

## GISCorps Conference Call – March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2006, 3:00 PM

Present: Wendy Francis, Shoreh Elhami, Frank Chang, Mark Salling, Juna Papajorgji, Martha Lombard

1. **Trademark Status & Financial Activities:** Chris was unable to attend the call. However, she had sent the financial report to Shoreh prior to the call. The report reflected the following: total expenses: \$8,988.96, total contributions: \$45,654.51, and total balance: \$36,665.55. All figures cover the period between mid 2003 and up to February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2006.
2. **CC Organizational** – The discussion over various sub committees responsibilities resulted in a one hour brain storming session. As part of the discussion, Shoreh asked Frank about his sub committee which is web site and outreach. He said that he would very much like to get between 3-5 volunteers to help him maintain the web site after it's in place and suggest that we would send a request for volunteers in one of the upcoming newsletters.

Mark is responsible for Grant writing and find raising sub committee and asked if any work had been done on this topic before. Shoreh said that Juna had done quite a bit of work on that. Juna will send Mark her documents.

For organizational sub committee which Martha was originally responsible for, we have to find someone else because Martha is busy with the address standards project. She did say that she would be able to help who ever that will be put in charge of that committee though. Shoreh asked everyone to send her names of those who may be qualified and interested.

The recruitment sub committee started the longest discussion mainly because of experiences with recent projects. Two ideas were discussed. One was to keep the procedure as it is today; the request for volunteers comes in, and after evaluation of the requester and finalizing the job description, CC members will look for candidates. This process is quite time consuming and imperfect however, mainly because the database doesn't include a multi-variable query engine. We have included this enhancement in the Scope of Work.

The second idea was to evaluate the requester, finalize the job description, and then post those descriptions on a web based interface and allow volunteers (who have already signed up and have a user name and password) to enter into that environment and post their availability. That way we won't get bombarded with emails and will be able to tend to each posting at a flexible pace. Also, we will require that they would update their records and resumes at that point. More discussion on these two options was continued under the web site update below and more discussion regarding this item will be held in Vancouver.

3. **Web site update** – Prioritizing Scope of Work (SOW): Frank had sent the SOW to CC, however, the list isn't prioritized yet. **Members will send their feedback in one week.** Wendy said that URISA's web site should be in place in April and ready for GC's web site. She also said that we can send the SOW to her and she'll forward it to the consultant. He will then be able to provide us with details

on timing and cost. Juna said that we don't necessarily have to wait to add the above enhancement (or any other) until we move to the URISA's server and that we can have the consultant start the process now. We will discuss this option with the consultant.

4. **GISP Credit for GC Volunteers** – Scott had sent an email regarding GISP points for volunteer work. Shoreh explained the options that CON committee of GISCI had suggested. They are suggesting two categories. Group 1 volunteers: are those who do not travel and will get 0.5 point for every 10 hours of work and Group 2 who travel and receive 3 points per mission. Scott explained later on that if someone does both of these activities they will get points for both services (if someone went abroad for 2 weeks and worked for 80 hours they obtain 4 points but also 3 extra points because they traveled, that brings the total to 7 points). He also said that no caps are yet put on the number of points. CC members for the most part agreed with the categories.

Scott had also asked that a letter be drafted to include description of the mission and duration of service (days and hours). **Shoreh will work on Scott on the letter.**

#### 5. **Deployment related news:**

- **Medical Mission Exchange (MMEX)** - Juna prepared a newsletter that summarized both missions. The newsletter included a link to a fascinating report from five volunteers of first MMEX mission ([http://www.giscorps.org/publications/mmex\\_report.pdf](http://www.giscorps.org/publications/mmex_report.pdf))
- **GSDI projects** – Juna finalized her year long effort to make the GSDI projects happen by completing the last step and by selecting 6 volunteers for each of the 6 GSDI projects and said that almost all of them have started the work. More detail on GSDI project was also included in the spring newsletter.
- **CATHALAC** – this project came to us in February. They need a total of 4 volunteers and are very interested in establishing a long term relationship with GC. Juna and Shoreh met with Frank Davenport of CATHALAC to clarify all the job descriptions and decided to start with the first volunteer which was a Cartographer with some web experience. Frank and Mark spent a weekend looking for qualified candidates and came up with 12. Shoreh sent emails to 6 of them and received 2 responses. Frank looked for more volunteers and found 4 more and the second email brought in another 3 volunteers. Shoreh will send the resumes of these individuals to CATHALAC and they will make the final decision.
- **Afghanistan** – A project manager at UNDP/AIMS contacted Shoreh for a SQL Server/ArcIMS expert. Shoreh followed up by asking for more details regarding support and after we receive their response, we can start the search for the volunteer.
- **Sri Lanka** – A non profit organization called Living Heritage put in a request for a GIS specialist with expertise in needs assessment and strategic planning. Shoreh talked to their project manager, Rachel English and fine tuned the description. The organization clarified that they won't be able to pay for travel but they will be able to house and feed the volunteer. They are interested in someone for +/2 months.

- **BrightEarth** – a request for volunteers came from Michael Graham of BrightEarth which is a non profit organization. They are looking for volunteers with KML expertise and the idea is to gather GIS datasets for various regions around the world that are either affected by natural disasters (hurricane, tornado) or unnatural disasters (genocide) and then embed that information into Google Earth. Shoreh will meet with Michael in Dc on April 11<sup>th</sup>.
- **South Africa** – a request came from Graham Taylor of Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality (NMMM). Shoreh sent him an email since several critical pieces of information were missing from his request form. We are waiting for their response at this time.
- **DHS/FEMA** – Shoreh met Ron Langhelm of division 10 of FEMA in DC and he expressed interest in forming a partnership with GC and to utilize GC volunteers for an approved pilot project for 2006 hurricane season. The idea would be to select 8-10 GC volunteers, send their resumes to FEMA for their approval, and following a security screening process, they would be hired as Disaster Assistance Employees (on call) dedicated to this project. They would then be deployed for no more than 21 days as opposed to the normal 30 day minimum and funded directly by FEMA for their travel, authorized expenses, and wages. In addition, there would be some minimal training (online) requirements these folks would need to fill to be prepared for deployment. Shoreh will continue discussions with Ron and report the details to CC.
- **The Red Cross** – Shoreh has scheduled a meeting with Greg Tune of Red Cross in DC on April 11<sup>th</sup>. They are also interested in forming a partnership with us and pre-deploy several volunteer so in case of a disaster, they could be immediately deployed to their site.

6. **Other:**

- **Groove** – Frank said that we can purchase Groove at +/- \$200 per user. He also said that evaluation copies are available for 60 days. He also said that we may be able to obtain free copies because we are non-profit. **He will check into that and get back with us.**
- **The World Urban Forum in Vancouver** – Shoreh asked if everyone who was coming to WUF (Mark, Frank, Juna, Shoreh) had taken care of their arrangements and they all had. The conference is held in Vancouver from June 19 to 23<sup>rd</sup>. Receipts for expenses can be sent to Chris.
- **New Project form review** – Shoreh reported that she had reviewed the form and thought that it looked fine for now. Mark suggested that a link should be made between this form and volunteer database. All agreed and after migration and as part of enhancements we will include this feature.
- **Video tape review** – Shoreh and Mark had sent their reviews. Shoreh asked others if they will be able to do the same. Juna said that perhaps even having a tape would not be such a good idea. Mark asked if we were paying for it and Shoreh said that this was being done by Allen Ibaugh's firm and that they aren't charging us anything. Frank said that he'll send his comments. **Anyone who is interested in sending feedback will send them in a week.**
- **New Brochure** for the GeoTec (placed in the bags) & WUF conferences in June – **Frank said that he can work on the revised version and Shoreh said that she will send him some information.**

- **GC Flyer in GeoWorld** – The idea of asking GeoWorld to insert our flyer into their magazine was brought up and we will try that after the brochure is ready.
- Publicizing projects that won't work for volunteers to IRC members so they can bid on them – Martha had brought up this issue via an email and Shoreh asked her to elaborate on that. She asked the opinion of CC members on two issues. The first one was regarding contacting South Africa (SA) project contacts while in SA in April. Shoreh said that we are waiting on their response and until such time that we know if we would even take on their project, we shouldn't take any actions. The second issue had to do with cases where a partner agency requests volunteers but for some reason GC cannot provide them with volunteers. Martha asked if in those cases GC could refer them to IRC. Mark said that we need to have policies in place in matters of this nature. Shoreh said that GC would not send any referrals to any for-profit entities, GC is a non-profit organization and as such must be extremely watchful of such actions.
- Presentations: Shoreh gave a presentation at GIS-T on March 28<sup>th</sup> and will give another one in Michigan at Imagin conference on May 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The call ended at 5:00 PM

Next call: April 18<sup>th</sup> 2006, 3:00 PM EST