

SWIG Steering Committee meeting notes

11/16/07

Present: Angie Hopf, Jay Young, Jacob Mundt, Dan Narsavage, Eric Wing, Charlla Adams, Jimae Haynes

Absent: Becky Rose, Todd Buchanan

Agenda:

- Fall meeting wrap-up
- General Topics
 - Attendance List Distribution
 - SWIG Website
 - SWIG Finances
- Next Meeting
 - Volunteers
 - Schedule
- Other Business

FALL SWIG MEETING WRAP UP

- In general, everyone felt that the Oct SWIG/IGUM went very well. Overall, comments and feedback were very positive. The organizers thought the organizing was pretty easy, and the attendees seemed happy. Some comments made were:
 - Most folks liked the facility but some found the projection screen at the front hard to see from the back, and likewise the sound at the back was hard to hear. Something to consider in the future is the placement of screens and speakers.
 - Making arrangements for the facility was complicated by the requirement to run everything through Nick (because the facility was Army National Guard); in essence Nick became a “bottleneck” and this slowed things down. It wasn’t a huge problem however, and for the future, it is just important to note that organizers who work with Nick on locating the SWIG at the National Guard facilities need to be aware of 1) all arrangements must go through Nick and 2) that takes time.
 - A suggestion was made to start planning the Oct SWIG/IGUM about 6 months in advance, rather than the usual 3 or 4 months.
 - It was noted that the scheduling for the Oct SWIG/IGUM meeting (scheduled for late Oct or early Nov) conflicts with GIS Day (Nov 14th). The steering committee agreed to move the fall meeting up to late Sept or early October, pending agreement from the IGUM organizers.
 - Dan reported that the registration website was not widely used.
 - The SWIG organizers voiced some concern that the IGUM portion of the Oct meeting may not have been as strongly planned/represented as in the past. The rumor was that Nick had some personal/family stuff come up and that may have pulled him off the planning for this meeting.
 - This elicited some discussion about the relationship between the SWIG and IGUM meetings. Are they overlapping in purpose and attendees? Are both still relevant? Do we need to do the meetings together, or would it be better to space them apart? It seemed like there was some general consensus that since the IGUM “landscape” has changed radically in the past year (with Nathan moving

to Ada County, Nick taking over the IGC, and the new Idaho State GIO coming onboard soon), it probably would be a good idea to confer with Nick and Gail (the GIO) to get their thoughts about the future of the joint SWIG/IGUM meetings. I think Jake was going to take the lead on this.

- The call for papers/presenters worked very well.
- The breakout sessions were both easy to organize and well received; however attendees requested that the agenda include a description of the content to be covered in the breakout sessions. Attendees were more interested in the subject to be discussed than they were in being regionalized.
- The vendor area was good, both from the vendors' and the attendees' perspectives.
- Attendance was estimated at about 65 people the first day and 45 people the second day.
- The lunches were good, but as usual were difficult to organize well. A suggestion was made to try using tickets to identify who had or had not purchased lunch. Tickets would be given to the attendee when they paid for the lunch at registration, and tickets would be collected from the ticket-holders when the lunch was picked up.
- A brief survey was handed out to attendees at the end of the second day. Some of the findings from survey are captured in other places in these notes; however, a couple of comments specific to the survey were:
 - There were about 25 surveys returned
 - Might have gotten a more representative sample if the survey had been distributed on the first day
 - Only folks who attended the end of the last day were sampled. People who did not attend the meeting at all, and people who came the first day but not the second, or who left early on the second day were not sampled.
 - The new mixed two day format was well received according to all reports, but we might gain some insight from a web-based survey that could include comments from a wider range compared to the just the folks who attended the last day of the Oct meeting. If we wanted to get an idea of how the mixed two day SWIG/IGUM format was viewed from people other than the people who attended the end of the last day, we could try a web survey publicized via the geotech forum – to get as broad of a sample as possible.
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GENERAL TOPICS

- Jake was approached by a couple of people who wanted to use or get the SWIG attendance list. We discussed distribution of the list and re-affirmed that the list will not be given out to anyone. Jake mentioned that the reason these folks wanted the list was to follow up with someone they'd met at the meeting, but they did not have contact information to do so. Jake will try to contact the various people and see if he can put them in contact with each other in a way that protects everyone's privacy.
- Everyone on the steering committee agreed that a SWIG website is needed. Dan, Jimae, and Jay volunteered to work on this task.
- SWIG finances:
 - SWIG currently has \$86 dollars that has been collected over the years. Jimae handed the cash off to Jake. The steering committee re-affirmed that the SWIG steering committee chair should hold the SWIG money.

- The group discussed whether the SWIG should charge some kind of registration fee – such as charging attendees a \$1 at the door. The general consensus was to not charge any kind of fee, but rather go with donations.
- Again we discussed the cost of snacks and drinks, and how to help organizers not have to pay for those costs out-of-pocket. It was mentioned that some people may not be volunteering to organize because they don't want to, or can't afford to, put up their own personal cash for snacks.
- Jake suggested that SWIG use some of the funds to help reimburse meeting organizers for any outlay of cash (snacks, drinks, lunches) that was not covered by the cash received from the meetings. The suggestion was to cover an individual's out-of-pocket expenses, up to 25% of SWIG savings, for which the individual had receipts. The steering committee voted to approve this suggestion. Note: Jake will add a note in the organizers guide to remind organizers to put out a donation jar with the snacks.
- A suggestion was made to develop a “sponsor program” – develop a list of organizations or individuals who would donate funds to cover the cost of snacks for the SWIG meetings. In return, the sponsors would get a mention at the meeting, have their name and logo included in the meeting agenda/notifications, and be able to place flyers, cards, handouts, and /or a poster sized “advertisement” board in the snack area at the meetings. Angie offered to take the lead on this task.
 - That lead the group into a discussion about whether this should be a new steering committee “role.” And if so, does that decision make Angie a steering committee member? And how does the steering committee add new members? Can we simply make the decision ourselves or do we need to go to the SWIG at large. After a bit of discussion we voted to approve the concept that the steering committee can add and subtract members as needed to perform the core mission of the group (to continue and provide continuity, over time, for the SWIG meetings); we then voted to add the “sponsor program” role to the list of roles for the committee; we then voted to add Angie to the steering committee and to have her take the lead on the sponsor program role.
 - The group also briefly discussed the “Outreach Coordinator” role – do these two roles overlap and should they be one? We decided to make the sponsor role separate from the outreach coordinator role, and we tabled the discussion concerning the outreach coordinator role. Jake will contact Todd and find out if Todd is still interested in serving on the steering committee and being the lead on the outreach coordinator position.
- The group discussed SWIG finances: there have never been any decisions about what to do with any excess dollars; SWIG does not want to get into the cash-flow business (taxes, financial reports, banking accounts, etc).
- The fall SWIG went a bit into the hole financially – in part this was because a donation jar, for the snacks, etc, was not set out until the second day; and in part because the organizers paid for lunches for the presenters. Note: several of the vendors stepped up to help pay for the presenters lunches; however it turned out that there were significantly more presenter lunches needed than had been estimated.
- The URISA workshop went over well, and many ideas about how to acquire and provide training in the future were generated. Jimae expressed that organizing this training was very frustrating, and suggested that a group of people take on a “training coordinator” role within the steering committee. It was suggested that the training coordinators develop a pool of potential trainers and courses that fit the fall SWIG needs – so that future organizers simply selected a course and contact an instructor

based on the pool. Additionally, it was suggested to begin organizing the training 6 months in advance rather than the usual 3-4 months. Jimae was tasked with writing up a “how-to” guide of what she’d learned about organizing training for the SWIG. Training will be a topic for a future steering committee meeting.

- Jake distributed the SWIG Delegation Duties document (listed the official roles within the steering committee and the duties associated with each role) for review. Jake will update the document from the feedback provided at this meeting and add the sponsor coordinator to the list.

NEXT MEETING

- The next SWIG meeting will be held the first Tuesday of Feb – Feb 5th, 2008.
- A suggestion was made to have at least one steering committee member help organize each SWIG meeting.
- The organizers of the Oct meeting did not collect a list of volunteers, so we will go back to the list of potential volunteers collected at the June SWIG meeting and see if we can pull from those folks for the Feb meeting.
- Eric Wing offered to help organize the Feb SWIG meeting.
- Charlla commented that she could “package” the SWIG database for use at registration so that people can register directly into the SWIG database.
- Jimae reminded everyone that getting volunteers for the next SWIG meeting is a big part of the organizer’s job; and also the sign-up sheet, however it is done, needs to always have ways for folks to sign up as volunteers for presenting and/or organizing future meetings.