

## NATIONAL SPACE GRANT ALLIANCE MEETING – OCTOBER 29, 2005

A meeting of the National Space Grant alliance membership was convened at the Cocoa Beach Hilton on October 29, 2005. Chairman Brent Bowen opened the meeting at 8:15AM. Most of the information presented is contained in “Power Point” slides posted to the Alliance website, so minutes will be confined to general summary and actions taken. Brent notified the members that new identification information was needed to access the closed portion of the website, where information for members-only was posted.

A motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously to accept the minutes of the last meeting, as previously posted.

Majid Jaraiedi gave the Treasurer’s report. He projected ending the current Alliance FY in the black by ~\$25-30k. He is still concerned about a number of non-dues paying consortia. Concern was expressed that some consortia had no access to non-federal funds for paying dues. Majid and Brent offered help in finding ways to fund dues. Majid reported that the audit of the Alliance books for 2001-2004 was satisfactory with only minor comments.

Brent presented his general status report. A number of legal, tax, and business issues have been addressed, with the help of legal counsel Bassel El-Kasaby. The Alliance is now fully compliant with regulations for tax-exempt entities in the District of Columbia. Two prior recommendations have been acted on:

- 1- Tax returns now and in the future will be prepared by the Alliance Treasurer and accounting consultants, rather than by VSA/TIG.
- 2- An insurance bond has been obtained for the Alliance Board members.

A new contract with VSA/TIG is now in draft form and will be reviewed by the Board. Counsel has recommended minor changes to the bylaws which will be taken up at the next Alliance meeting. Note: This serves as official, required notice to the Alliance membership of the intention to make changes to the bylaws.

Brent reported that, with VSA’s help, the FY’06 appropriation for Space Grant was being addressed by targeting key congressional members through the Space Grants in their states. The Alliance and VSA/TIG have requested \$29.55M, and this is the figure in the Senate appropriations bill. The House committee is silent on this and all NASA “plus-ups” and it is hoped they will defer to the Senate’s numbers. The Senate bill does not currently contain language specifying the expected use by NASA of the funding, but does contain the general comment that NASA Education programs “...shall ensure continuation of Space Grant, EPSCoR, and Explorer Schools.” VSA/TIG was asked to research the source of the specific endorsement of Explorer Schools. A new authorization bill for NASA has received attention, but is not likely to go forward this year.

Brent noted that he and VSA/TIG were cautiously optimistic that the \$29.55M figure would hold through conference, and there was a possibility that an extra ~\$1M would be added to compensate for administrative cuts. He also cautioned about the need for more specific language directing NASA’s use of the funds, something VSA/TIG will continue to push for.

A new 5-year funding plan and rationale will be drafted by an *ad hoc* committee of Board and other members. The plan will address recent developments and feedback from congressional staff. Brent noted that one strategy to be evaluated would be to capitalize on the current favorable congressional climate regarding

Space Grant to seek a major increase in appropriation, perhaps to include management of other, current programs of the NASA Education Office.

John Gregory noted that Bill Byrd and others had been key in making contacts leading to the favorable resolution of the FY'05 budget situation. He urged caution in proposals to take on other Education programs, as these could become unfunded mandates.

General discussion followed. A request was made for an identification and inventory of the influential connections harbored by the various Space Grant programs. Brad Weiner suggested that the Alliance think about pushing more aggressively for Space Grant to be the predominant NASA network operating in the states. In response to a question, Brent noted that the key strengths of Space Grant recognized in congress were working directly with students and faculty, and diversity.

The meeting ended with elections for the Council Executive Committee, Foundation Board, and Alliance Board. Jaydeep Mukherjee was the sole nominee to fill an interim post on the Executive Council, and was elected by acclamation. Brent asked if there were nominations from the floor for the Foundation Board. Mary Sandy asked if Brad Weiner could be a candidate for Board appointment *ex officio*. This suggestion was referred to the Foundation Board for consideration. There being no additional nominations, the entire slate of candidates was elected by acclamation. [Brent- I didn't capture the list of nominees, so please insert the names here.] Brent asked for nominees from the floor for the Alliance Board. There being none, written ballots were distributed to Directors of consortia in good standing. The candidates receiving the most votes were elected to the four vacancies: Bill Hiscock, Pat Hynes, Yervant Terzian, and Mary Sandy.

The meeting adjourned at 10:50AM.

Respectfully submitted – David Bartlett, Secretary.

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