



Society for Technical Communication

Board of Directors Meeting
Conference Call
08 June 2010

Call to Order

Mr. Hughes called the meeting to order at 11:32 am EDT(GMT-4). A quorum was established and the Board approved the agenda. The 30 April 2010 minutes were approved with the amendment of adding Mr. Maggiani's name to the Attendees list.

Attendees

Board

- **Mike Hughes, President**
- **Hillary Hart, Vice President**
- **Aiessa Moyna, Treasurer**
- **Rachel Houghton, Secretary**
- **Cindy Currie, Immediate Past President**
- **Karen Baranich, Director**
- **Nicky Bleiel, Director**
- **Lori Corbett, Director**
- **Judith Herr, Director**
- **Rich Maggiani, Director**
- **Tricia Spayer, Director**
- **WC Wiese, Director**

Office

- **Susan Burton, CAE, CEO**
- **Diana Buttram, COO**
- **Lloyd Tucker, Deputy Executive Director**

Community Funding and Support Task Force Report

Ms. Hart reported that the final version of the Community Funding and Support Report was posted to the board Yahoo group. This report is substantially the same as the draft report the Board reviewed prior to the conference, the findings of which were presented during Leadership Day.

The key areas of the report covered four recommendations:

1. Increasing STC's relevance to the technical communication community
2. Improving STC's logistics
3. Improving financial understanding and clarifying the funding model for communities
4. Providing education for community leaders.

It was noted that many of the specific recommendations are for items that STC is already doing or for items that are in progress. These need to be communicated to the communities in a variety of ways.

A number of recommendations have budgetary implications that will be part of the Board's budget discussions in June through August. The Community Advocacy Committee (CAC) was charged with taking the report's recommendations and making a plan to make them actionable.

The Board directed Ms. Hart to officially communicate the Board's gratitude to the task force for their work and that the report will be part of the budget discussions. The report will be added to the new page of the website that is being developed to make it easier for members to find materials related to Board discussions.

International Affiliation Agreement

Ms. Hart reported that the 2010 version of the International Affiliation Agreement and a summary of the key provisions were posted to the board Yahoo group. There will be time on the July agenda for a more detailed review of the document so that Board members will be prepared to answer member questions.

Ms. Burton reviewed the history that necessitates this document. The IRS is requiring associations that have international chapters to clarify their relationships; this includes requiring the chapters to be legal entities in their own countries and establishing formal relationship with an affiliation agreement. One of the purposes of an affiliation agreement is to ensure that international chapters are being held to essentially the same bylaws and policies that US. chapters are required to have.

Recognitions

Ms. Bleiel reviewed the recognitions changes.

New guidelines for number of DCSA/DSSA/DSAS awards per community (Only Presidents and VPs will be ineligible.)

CAA: Community of Distinction will be awarded to all communities that qualify. Considering a "Best of Show" type designation.

Sigma Tau Chi (STX) and Alpha Sigma Awards (AS): May drop Alpha Sigma. Only one honoree in history of award.

She mentioned that plaques will become certificates, communities can frame certificates, and reminded Board members that they cannot serve as references or on committees that do member recognition.

Organizational Synergies Task Force

Mr. Wiese moved that STC form the Organizational Synergies Task Force. The motion was seconded.

Discussion

Mr. Wiese summarized the purpose of the task force as outlined in his report to the board: To identify to the Board of Directors best practices and opportunities that increase STC member value through ongoing dialog with related professional organizations.

Currently STC has formal partnership agreements with LISA (Localization Industry Standards Association), Association of Proposal Management Professionals (APMP) and there is a draft agreement with American Society of Indexers (ASI). Ms. Burton reported the agreement is ready for the new ASI president to sign. These agreements cover mutually beneficial promotion of each other's events, free booths at each other's events, membership pricing for each other's events, and joint projects, such as live web seminars, to be developed when appropriate.

A concern was expressed about whether such a task force was actually needed since there are these agreements in place. It was clarified that discussions would go beyond exchanges and look for synergies that would benefit the members of each association through the sharing of knowledge. A related concern was how to ensure that the task force does not step beyond its scope of authority, making agreements or promises without Board approval. This concern was addressed by clarifying that Deputy Director Lloyd Tucker would be involved in all discussions.

Motion carries. Task force was approved.

Student Voting

Mr. Hughes moved that STC conduct a knowledge based governance survey of the membership on the issue of whether students should be allowed to vote in Society business.

Motion seconded.

Ms. Herr joined the call.

Discussion

After brief discussion, the Board agreed that there should be no need for a vote, just a "will of the board" consensus, unless there is overwhelming rationale against the survey. No such rationale was offered. It will be important to let respondents know that the survey results are informational only and cannot be binding on the Board. Allowing student voting would involve a change to the Bylaws, and the Board wish always to govern the Society in alignment with what is best for the profession and the members. Mr. Hughes withdrew the motion and called for a "will of the Board" decision.

The will of the Board is to conduct the survey.

CAC Update

The Community Advocacy Committee is being strengthened and reorganized to better serve STC communities. Co-chairs are directors Judith Herr and Tricia Spayer. The CAC will have a dual focus, half on community affairs and half on the Leaders' Resource (formerly known as the LCR). Within both parts of the CAC, Ms. Herr will focus on chapters and international communities, while Ms. Spayer will focus on SIGs and the LR.

The members of the Community Support and Funding task force (now sunsetted) will be contacted to work with the CAC. One important activity for this year will be determining whether and how a Community Council would be formed – this group could consist of representatives of communities elected by members. Mr. Hughes wanted to make sure that Ms. Currie-Clifford is recognized for the idea of an elected community council, even though she was not able to implement this during her administration.

Ms. Herr stated that the CAC will be up and running by the end of July.

Niagara Frontier Chapter Dissolution

Ms. Herr moved that STC dissolve the Niagara Frontier chapter.

Motion seconded.

Discussion

The Niagara Frontier chapter has four members and no members are willing to take on leadership roles. The chapter and STC staff followed all of STC's policies and procedures regarding chapter dissolution. The chapter does not wish to merge with another chapter and its remaining funds will be sent to the Society. Upon the vote of the board, chapter members will be advised that the chapter has been dissolved so that chapter members may decide to move their memberships to another chapter.

Motion carries.

Community Social Media Platform

Ms. Buttram advised that plans for implementing the community social-media platform are on schedule. Beta testing is due to begin in June, with promotion of the platform to ramp up at very end of June. The beta testing will involve 5 groups and the hope is that their feedback will not only help refine the platform but provide information helpful for communities as they adopt and use the platform. Mailman lists and archives will be required to move to the new platform; other uses of the technology are up to individual communities and groups.

This platform may provide sufficient web presence for smaller chapters and SIGs, but it is not intended to replace the more robust websites of many communities. It is primarily a collaborative space in which groups may work and communicate with members. STC members will have to register using member ID, and lists will not be automatically moved over because there are non-members on some lists. iMIS is the member authentication portion of the community platform.; there is still ongoing discussion regarding having an "expert" level type login for non-STC outside participants. The plan is to have the platform operational/live before the end of July 2010.

Budget

Ms. Moyna clarified that STC uses zero-based budgeting in developing the Society budget. This means that all programs and services will be reevaluated regarding importance to the mission. It may be that the Board will need to make some hard decisions to eliminate some programs in favor of new imperatives. There was discussion about the need for the Society to increase marketing efforts.

The Board reviewed a worksheet developed with input by the Finance and Investment Committee to allow the Board to consider various scenarios. Key variables include the percentage of members renewing, number of potential new members, and conference attendance. It was clarified that marketing expenses have their own tab summarizing the total but that they are included within each program on the balance tab.

Prudent budgeting implies conservative projections; however, there can be aggressive marketing goals set relative to renewal and new member numbers and conference attendance. The "goals" can be outcomes STC would hope to achieve. For example, it is good to hope to achieve 100% membership, but STC should not use that assumption for estimating what the operating funds will be.

There were some additional suggestions to the worksheet that will be incorporated in the next version to be ready for the Board by June 18. This will enable Board members to use if they wish to develop their own projections. The Board will collectively engage in scenario development at the July Board budget call.

Ms. Herr left the conference call.

Social Media

It was agreed that there should be communications to the membership about the following:

- The Community Support and Funding task force recommendations will be considered as part of the Board's development of the 2011 budget (June-August)
- There will be a full roll out of Leadership Seminars, including one on how to budget for 2011
- An Organizational Synergies task force has been created for the purpose of identifying to the Board of Directors best practices and opportunities that increase STC member value through ongoing dialog with related professional organizations. The pilot organizations will be ASI and ATTW.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 12:59 pm EST (GMT-4).