

COSMOS

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

May 8, 2013

1:00–5:00 PM via Teleconference

BOD Participants:

W.D. Iwan
W.U. Savage
John Parrish
Donald Wells
Jamison Steidl
Robert Nigbor
Alan Yong

Other Participants:

Robert E. Bachman (Director of Engineering Applications)
Claire Johnson (Office Manager)
Anthony Shakal (Guest) (joined teleconference @ 2:15 PM)

Not Present:

C.B. Crouse
D. Dreger
D. Levis
D. Yule

Call to Order and Roll Call

1:09 PM

Agenda Review and Approval of 21 November 2012 Minutes

Review was postponed as Iwan had not received copy of Minutes.

Review of Action: On 5/8/2013, Bachman contacted T. Brown, a structural engineer at the USBOR regarding USBOR membership as core member of COSMOS and new representative for BOD.

Presidents Opening Remarks (Iwan)

Iwan reviewed the effect that the government sequestration has had on COSMOS' current funding levels, noting that USGS has reduced funding for this year to \$5000 compared to their previous support of \$20,000/year; this was in response to the packet that the Board sent to the USGS in April of this year with a request for funding for 2013. He noted that both the USBOR and USACE are delinquent on the 2012 dues, and the expectation is that they will be unable to fund COSMOS for 2013.

Status of USGS Funding for 2012 and 2013 (Savage/Johnson)

Savage referred to the email from B. Leith of the USGS detailing reduced funding for this year and suggested that COSMOS be vigilant in ensuring that COSMOS activities are recognized as relevant and valuable to the USGS. Given that our activities are closely tied to USGS, as is our funding, more diverse communications between COSMOS and USGS are needed. Chris Stephens at Menlo Park could be an effective liaison with Washington.

Parrish suggested that we produce an Annual Report of our products and services, and then send this report to the USGS as documentation of how we have spent their funding. Steidl stressed the importance of annual reporting. Yong noted that an Annual Report on the State of the VDC database published in SRL would be a way of communicating to the community new records and recent innovations. Savage liked the idea of using SRL, especially since they are currently in the process of becoming a more timely and responsive journal. Publishing in SRL would also reach a more diverse audience. Yong pointed out that such a report could be submitted to SRL as a Short Note. Wells noted that the EERI newsletter could be used to publicize this publication, and Savage believes that the CESMD Working Group could also help to facilitate this publication. The SSA is looking to provide quick publication without copyright issues for open access. Electronic release in advance of publication is being developed.

Action Item: Steidl/Savage to work with C. Stephens and H. Haddadi to facilitate frequent updates/publications to content in the VDC/CESMD.

Status of USBOR funding for 2012 and 2013 (Levish/Johnson)

There has not been a response to Johnson's repeated inquiries nor Iwan's phone calls. It is hoped that Bachman's outreach will reestablish communication.

Status of USACOE funding for 2012 and 2013 (Yule/Johnson)

There has not been a response to Johnson's repeated inquiries nor Iwan's phone calls. Johnson noted that USACOE has always been a dues paying member since the inception of COSMOS and that this is the first year since 1999 that they have not paid their dues.

Action Items: Wells to reestablish contact with D. Yule or others at USACE.

Treasurers Report (Wells)

COSMOS had a loss of \$12,000 for 2012, and it is anticipated that we will have a loss of \$17,000 for 2013. The 2012 Technical Session generated a healthy income this year and potentially could generate revenue via higher fees. Wells stated his concerns regarding Core membership, especially given that the Core Member USGS seeing reserves as a reason to not fund COSMOS. Individual membership has increased slightly. Current assets are available to support new initiatives in the short term, but core funding needs to be stabilized. Expenses can be reduced through efforts like holding the spring board meeting via teleconference. The Financial Review has been completed, and the Balance Sheet shows reserves. It is anticipated that the \$20,000 still owed by the USGS for 2012 will be forthcoming once issues with the online procurement process are ironed out. Bachman suggested that the Board review the comparison budgets sent out by Johnson that provides a clear picture for future income and spending. With the additional of \$20,000 from the USGS and another pending \$5300 from CSG, COSMOS will have \$186,000 moving forward into 2013.

Per the suggestion of the Finance Committee, Johnson asked Dave Bott, the accountant, if COSMOS should revert to a cash basis accounting system as opposed to the accrual-based system COSMOS is currently using. Bott believed that COSMOS should continue with the current system, but be very conservative in terms of anticipating accruals. Wells agreed with that suggestion, believing that this will give a clearer picture of our financial position. He proposed that COSMOS continue the current system but operate it on a very conservative basis. Iwan suggested that this should be put before the Board for a vote.

Bachman moved to propose this method to the BOD, which is basically to continue as previously but with a more conservative approach. Savage seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Nigbor would prefer a cash-basis accounting system but does not object. There were no objections to the motion, and the motion passed at 2:01 PM.

Changes to the proposed 2013 Budget were suggested:

(1) increase the Technical Session dues;

(2) increase teleconference costs and reduce BOD meeting costs;

(3) cut BOD expenses for the fall dinner meeting as this is a significant cost—roughly, \$900. Johnson was tasked with researching ways to cut costs, including not reserving a banquet room for COSMOS' private use and minimizing general costs. Yong suggested looking at government per diem rates.

Approval of budget was postponed until the other committee chairs could present reports and request budgets for 2013.

BOD Nominees for 2013 Elections (Iwan)

The current BOD members whose terms are ending are Wells (who has served for three years) and Dreger (who has served for five years). Iwan asked if we need to revise the Bylaws to allow for term limits. Ballots need to be mailed at the end September/beginning of October in time for the BOD meeting November.

Proposal: Savage and Steidl to serve as the nominating committee, with Bachman as ex-officio member. The proposal was moved by Iwan, which was seconded by Savage. There were no objections, and the proposal was approved.

Director of Engineering Applications' Report (Bachman)

Last year's Technical Session was a success. Attendance was around 85/90. Income from this year had increased from previous years for two reasons: (1) the hotel refunded \$1900 because of problems with the room; and (2) there were no travel expenses. The 2013 Technical Session will be held at the same hotel, and it is anticipated that expenses will be roughly \$8500 (per Johnson). A contract has been signed with the hotel. The 2013 Board Meeting will take place on Thursday, 11/21, and the Technical Session will take place on Friday, 11/22. Documentation is now part of the 2013 budget.

Regarding the response from the USGS in our request for funding sent to the USGS in April of this year: Johnson noted that we did not receive feedback from the USGS on what they thought of the proposed future activities. Iwan observed that it was clear from the email from B. Leith that the USGS expects COSMOS to spend down its financial reserves. Bachman reviewed the list of COSMOS activities proposed in the report submitted to the USGS for 2013–2015.

Report of VP on Bolt Medal (Savage)

Mustafa Erdik was this year's Bolt Medalist. He received his medal at the EERI Annual Meeting in February 2013. Nominations for next year will be requested shortly.

Special Session at the 10th National Conference on Earthquake Engineering (Steidl)

In conjunction with EERI, a special session on strong-motion has been proposed. Some international participants have already responded positively, including India and China. Yong noted that he has proposed a special session on the "Geophysical Characterization of Strong Motion Stations," and suggested that they broaden their audience by advertising to each other's participants.

Steidl has sent Polat Gulkan, President of IAEE, a draft charge with the idea of forming a Working Group in conjunction with IAEE. Gulkan responded positively. The next step is to formalize that draft and sent it to Polat to formalize our activities.

Action Item: Steidl to prepare a draft charge formalizing international working committee between COSMOS and IAEE. Draft needs to be circulated among Board Members and then sent to P. Gulkan for his review.

Status of the CESMD/VDC (Parrish)

Parrish reported that most of the Japan data has now been added. It was decided to use the NEIC magnitudes for event magnitudes. The CESMD Working Group is meeting regularly, with board member Savage and Chris

Stephens of the USGS in attendance. Stephens is currently working with former board member John Anderson to bring in data from Reno. The Working Group determines the priority in loading data to the VDC.

Action Item: Savage and Shakal to bring up the issue of loading international data at the next CESMD Working Group.

Report of Instructional DVD (SEED) Committee (Dreger)

Board agrees that the name of this committee needs to be changed. Dreger unable to attend due to conflicts on campus. Steidl noted that the real benefit of the SEED proposal would be to have relevant/significant data from IRIS DMC that is not currently in the VDC, converted to COSMOS V0 format and loaded into the VDC.

Action Item: Steidl to follow up on the SEED proposal with Dreger.

VDC Tools Report (Bachman for C.B. Crouse)

The proposal to adapt PEER's DGML spectral matching search tool to the COSMOS VDC is acceptable as long as PEER is acknowledged as the developer and funding from CGS/Caltrans is acknowledged. Links from the web-based tool to the CESMD/VDC would need to be developed. Staff from AMEC is potentially available for this project; however, it is anticipated that it will cost \$50,000, plus effort from CGS/USGS staff to install the links. Outreach to USGS/CGS has not yet occurred to see if staff is available to establish links once the tool has been adapted to the VDC. Funding might be possible by soliciting firms for sponsorship of the site.

Report of the Strong-Motion Standards Committee (Shakal)

Site descriptions guidelines v2.7 was sent out, with some iterations since the previous board meeting. This new version meets the needs the CISON/ANSS partners, but development is still needed for metadata. Station XML is a part of this, as a way to share data from various networks metadata databases in a standard format.

Action Item: Johnson to post new version to COSMOS website.

Proposal to Induce COSMOS Involvement in Site Conditions Characterization (Yong)

Yong is obligated to provide a draft on best practices/guidelines for characterizing site conditions, with a June/July anticipated publication date for the Open File Report. About three years ago, he was funded by the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) to characterize site conditions at a little less than 200 (191) SM station sites in California and CEUS. The majority of these sites are stations from the Southern California Seismic Network, as well as two-dozen strong-motion sites run by CGS. The project has two objectives: (1) acquire waveform data to estimate shear-wave velocity profiles and V_{s30} ; and (2) to establish a pilot project for the ANSS to guide similar efforts in the future. Because invasive techniques were both cost and environmentally prohibitive, this project applied mostly surface-wave techniques. However, the major drawback for non-invasive methods is that these techniques determine seismic properties indirectly (by inversion of surface-wave phase velocity to estimate body-wave velocity), and hence tend to introduce more uncertainty into the estimated values than invasive approaches. Nevertheless, by comparing results from multiple techniques, the inherent uncertainties can be significantly reduced and, our results corroborate this hypothesis. In the coming months, i.e., June or July, the OFR and raw data are expected to be available online.

On the basis of this ARRA project, Yong participated in an international workshop convened by Cécile Cornou and Pierre-Yves Bard to develop recommendations for best-practices/guidelines when characterizing site conditions at strong motion station sites. As part of this agenda, the need for a standardized geotechnical database was discussed. Yong proposed COSMOS' participation in two ways: (1) the International Committee provide feedback on the guidelines/best practices document; and (2) endorse PEER or SCEC to use the partial/full framework of the GDVC as the basis for the development of a centralized standard geotechnical repository. Additionally, Yong proposes that COSMOS fund/co-fund (part/full-time basis) an undergraduate or graduate student, with oversight by a COSMOS BOD member or another stake-holder to maintain the repository. Ellen Yu of the SCEDC is interested

and will explore support through SCEC. Yong will initiate discussions with Jon Stewart of UCLA (PEER) and Loren Turner (Caltrans) about Caltrans and DIGGS in the coming weeks.

Action Item: Yong to present budget for student maintenance of database.

New COSMOS Initiatives (Steidl/Nigbor)

Nigbor believes that reaching out to nuclear power plant (NPP) operators for a potential workshop is still viable. Currently, San Onofre NPP is increasing strong-motion instrumentation, as is Palo Verde in Arizona. An ANSS regional networks workshop on structural monitoring is on back burner for now, but it still has potential. Nigbor believes that there could be much interest in an NSF/USGS joint workshop to develop best practices and standardization methodologies for strong-motion site characterization. This workshop would also have international appeal.

Action Item: Nigbor/Yong to produce White Paper as the basis of a proposal.

International Committee Activities and 2013 Budget Needs (Steidl)

Funding for a programmer to set up the Wiki Pages is currently committed in the 2013 Budget. No funding needed for other international activities.

Other Business

Regarding Advocacy (Savage): In a telephone conversation with B. Leith of the USGS, Savage believes that COSMOS should focus on USGS efforts in the CESMD and how valuable it is on both the federal and state level. We should investigate building relationships with individuals in Congress to communicate the value of programs within the USGS, like CESMD. Iwan asked if we needed a budget to send a representative to Congress to begin fostering such relationships. Savage believes that such efforts with representatives in our own states might be more effective, especially in times of fiscal belt-tightening. Johnson noted that as a 501C3, there are limitations on COSMOS in terms of lobbying. Iwan and Steidl called for guidelines on what we can and cannot do.

Action Item: Savage to write up a proposal for a COSMOS advocacy plan, listing guidelines so that COSMOS does not violate limitations of our 501C3 non-profit status.

Modification of Bylaws for Overhead Rate (Steidl): Steidl suggested modifying the Bylaws in regards to overhead rates.

Action Item: Johnson to review original Charter for wording regarding overhead fees on funding from other organizations. Add this to the bylaws, and distribute for review.

Adoption of Proposed Budget

The proposed changes to the 2013 budget are as follows: under expenses for board meetings, \$1000 has been designated for conference calls and general expenses for board meetings have been reduced to \$4500.

At 4:50 PM Nigbor motioned to adopt the 2013 budget with above changes, which was seconded by Savage. There were no objections and the motion was approved.

Move to adjourn at 4:55 PM

Meeting was adjourned.