

Wyoming Geospatial Organization (WyGEO)
4th Quarter Meeting Minutes
Web Meeting
December 15, 2016

Board Members Present (6):

Shawn Lanning – WyGEO President, University of Wyoming, WYGISC Research Scientist
Nicholas Graf – WyGEO Vice President, WYGISC
Joy Hill – WyGEO Secretary, Big Horn County, Land Planner/GIS Manager
Cathy Raney – WyGEO Past President, NE Region Director, Campbell County, GIS Coordinator
Nyssa Whitford – WyGEO NW Region Director, Wyoming Game and Fish, Sage Grouse GIS Analyst
Angie Rudolph – WyGEO SW Region Director, Greenwood Mapping, GIS Specialist

Board Members Absent (3):

Paula Reece – WyGEO Treasurer, Natrona County, GIS Specialist
Jeff Sun – WyGEO Director at Large, Casper College, GIS Instructor
Steve Vossler – WyGEO SE Region Director, SEO, GIS Specialist

Professional Members Present (4):

Ryan Sirdoreus – State Parks, Historic Sites and Trails
Suzanne Wick - Scotts Bluff County GIS/Mapping (Nebraska)
Esther Worker – Esri
Kirk Nordyke – Wyoming Game and Fish Department

I. Meeting Called to Order

Shawn Lanning, WyGEO President, called the meeting to order at 10:05am.

II. Welcome and Introductions/Remarks

Shawn welcomed everyone to the WyGEO 4th Quarter Meeting of 2016.

III. Review of Last Meeting Minutes

Shawn entertained a motion to approve the 3rd Quarter meeting minutes of 2016. Cathy Raney, WyGEO Past President/NE Region Director, made a motion to accept the minutes. The motion was seconded by Nyssa Whitford, WyGEO NW Region Director. All in favor. Motion passed.

IV. Treasurer's Report

Shawn presented budget details in WyGEO Treasurer, Paula's, absence. The amount currently in the WyGEO bank account is \$33,666.91. Most of the recent expenses were conference related. Shawn said next year's invoices for membership dues will be coming out after the new year. He asked for members to check their junk email folders. Cathy asked about a beginning balance being added to the Treasurer's Report.

V. Old Business

1. Tony Young Letter

Shawn explained that Tony Young is the new CIO for the State of Wyoming. In the 3rd Quarter, WyGEO sent a letter to him asking about the reinstatement of the GIO position and asking for the state to take into consideration geospatial technologies when making decisions. We received a letter from Tony in response to ours, as well as further clarification in a later communication. While he is on board with geospatial technologies, the current budget climate has led to securing current positions and no focus on adding positions. However, he will keep the GIO in mind for the future.

Ryan Sirdoreus, chair of TAG, added that TAG is moving forward a bit, renaming the GIS Oversight Committee to the Advisory Board. Tony has been very open with the communications, especially regarding governing structure. He said Tony seemed apologetic and that there may have been a bit of a misunderstanding initially. He recapped that they will be making changes to the governing structure to reinstate the GIS Oversight Committee/now Advisory Board). Cathy asked if the Advisory Board and Technical Advisory Group (TAG) were similar. Ryan clarified that they are working to keep both moving/staffed.

2. Scholarship Committee Update

Shawn mentioned a new scholarship application that Cathy has been working on. The Board and Scholarship Committee agreed that we want the award to be available for the fall semester of 2017, which produced the deadline for applications to be in May of 2017. Winners could be announced at the 3rd quarter meeting. Cathy said that cutting quarterly meetings down concerned her, asking if the 3rd quarter meeting could become virtual. Cathy said Jeff Sun asked if we could give students pursuing GIS certification a chance at a scholarship. She opened the question to those in attendance. Nyssa said she understands Paula's point (made over email) that the money should go to someone who is intensely studying GIS technologies. But she also felt that Jeff's point about students seeing the value in GIS by pursuing a certificate. She said maybe we could weed out those whose applications that do not demonstrate strengths or real achievements. Joy added that she is on the fence, but can see the value in giving awards to certificate students. She agrees with Paula that reduced awards for certificate students would be more suitable than a full award due to how many fewer subject-based credits a certificate student must acquire versus an associate or bachelor's candidate. She also added that she is not sure of how large of a pool of students we are even talking about in the state of Wyoming. Nyssa said we could easily build in flexibility to the award notice, identifying a pool of money which would be doled out according to level of study. Suzie Wick added that she sees value in providing scholarship opportunities to all students seeking education and interest in the field of GIS, especially with the challenges we face in finding GIS jobs in general. Cathy said that she senses an overall agreement that GIS certificate students should be taken into consideration. She will take the application back to the scholarship committee and then to the Board for re-approval. Nyssa thanked Cathy for her work on the scholarship application.

3. Collaboration with GISCO on Spring 2018 Annual Conference

Shawn mentioned that we are still working towards a joint conference with GISCO. The idea of moving the meeting to spring of 2018 has been pushed by Colorado. Cathy said we were very close to closing in on a full agreement with GISCO, barring one outstanding issue that she was unable to recall. She said the terms were to rotate to every other year joint meetings, possibly flip-flopping between Wyoming and Colorado locations. Saratoga, Wyoming, is being discussed as a location for spring of 2018. Everyone was in agreement with a joint budget between the two parties. Joy asked if WyGEO should be considering a “small” annual conference for 2017 since we would bypass an annual conference completely by moving to spring of 2018. Shawn agreed. Nyssa added that maybe we could grow our 2nd Quarter meeting to be a bit larger than usual. Perhaps a single overnight experience. Try to find some middle ground between an annual meeting and quarterly meeting. Esther Worker asked about possibly a WyGEO track at GIS in the Rockies (Denver). Shawn offered the idea of a lesser fee. Joy added that she was concerned about meeting in Denver as an option because it is already difficult for people to make in-state meetings. Nyssa said it would be valuable for WyGEO to have a presence at GIS in the Rockies, agreeing that out-of-state meetings could make it more difficult to get WyGEO participation. Nyssa added some ideas for how a mini conference could shape up, adding training, special speakers and partnering with other organizations as possibilities.

Cathy said GISCO made a small change to dates in the original contract agreement, pushing out the end date to December 2018.

Action Item: Cathy will forward the latest version of the agreement to Shawn for signing.

VI. New Business

1. Recap Survey Results

Shawn shared a recap of the survey regarding meeting frequency. 22 members responded to the survey. Members didn't have a strong preference over the time of year for the annual conference. Numbers were close as far as the number of meetings in general, however, the response was more overwhelming for a move to two meetings per year, shifting regions. Some pros and cons were shared within the survey. Joy asked if we should be satisfied with the number of respondents. Shawn said he felt it was okay since we would have to send out a survey/vote regarding bylaw change proposals which would require a greater percentage of the membership to respond. Nicholas agreed. Cathy said that our flexibility has served us well over the years. She personally would like to try and see if a change in our meeting delivery would serve our members better. She said if we offer our members more substance at our meetings, through fewer meetings, perhaps we could actually see stronger attendance. Nyssa said she agrees with everything that has been said. She sent a list of pros for reducing meeting numbers from four to two, adding less work for board members in planning meetings (which could lead to more interest in board participation), more effort being put into planning two meetings, more flexibility in timing and location, more substantial attendance and heavier presenter loads, cost savings for travelers, and asking for sponsorship less frequently. It does

put more pressure on the board to amp up the meetings to make them very worthwhile. She added there could be one meeting as a focus on a particular subject or joint opportunity with another group and one annual meeting. It would give us more time to plan, a chance for people to get things on their calendars sooner and reduce schedule conflicts while increasing chances to get funding to support the travel. Shawn added that his opinion on this subject has been swayed in the past month. He does have some trepidation about cutting out region-specific meetings each year, fearing that we'll miss some people attending. But giving this a try for a year could give us the answers we need and a chance to really see how people respond. Nyssa felt that, while it is a risk to lose the "locals" whose region may get skipped in a particular year, she has seen poor attendance by locals in past meetings anyway. Suzie said that less frequent meetings are good due to budget cuts and explaining the justification of going to these meetings – training options may help that. Also, if training could help towards GISP certification it may draw more attendees. Cathy agrees very strongly with offering more robust training and being able to promote our events more heavily because the board will have more time to do so. Nyssa mentioned the Buffalo meeting that was packed due to Cathy's great efforts on reaching out to members.

2. Discussion on Changes to Bylaws

Shawn said to accommodate a reduction in the number of meetings and a spring annual, we would need to make changes to the bylaws, specifically in the areas of elections and the number of meetings that occur annually around the state. Nyssa said we would benefit from building flexibility into the bylaws as far as meeting frequency is concerned. Shawn agreed with making the bylaws a bit more flexible in case we decide to change the numbers of meetings in the future. Joy agreed that we need to build in flexibility regarding meeting numbers and types, as well as fixing the election section as a whole. She also would like to see agreement to fix general grammatical errors throughout the entire document. Nyssa asked if we could do more to reach people with survey notices since it is possible some people are not getting the emails. Shawn said we can use other methods to reach out. Shawn sought a motion to pursue changes to the bylaws. Nyssa made a motion that we survey our WyGEO membership regarding changes to the bylaws for meeting frequency, general grammatical changes and election clarification. The motion was seconded by Joy. All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed. Joy asked how soon the bylaw changes would need to be made. Shawn said it would need to happen shortly after the new year.

Action Item: Nyssa will put a draft survey together for Board review at their next meeting.

3. Next Meeting Location – Southwest Region

Shawn said we need to hold a meeting before the end of March in the Southwest Region under the current meeting configuration. We can choose a location and not a date, tabling it due to a need for the vote from the membership. Cathy suggested that we table the entire discussion until a survey is sent out. Nyssa agreed. Joy said it would seem that if Saratoga will be the site for the annual conference in 2018, SW and NE would be the logical choices for

2017, if we move to two meetings. Angie said Western Wyoming Community College in Rock Springs offered to host a meeting/conference in 2017. Shawn said if we went to a 2-meeting configuration, it would seem reasonable to shift meetings to weather-friendly times of year. Joy, Cathy and Nyssa agreed. Shawn tabled further discussion on meeting location/date until after the vote on bylaw changes.

4. NAIP 2015

Shawn said the NAIP 2015 (and 2012) can now be downloaded from the GeoHUB now – the true, raw, 4-band data.

VII. Meeting Adjourned

Shawn adjourned the business meeting at 11:10am following a motion to adjourn by Cathy, seconded by Nyssa.