

COSMOS
Consortium of Organizations for Strong-Motion Observation Systems

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING

5 November 2009
3:00 PM – 7:30 PM

Clarion Hotel
Millbrae, California

Present

Members of the Board

N. Abrahamson
D. Dreger
W. D. Iwan
R. L. Nigbor
J. Parrish
M. Power
W. U. Savage
D. Yule

Members Absent

J. Wright

Director of Engineering Applications

R. E. Bachman

Guests

C. B. Crouse
James F. Davis
A. F. Shakal

Office Manager

C. M. Johnson

The meeting was called to order at 3:03 p.m. by W. D. Iwan (WDI)

(1) Review of the Minutes for the May 26, 2009, Board of Directors' Meeting

The Minutes were reviewed by the Board.

Motion: W. U. Savage (WUS) moved to accept the Minutes; the motion was seconded by multiple people and approved unanimously.

Action Item: The action items listed in the Minutes for the May 26, 2009, Board of Directors' (BOD) Meeting were to be considered during the Agenda of the current meeting. The Minutes were accepted at 3:12 p.m.

(2) Election results. 47 ballots, 24 returned. Majority achieved.

WDI was re-elected as a director for a three-year term. R. L. Nigbor (RLN) was elected to a three-year term on the Board of Directors.

(3) Board of Directors Officers Election:

WDI was elected as president for a three-year term. Maury S. Power (MSP) announced his retirement as Treasurer, effective at the Fall 2010 Board Meeting.

Discussion: The type of candidate to replace MSP might be an informal Treasurer-Elect from the COSMOS membership. MSP pointed out that it would be useful to have someone onboard to review the books with him in January. Pluses in a candidate include someone who lives in the Bay Area so that they can easily access the COSMOS office in Richmond.

Motion: N. Abrahamson (NA) moved to task the Executive Committee to search for a replacement for the Treasurer position; seconded by RLN. Motion passed

Action Item: Executive Committee to search for replacement for the Treasurer position.

(4) President's Report: W. D. Iwan

WDI noted the excellent turnout for the BOD meeting. COSMOS is currently healthy and financially secure. He would like to discuss the NEHRP reauthorization and the potential role for COSMOS, and suggested that this be discussed at end of BOD meeting; he asked that it be added as an Agenda item.

The Annual Business Meeting Agenda (scheduled for the next day during the lunch break during the Technical Session; 12:30-1:30 p.m.) was the same as in previous years. Pre-registration for the Technical Session is down by about fifteen from last year, but he noted that multiple seminars dealing with the same topic have occurred or are occurring the previous and following weeks, respectively.

(5) Director of Engineering Applications' Report: R. E. Bachman

2009 Technical Session

This Technical Session will be critically important. R. E. Bachman (REB) reported that changes in the code are imminent. One change is the use of maximum ground motion instead of the geometric mean. These changes are controversial. The primary developers of these changes are scheduled to speak to discuss the rationale for the changes, and primary users and consultants will also be present to provide feedback and discuss current practice. In addition, there will be discussions on implementing the new procedures. A COSMOS report (to be compiled by J. Watson-Lamprey) will summarize the discussions and suggestions for approaches, and there will be a document available for reference. This report will need to be approved by the Board before it is published. One potential follow-up to this Technical Session would be to present and disseminate the COSMOS report to the engineering community at large at the future EERI annual meeting and/or Toronto conference.

Action Item: REB to follow up after the Technical Session with EERI regarding a forum for presenting the report at upcoming conferences.

Action Item: C. M. Johnson (CMJ) to look into getting an audio recording of the Technical Session presentations and discussions to be used in preparing the report.

Update on COSMOS Committee Chairs:

International Committee: Jamie Steidl (JS)

Standards Committee: A. F. Shakal (AFS)

Educational Module Committee: D. Dreger (DD)

VDC Tools Committee: C. B. Crouse (CBC)

Status of Proposal to the IBC

A proposal was submitted to add to the IBC Appendix a section (L.101) on earthquake recording instrumentation (see document in BOD Package). REB attended the code hearings in Baltimore on October 26, 2009. The IBC Structural Committee voted 12-2 to approve the code change. Changes made during the committee meeting included annual maintenance of the instrumentation. This document is now subject to final action hearings for approval in Dallas on May 22-23, 2010. This will not be published until 2012 and adopted in 2013 or 2014. REB noted that standards should be developed to assist building officials in approving or not approving installations. Preparing such standards could be a potential future COSMOS project.

New PEER Project 2L04 for 2010

This is the final phase of the geotechnical virtual database project using the DIGGS format for geotechnical site characterization data, as well as other well borehole data. The project's technical leader has been changed from Carl Stepp to Cliff Roblee, with administrative assistance from REB. A discussion ensued of the role of COSMOS in the GVDC and any long-term support. C. Stepp sent suggestions for a long-term business model for support. There is potential for future support through the NRC (see BOD package, email from C. Stepp). The Nuclear Regulatory

Commission may be a potential large data provider in the coming years. RLN notes that the 2L04 contract has a non-COMSOS P.I.

Motion: WDI suggested forming a task group to review the current proposal and make a recommendation back to the Board about how to move forward with the GVDC in the future. RLB so moved; WUS seconded and the motion passed.

Action Item: Form a task group to review the current proposal and make a recommendation back to the Board about how to move forward with the GVDC in the future.

(6) Treasurer's Report: M. Power

2009 Budget Report

MSP drew attention to the attachments following the Treasurer's Narrative: Attachment #1 consisted of the 2009 budget, including minor changes made during the May BOD meeting; Attachment #2 consisted of the P&L Statement through 10/22/09; and Attachment #3 consisted of the Balance Sheet (because many of the 2009 costs had not yet hit the books, MSP suggested that Attachments #2 and #3 be studied in conjunction with the Treasurer's Narrative). MSP confirmed that the Technical Session Report can be charged to the California Geological Survey contract.

Both individual and organizational membership is basically static. There was a discussion about the potential to charge different member and non-member rates for attending the COSMOS Technical session as a strategy to bring in new members. NA suggested a lifetime membership rate.

Items of Interest:

- It was hoped that the Technical Session would be close to break even, although this year with the economy and concern over attendance, it is not certain.
- The Bolt medal was an unbudgeted expense at ~\$1,300. Design, creation, and casting of the medal were covered by this year's expense, so costs in future years will be much less expensive.
- Pre-payment to the UCB account for CMJ's salary will be transferred to next year's books.
- The Record-Processing Proceedings is expected to be published this year, and the associated expense incurred this year. Previous USGS 03WRAG0046 project income to COSMOS covered the cost.
- Though not reflected in the attachments or the P&L, MSP projected that COSMOS should break even at the end of the year, translating to no change in the net financial position from the previous year with a net worth of ~\$210,000.

2010 Proposed Budget Review

Attachment #6 consisted of the Preliminary Budget for 2010. Included was the new 2L04 budget for ~\$43.67K with 10% overhead to COSMOS. Most other income and expenses remained the same. Committee expenses were the most uncertain estimates as they are dependent on activity levels. Some consideration for investment strategy is necessary as the CD terms in February 2010. The Finance Committee meeting will solicit recommendations from the accountant, D. Bott, at the Annual Review Meeting. MSP acknowledged CMJ's contribution in maintaining the financial books.

Motion: REB moved to approve the 2010 Preliminary Budget. MSP suggested that this should wait until committee chairs have reported, as these budgets may change. REB agreed.

REB proposed paying an honorarium to Technical Session presenters (in addition to travel expenses). This would mean increasing the budget, and potentially increasing the cost to participants to cover the expense to make it budget neutral. NA suggested continuing education units would help to justify increasing costs to the participants.

Meeting broke at 5:20 p.m.

Meeting resumed at 5:35 p.m.

(7) Report of the Vice President: W. U. Savage

The Bruce A. Bolt Medal has been designed and cast, and is ready for presentation at the Annual Business Meeting. The process of selecting the next awardee was underway. A mailing went out requesting nomination packages with responses due back October 30th. The previous year's remaining nominees were re-nominated, and two new nominations were submitted. WUS and AFS represent COSMOS on the Bolt Medal Joint Nomination Panel along with two representatives each from SSA and EERI.

Discussion: WUS brought up the issue of whether there should be a formal process regarding how many years a person can be nominated, or, generally, the carrying forward of nominations or re-nominations. J. F. Davis (JFD) suggested that given it is a new award, he believes it's not something COSMOS needs to worry about in the near future. The Board generally concurred with this view. Even though names are carried forward, the person nominating is asked to resubmit the nomination. The Board also generally concurred with the established practice to not make public the names of the individual representatives from the organizations involved in making the selection. The memberships of the honors/awards committees in SSA and EERI are public, but not the names of individuals deciding on the particular awards. JFD congratulated WUS on getting the medal established and especially working with and encouraging EERI and SSA to make it a multi-organizational award. WUS recognized JFD's consistent support and encouragement.

(8) Update on COSMOS Website: Claire M. Johnson

The BOD packets contained a copy of information on the new site for review and feedback from the Board. The contract with CUREE has been extended to complete the website upgrade. Darryl Wong (the person at CUREE doing the website) should check on the domain registration for COSMOS-related domains.

Action Item: Explore setting up a Paypal account and linking it to the COSMOS bank account.

(9) Update on Technical Session Summary: N. Abrahamson

The Summary, put together by J. Watson-Lamprey, reports on the past five years of Technical Sessions and ties them together. This will be issued a COSMOS report number and will be available on the new website.

Discussion: CBC suggested putting audio presentations with slides of future Technical Session for viewing at a later date in a members-only section or pay per view. JFD suggested that CMJ arrange for audio recording of tomorrow's session.

(10) Status of the CESMD: J. Parrish

J. Parrish (JP) reported that this has been active for eighteen months. Recently added items include: photos of damage for some new records; and new international data in the M5.8–M8.4 range. Future upgrades include ground-motion ranges for different national and international data to be included, and automated incorporation of data into the strong-motion center.

CESMD Advisory Committee Report: W. Savage and A. F. Shakal

There is a good balance of active people helping make policy decisions (e.g., ground motions ranges to be included in the data center).

Formation of the CESMD Working Group: J. Parrish

Discussion: The question was raised about the status of this advisory body to the CESMD. John Parrish pointed out that the “ball was in COSMOS’s court” to develop a plan for the committee. Further discussion in the Board meeting arose with respect to the VDC Tools Committee and in separate discussions. These remarks are summarized in the VDC Tools Committee discussion during Committee Updates.

NA raised a question about the minimum levels of shaking that are included in selecting data for the data center, which is important if you do both the magnitude and ground motion level as selection criteria. NA pointed out that there is a critical need for small-earthquake motions to sort out regional differences in attenuation. He agreed to provide his suggested guidance to the CESMD Management Group for their consideration.

Report on the Transition of the VDC to CESMD: J. Steidl

This summer, JS received a report from the vendor, ISTI, with a strategy for automating data ingestion to a new database. The Working Group is now very active again, meeting on a monthly or more frequent basis to develop a path forward. Preliminary evaluation suggests using

an XML data format, using the Virtual Tagged Format (VTF) published in the USGS Open File Report, which includes the COSMOS V0 format as a subset.

(11) Committee Updates

(A) International Committee Report: J. Steidl

JS will be attending a meeting with NERIS in Turkey next week to develop an MOU based on the results of this meeting with Euro-Med community to improve data dissemination.

Discussion: Should COSMOS add an international member to the BOD and various committees? Committee meetings are primarily electronic, so there is not much cost associated with this. WUS suggested starting with the committee membership expansion to the international community first, and then later perhaps selection of an international BOD member. The development of an international workshop is a potential near-term culmination of the International Committee's efforts.

(B) VDC Tool Committee: C. B. Crouse

The tool development is on hold until the VDC transition takes place, as the VDC is no longer being updated.

Discussion: Do the tools come from COSMOS or from the Center for Engineering Strong Motion Data (CESMD)? Are the Working Group and VDC Tool Committee the same thing, or two different committees? The Working Group should provide feedback to both the CESMD and the COSMOS organization. The Working Group is the natural fulcrum for the data user community to provide feedback to both the CESMD and to COSMOS on what improvements are needed to the data center and what tools should be developed to enhance use of the strong-motion data center. What is the role of the Tools Committee? CBC recommended new user tools that have hooks into the data center database. Once the VDC has transitioned, there was a suggestion for a data center user feedback and tool recommendation committee.

Further Discussion: The plan has been to form a COSMOS-based advisory body that would provide input to the Center Management Group for the CESMD. As discussed for several years, the idea was for the COSMOS advisory body to be chaired by an individual who would also serve on the CESMD Advisory Committee. The COSMOS group's input to the CESMD Advisory Committee would be welcomed in all areas, but would be perhaps most needed in two areas: international data management (including encouraging international data and metadata access and establishing widely accepted standards for data and metadata) and encouraging the prioritized development of engineering data analysis tools that could be developed to have direct access to CESMD data and metadata (including international data). This advisory body is thus closely related to the International Committee and the VDC Tool Committee. CBC has indicated his willingness to serve as the head of the COSMOS advisory body, with the members to possibly be the same as the members of the VDC Tool Committee. The head of the COSMOS advisory body would be a seventh member of the CESMD Advisory Committee. There has been some confusing discussion about the seventh person being a "voting" or "ex

officio” member; since the CESMD Advisory Committee is not a formal Federal advisory committee, there is no voting structure and the members offer their opinions and advice on an informal basis. The COSMOS advisory body chairman would have an equal voice with the other six CESMD Advisory Committee members.

In a separate discussion, CBC clarified that he understood that any tools developed to interact directly with the CESMD data would not be owned or used for business purposes by COSMOS. They could be developed by PEER members or others, and do not have to be private but should be in the public domain.

(C) Report of the Instructional DVD Committee: D. Dreger

No activity so far in 2009, but there is potential for new instructional development with recording of the Technical Session.

(D) Report of the Standards Committee: A. F. Shakal

AFS provided the BOD with minutes from a teleconference on October 28, 2009, which addressed the current status and needs for COSMOS standards. These included: reference site criteria review; processing guidelines, including processing real-time vs. triggered; building instrumentation guidelines review; guidelines for bridges and dams review; formats for engineering strong-motion data (ASCII and XML); minimum characteristics for accelerograph characteristics, site conditions characterization and documentation; determination of site conditions; and data qualifications (both on site conditions and on the strong-motion data itself).

Discussion: International input would be necessary to get a broad consensus on moving forward with some of these standards. What to move forward with first? How to translate international site characterization information into a consistent set of parameters to make the data useful? Site period may be all that is available. What are the five or six parameters most needed for site characterization? Money is needed to develop some of the standards issues. Hosting a workshop or meeting on this would provide critical input. Standards issues are projects and thus are potential items for COSMOS funding opportunities through proposals to various funding agencies.

Action Item: Committee chairs need to provide updated charges to the committees’ activity and budget plans for 2010. This should be provided by the end of January.

Motion: REB moved to approve the 2010 preliminary budget as presented; second by JP. All were in favor and it passed at 7:50 p.m.

(12) Discussion of Membership

Membership discussion was postponed until the Spring BOD meeting.

(13) NEHRP Authorization

Discussion: Should COSMOS join the NEHRP coalition? Ensuing discussion noted that the function and obligations of the coalition membership need to be explored further and reported back to the COSMOS BOD.

Action Item: WDI will research this and report back to the Spring BOD Meeting.

RLN suggested COSMOS outreach to the seismological community to let them know that COSMOS is a resource for them.

Action Item: Agenda item for next BOD meeting should be COSMOS outreach to the seismological community.

Meeting adjourned 8:55 p.m.