

American Association for Geodetic Surveying

Board of Directors

Monthly Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 14, 2019

1. Open meeting, President

A. The Board of Directors meeting was called to order by President Tom Meyer at 16:03 hrs. EDT.

B. Acting Scribe Rollins called the roll:

i. Present: Thomas Meyer, President; Charles Ghilani, Immediate Past President; Dan Gillins, President-Elect; Herb Stoughton, Vice-President, Director (3rd year); John Bean, Director (2nd year); Tony Cavell, Director (1st year); Dan Roman, Secretary; Steve Briggs, Parliamentarian; Jacob Heck, AAGS/NSPS Liaison; Ronnie Taylor, Reporter/Association Editor; Elisabeth Rollins, Acting Scribe; Michael Dennis, Pat Kalen, Larry Hothem.

ii. Absent: Dan Martin, Treasurer; Dave Zilkoski, Membership Chair.

iii. At least two directors were present as well as a quorum; therefore, the meeting was authorized.

Please note: Callers not using a speaker phone can be heard most clearly and easily.¹

2. Agenda

A. Upon call for additions, new business was not introduced.

B. AAGS Vice President Stoughton made a motion for acceptance of the AAGS BOD agenda, posted March 14. Parliamentarian Briggs seconded the motion, which carried with no objection.

3. Minutes

A. Cavell pointed out that approving the minutes can be expedited (see <https://www.dummies.com/careers/business-skills/roberts-rules-for-approving-the-minutes/>)

The presiding officer says, "The minutes have been [read/distributed] to you. Are there any corrections?" If corrections are offered, the chair handles each by offering the correction to the membership, just to be sure

¹ <https://www.conferencecallsunlimited.com/blog/10-ways-to-improve-audio-on-your-conference-call/>

everyone agrees that the correction is accurate. The secretary then enters the corrections on the master copy.

When no (further) corrections are offered, the presiding officer says, "If there are no (further) corrections . . . (pause) . . . the minutes are approved as read/distributed/corrected."

- B. Ghilani made a motion to adopt this procedure. Stoughton seconded the motion, which carried with no objection.
 - C. President Meyer called for corrections.
 - i. Bean observed that on some systems, double-clicking agenda attachments does not fully open the attachment – so the February 14 Meeting Minutes attached to the March 14 agenda had not been fully readable.
 - ii. February 14 Meeting Minutes had been distributed to all board members by email February 20, attached separately as .pdf and .docx, for corrections, so they were deemed sufficiently distributed. Discussion followed, bringing no objection.
 - D. The February 14 Meeting Minutes were approved as distributed.
4. Treasurer's Report (Martin)
- A. Budget report (Gillins, Martin) has not been received. Gillins and Martin are to work together to draft a budget, to report at the next meeting.
 - B. Any news concerning the costs of COFPAES² are to be presented at the next meeting.
 - C. At a previous meeting, Martin had reported on the number of members who had not yet renewed. Meyer requested via email to Trish Milburn 2/1/19, that the renewal reminder notice be sent out. Results are to be reported at the next meeting.
5. Old Business and Communications
- A. International Federation of Surveyors (FIG)

The February 14 meeting discussion, about AAGS joining **FIG**³ directly rather than through NSPS, was postponed because Roman needed to leave the meeting.

Meyer read email correspondence with Roman on the subject, and opened the floor to continue the discussion.

 - i. Meyer:

I see that 'Meyer will inquire of Roman what he recommends AAGS do about FIG, and Meyer will get back with the board with these results.' And so I am doing. I will reopen the discussion as the first agenda item under Old Business. Would you prefer to defer your comments until then?

² cofpaes.org – Council on Federal Procurement of Architectural and Engineering Services

³ fig.net – International Federation of Surveyors

ii. Roman:

It's definitely a sensitive topic. Based on money, it's worth doing [joining FIG directly rather than through NSPS]. Cost is 4.48€ per member, with a minimum of a 50€ fee. For us, at about one hundred members, that's 448€, or \$515. I think that's about a third of what we pay NSPS. The problems are:

- (1) NSPS gets a veto vote on whether we join;*
- (2) we may alienate them further than they already are; and*
- (3) we will need to participate as members, at meetings.*

I have been nominated by NSPS, and fill a position as Commission Chair. So, I don't think I can sit in for AAGS, when I'm nominally representing NSPS. It certainly is worth it from the financial aspect, but the political cost may be too high. Hence my original comment that this is a Board of Directors decision, and it needs to be discussed.

iii. AAGS pays a substantial fee to NSPS for participation in FIG, some 5% of NSPS total fee for its FIG membership. The cost is out of proportion for the size of AAGS membership.

Ghilani suggested that NSPS would not be upset by AAGS choosing to apply for membership separately instead. The amount AAGS pays to NSPS for its share in NSPS' membership is large for AAGS, but perhaps not significant for a large entity like NSPS.

Briggs spoke of the history of AAGS membership through NSPS, which was established prior to NSPS decision that all NSPS members (including State Society members) were to be members of FIG. Briggs suggested that AAGS ask NSPS to recalculate how much AAGS owes for its portion of membership.

iv. Gillins and Cavell expressed that separate membership could even be an advantage to NSPS because AAGS would then provide North America an additional vote. This might be attractive to NSPS.

- Stoughton questioned whether this would provide the United States with an additional vote, or whether all US member organizations would agree as a consortium, producing one vote.
- Bean cited the FIG website, which shows countries with multiple organizations.
- Meyer described the FIG membership form, which states that "In the case of an application received from an association in a country which already has one or more member associations, these associations shall be informed of the application, and their comments are sought."

- v. Stoughton remarked on the additional cost of sending a member to FIG to represent AAGS. Gillins made himself available to represent AAGS, as he plans to attend, sponsored by NGS but not representing any other organization. He acknowledges this to be a long-term commitment, for which Meyer expressed AAGS appreciation.

Taylor highlighted the point that if Gillins serves on one of the FIG commissions, then that helps assure that he will be given priority by NGS when approving travel to attend the annual meeting.

- vi. In favor of AAGS applying for FIG membership directly, Hothem emphasized the importance of AAGS as the principal organization from the US capable to provide representation on *FIG Commission 5, Positioning and Measurement*. (Roman is the current chairman of Commission 5.)

FIG Commissions include 1 – Professional Standards and Practice, 2 – Professional Education, 3 – Spatial Information Management, 4 – Hydrography, 5 – Positioning and Measurement, 6 – Engineering Surveys, 7 – Cadastre and Land Management, 8 – Spatial Planning and Development, 9 – Valuation and the Management of Real Estate, 10 - Construction Economics and Management⁴

- vii. Cavell recommended that AAGS discuss the decision with NSPS, whether NSPS would reduce AAGS fee, or whether it might be best for AAGS to join FIG as a separate entity with an additional vote. Briggs and Taylor recommended that AAGS President Meyer get together with NSPS President (Leavitt) to discuss these options and find the best way forward.

For those AAGS Board members who know something about this, please send Meyer an email, so that he can form an ad hoc committee to sort this out. Meyer will work with AAGS NSPS Liaison Heck. Meyer will report back at the next meeting on this.

B. Coalition of Geospatial Organizations (COGO)

- i. At this time and into the past the COGO has not had any membership dues. However, at the last meeting this issue was raised because there are operational costs for the website, domain name and other minor expenses. The question of dues will be on the agenda for the next meeting and by sending representative(s), AAGS can be on the ground floor of that discussion.
- ii. Four roles are available to AAGS representatives; Delegate, Alternate, Staff, and Observer. Of the four, one votes. COGO Chair Shelby Johnson described these four roles in a message to Meyer, March 12:

My simplest characterization of how both [Staff, Observer] have operated during previous meetings is to be in listening mode the majority of meeting time.

⁴ <http://www.fig.net/organisation/comm/index.asp>

There are occasions when a Delegate of a large organization with full time staff may not have information they need and in those instances they call on the staff to provide additional information during discussions. Staff do not vote.

I cannot recall that I have ever heard any Observers speak and they do not vote. It's my assumption that most observers, assist staff and their delegate in reporting any decisive information back to their respective organizations (like a second set of ears). The delegate can appoint an observer to represent them in the event they are unable to attend. In those instances, the observer has voting authority.

- iii. Briggs and Meyer agreed that of the four, the one required role was that of Delegate. The other three roles may be available to serve as a proxy for the Delegate, or support the Delegate otherwise.
- iv. Meyer indicated that the opportunity to represent AAGS as Delegate to COGO would be opened to the organization at large.

Cavell indicated that in case no one else volunteers, he will consider the role, which involves attending one in-person meeting per year, plus monthly conference calls.

- C. The **AAGS Newsletter** is complete apart from Martin's Experience Report about the Astro Survey he did as part of the GRAV-D Validation effort.
 - i. Martin will finish this next week, after which Meyer will ship all the materials over to Ghilani.
 - ii. As invited, Cavell has stepped for the next newsletter up to provide a Technical Report regarding his unit's Gravimetry surveying program. The deadline is five months from now.

Louisiana State University's Center for Geoinformatics, serving as the Louisiana Spatial Reference Center (LSRC), has received a second five-year grant from NOAA to support the improvement and modernization of NOAA's National Spatial Reference System.

This in collaboration with a continuing 5-year Gulf Coast-wide partnership among Mississippi, Texas, Louisiana, Florida and Alabama; for their support in Regional Geospatial Modeling.
 - iii. Please let Meyer know if you have any suggestions for the *Meet AAGS* column.
- D. **Web-based membership renewal issues:** Colburn was emailed by Meyer on 2/27/19 regarding creating a renewal path that did not require a login, just a member ID number. Colburn is researching this.
- E. UESI ***Surveying and Geomatics 2020 Conference*** Committee

- i. Deadlines and dates were discussed on a conference call February 15, attended by Gillins, Meyer, and Dennis.
[iSpoiler Alert!] Dan Roman will be approached to be the keynote speaker.
- ii. Gillins and Dennis aim to be on future conference calls, the next scheduled for March 15. Meyer cannot attend the March 15 meeting because he is scheduled to be in class.
- iii. Gillins would like to see AAGS organize a track at the conference. Last year AAGS provided a half-day track; perhaps we could do more this time around. Conference development is still at a preliminary stage, such that if AAGS would like to propose sessions, meetings, etc., these can still be organized.
- iv. Meyer will send some emails around to gather parties interested in this effort.

F. NGS NSPS AAGS Quarterly Meeting March 8

- i. Meyer attended this conference call representing AAGS, and found that many other AAGS members (Dennis, Gillins, Roman and Heck) attended as well, being NGS.
- ii. The GPS-on-benchmarks update included the idea of establishing RTN check marks/stations.
- iii. The new realization of the Frame ITRF14 and GEOID18 are tentatively scheduled for June release, but with quality as a priority, this date may be flexible. NGS is thinking about sending AAGS an announcement to share with members.
This announcement could be published in the AAGS Newsletter.
- iv. M. Dennis mentioned that NGS is looking into deprecating the U.S. Survey Foot, and that NGS would like to adopt positive-eastward longitudes as the default for their own purposes.

- When the U.S. Survey Foot was named in 1959 (*Federal Register*, F.R. Doc. 59-5442; filed June 30, 1959) the intention was to deprecate it the next time the basic geodetic control network of the US was readjusted by NGS.
- Readjustment has been accomplished multiple times since then, without changing the U.S. Survey Foot.
- When Dennis brought this up at the quarterly meeting March 8, Dru Smith, Dan Roman, and Juliana Blackwell were supportive of bringing the United States to use one single, coordinated definition of the foot.

Out of the 50 states, 24 have legislated that surveying measures should be based on the U.S. Survey Foot, eight have legislated that

they be made on the basis of the International Foot, and 18 have not specified the conversion factor from metric units.⁵

- Given that State Plane Coordinate Systems will change in 2022, this is an opportunity, the last for a long time, to coordinate. Dennis and Heck spoke with Curt Sumner, to get on the agenda of the NSPS Board of Directors meeting next month in Arlington, Friday, April 12. The purpose is to bring it up, to have people think about it.
- Cavell mentioned the historic reasons why the United States implemented the foot rather than the meter. He maintained that it is less confusing for property conveyance records, to deprecate the International Foot. Presumably, Cavell and Dennis did *not* take their good-natured discussion “out to the parking lot”.

Congratulations to Dr. Dennis, as well as Dr. Meyer, Dr. Roman, Dr. Heck, and any others, for your truly remarkable achievements.

G. Information Matrix

- i. Meyer has been contacted by **PBS**, which intends to produce TV programming to include AAGS. March 12, Meyer received email shown below from Andrew Lopez, assistant to senior producer Nina Bell, and spoke with Nina Bell by phone March 14.

This is Andrew Lopez, assistant to Nina Bell, Senior Producer of the program Information Matrix hosted by Laurence Fishburne. Nina is producing a positive and educationally helpful documentary series surrounding, "Unique Educational Stories". Our research team thought American Association for Geodetic Surveying might be a good fit for this topic. Segments will air on Public Television, Discovery, CNBC, among other networks. ... She will interview several possible guests and ultimately select one organization to participate in the program on a given topic.

- ii. Meyer provided a synopsis of his conversation with Ms. Bell:
 - Meyer explained what the field of geodesy is and what geodesists produce, namely, global coordinate systems that are used for navigation, defense, civil infrastructure, disaster relief efforts, and time transfer. She was amazed and delighted. Meyer finished the conversation with some questions and comments:

⁵ National Geodetic Survey (n.d.), "What are the "official" conversions that are used by NGS to convert 1) meters to inches, and 2) meters to feet?", Frequently Asked Questions about the National Geodetic Survey, <<http://www.ngs.noaa.gov/faq.shtml#Feet>>

- Who funds Information Matrix? What is the business model? *They are contracted by National Public Television (PBS) to produce content for them. IM is a for-profit company.*
 - The five-minute format is very short. Five minutes can provide a taste of a subject, but nothing much beyond that. Who is the target audience, and what are the pedagogical goals for the segments? *These shorts fill the gaps between the 52-minute segments aired by PBS.*
 - Is there a mission statement or some other stated policy that guides the content selection? *No, but that's not uncommon for for-profit companies.*
 - The piece about local banking seemed oddly out-of-place with most of the others; it felt more like an advertisement than a documentary. *For-profit companies can use Information Matrix as a vehicle for infomercials. This provides a funding stream for PBS.*
 - Meyer commented that some of the principle speakers might not be acknowledged as experts by academia. He volunteered AAGS to be a source of domain experts/consultants for all things spatial, including GIS, GPS, UAVs, navigation, as well as related fields like astronomy and geophysics.
- iii. In a nutshell, AAGS has been short-listed as an organization of special interest to be highlighted for a 5-minute TV segment. PBS will contact AAGS again in about five months as things develop, and perhaps again in the meantime for ideas about scripts and other information.
- iv. Board members were unanimously enthusiastically receptive. Interested members should email thomas.meyer@uconn.edu

H. O*Net

- i. Meyer received email from Research Triangle Institute (RTI) Business Liaison Matthew Hoffman, and spoke on the phone March 12.

*Thank you for speaking with me this morning regarding the United States Department of Labor's O*NET program. The Occupational Information Network (O*NET) is an initiative that replaced the outdated Dictionary of Occupational Titles with an updated occupational database that is available online and thus more accessible to the general public. O*NET is the primary source of occupational information in the United States and Research Triangle Institute (RTI) assists the Department of Labor in keeping this information relevant and up-to-date.*

We are reaching out to you and the American Association of Geodetic Surveying for help in updating some of this information. We would like to obtain a list containing the names, addresses, and telephone numbers for Geodetic Surveyors who are considered experts in the field. We then select a random sample of these experts and call them to request their participation and ask if they would be willing to complete a set of questionnaires about their work.

- ii. As AAGS President in 2014 when O*Net was introduced the first time, Dennis explained the program. The Occupational Information Network (O*NET) is an online database containing definitions of occupations across the US, maintained by the Department of Labor/Research Triangle Institute (RTI). They want information about what geodetic surveyors do, so that they can update/refine the definition. As shown above, they want to poll AAGS members to get information for this purpose.
 - In 2014, Dennis circulated the request among AAGS members, including the possibility to opt out, after which he submitted the list of members, along with other information requested.
 - NSPS Exec. Director Curt Sumner has also been approached, and will participate, just as in 2014.
 - RTI has apparently reached out to NGS as well. AAGS members who are part of NGS and come across this survey, are invited to let AAGS President Meyer know.
 - Meyer estimates that most people in the United States who would self-identify as Geodetic Surveyors are also members of AAGS. Meyer supposes that there are not many members of NSPS who would identify as geodetic surveyors, who are not also members of AAGS.
 - Ghilani noted that everyone who is a member of a state society is also a member of NSPS.
 - The intersection of NSPS and AAGS is large, and Meyer feels that AAGS is the right organization to take the lead on this.
 - Taylor moved that Meyer seek and send AAGS member email addresses to the RTI (minus Student and Affiliate members), Cc: NSPS' Curt Sumner, so that RTI may contact a sample of members to request information. Briggs seconded the motion, which carried with no objection.
 - Dennis will send Meyer the editable Word versions of templates for this project.

6. Committees

A. Membership committee (Zilkoski)

Zilkoski had sent Meyer three files listed below, appended to the meeting agenda. These may be brought up with motions for adoption in the next meeting. The board can review the documents in the meantime.

- i. Corporate membership (Draft)
- ii. Job advertisement
- iii. Template articles of affiliation

B. Ad-hoc UESI (Martin)

- i. In Martin's absence, nothing was reported.

C. Geodetic Certification Committee (Stoughton)

- i. Nothing to report at this time.
- ii. Certification has been a big interest of Cavell's, who reported receiving a phone call inquiring when certification would happen, because they wanted to apply.
- iii. Bean would strongly support certification as a relevant benefit that AAGS can uniquely offer.
- iv. Cavell noted that NSPS administers several different certificate programs, such as Hydrography, Land Title Association Surveys, etc. In each case, the principal expert group that provides the credentials is not the NSPS directly. This provides an opportunity for quality control.
- v. Dennis had circulated questionnaires for analysis, in the past. Because of involvement with UESI, Dennis raised the point with Gillins that working together might be a way forward. Discussion followed, recalling past connection with NSPS on this effort.
- vi. Gillins stated that UESI would like to see the Geomatics Division doing more, using a budget that does not get spent each year. With the financial resources and infrastructure in place to support something like this, they could be an excellent partner. They are currently developing an online course in Surveying, for Civil Engineering students to take. They might be very excited about a certification program.
- vii. Briggs stated that AAGS should provide the expertise on the application and the examination. These could be worked on independently of funding and infrastructure for test administration, etc.
- viii. Meyer will send an email thread to discuss the right way for AAGS to proceed.

7. Surveying and Land Information Science (Ghilani)

A. SaLIS Ex-Comm (Meyer)

- i. Nothing to report at this time.
- B. SaLIS (Ghilani)
 - i. The May issue proofs have been edited and returned to Sheridan.
- 8. The next meeting of the AAGS BOD is scheduled for Thursday, April 11, 2018, @ 4:00 PM EDT.

Suggested Future Board meetings for 2019 are shown below. If a sufficient number of Board members express conflict with a specific date, the meeting will be rescheduled.

May 9 @ 4:00 PM Eastern Time
June 13 @ 4:00 PM Eastern Time
July 11 @ 4:00 PM Eastern Time
August 8 @ 4:00 PM Eastern Time
September 12 @ 4:00 PM Eastern Time
October 10 @ 4:00 PM Eastern Time
November 14 @ 4:00 PM Eastern Time
December 12 @ 4:00 PM Eastern Time

- 9. Upon invitation, Briggs read: *“For the Good of the Order, the AAGS Board gives the President and Treasurer the authority to carry out the day to day activities of the AAGS until the next Board Meeting.”*
- 10. AAGS President Meyer adjourned the meeting at 17:20 hrs. EDT.

Respectfully submitted,

Elisabeth Rollins

Acting Recorder

File: Documents\AAGS\AAGS Board Minutes March 14, 2019 final.docx

Date: March 29, 2018

Compiler: Elisabeth Rollins