

NACIS Board Meeting - January 2026

Date: January 8, 2026 Board Meeting

Time: 7 PM Eastern

Location: Zoom

Executive Office (non-voting)

Susan Peschel, Business Manager

X Martha Bostwick, Associate Business Manager

X Kate Leroux, Director of Operations

X Jenny Marie Johnson, Executive Director

Executive Board (voting)

X Hannah Dormido, Past President (*term expires 10/26*)

X Vicky Johnson-Dahl, President (*term expires 10/26*)

X Nick Lally, Vice President (*term expires 10/26*)

X Jen Mapes, Vice President-Elect (*term expires 10/26*)

X Josh Ryan, Secretary (*term expires 10/27*)

Neil Allen, Treasurer (*term expires 10/26*)

Board of Directors (voting)

X Jessica Breen (*term expires 10/26*)

Silas Hill (*term expires 10/26*)

X Lily Houtman (*term expires 10/26*)

X Mike Foster (*term expires 10/27*)

X Kelsey Taylor (*term expires 10/27*)

Deondre Smiles (*term expires 10/27*)

X Zhaoxu Sui, Student Board Member (*term expires 10/26*)

Alexis Wood, Student Board Member (*term expires 10/27*)

Ex-Officio (non-voting)

X Jim Thatcher, *Cartographic Perspectives* Editor

X Nat Case, *Atlas of Design Series* Editor

Other (non-voting)

X Daniel Huffman

Motions

- Motion to approve the December minutes passed

Welcome and Approval of Minutes (Vicky)

- We'll discuss, amend if needed, and vote to approve the following minutes
 - [December 2025 meeting minutes](#)

Vicky - First thing is the December minutes. I hope everybody reviewed them.

Martha motions to approve the December minutes

Jen seconds

No discussion

9 ayes

1 abstention

Motion passes

NACIS Google Drive (Jenny & Kate)

- [NACIS Google Drive Overview.docx](#)

Kate - *Sharing screen*. With the email address you have on file - look in your shared drives. It has NACIS Google Drive. The Drive is owned by NACIS. You can create things here, and when you roll off, NACIS still keeps it here. We've tried to save everything from Teamwork. If you have things to add, feel free. All board members have read/write access to everything with one exception.

There is a folder for every Committee. Then there are subfolders by year. Easier for organization. You can share the committee folder with people who are not on the board if needed.

Some of the committees have sensitive information. They have folders with a special icon on them (banned symbol). Permissions have to be given directly and specifically. Those are for putting things with personal information. Ethics folder is an example of one of these. Access to that is limited.

There is an Overview document which is linked. This is ready to go and I encourage people to use it.

JMJ - We're trying this in part because the training that was necessary to use Teamwork stopped happening 3-4 years ago. We lost ground there.

We are using Google Drive because people are already familiar with it. If this doesn't work for you, let us know. If we missed something, let us know.

If you have any old documents, please upload them.

If you need access to the sensitive folders, reach out to Kate or myself.

Kate will be resetting the permissions every year after the fall conference and after the committee chairs are set. You don't need to worry about removing yourself when you roll off.

Kate - There are no special permissions for committee chairs. The whole board has that permission

Atlas of Design (Nat)

- [Document from Nat](#)

Nat - The document is a lot to digest. Thank you to Daniel for coming along on this meeting. In response to Neil's email earlier today. I'm not convinced that keeping a hard cover book without something like this makes sense.

Our sales for 2025, with no promotion, and no mailings, was like 30 books per volume which is really not good as a baseline.

We need to do something to get it out there - if we are going to be selling books. This solution/framework covers about $\frac{2}{3}$ of our needs. We are more accessible to bookstores/Amazon/individual buyers who want to use a more modern and regular webstore.. This makes it easier to do course adoption. It's a University press, they do this all the time. It opens up bigger possibilities for sales.

There are some costs in 2026 if we go with this, but not from UVA (University of Virginia Press). We need to ship a bunch of books to their warehouse. And we need to figure out warehousing for the remainder of the stock. For now we can keep it at EastView, \$15/pallet/month. We can fit it on 3 pallets, \$45/month. In the long term it would be good to move to a warehouse that is closer to UVA campus (if we do this).

There would be costs for publicity. That's the other $\frac{1}{3}$ of what we need. We don't have a promotions/publicity outreach component. Publishers that will talk with us don't have that as part of their package.

If this doesn't work, I won't be offended. This is my best attempt to make this work. If this doesn't work, then it doesn't work and we will have to figure out what to do next.

Nick - I have a more general question about the Atlas. Once it gets into vol 8, 9, 10. It seems to be intimidating for newcomers. Do you feel like you have to have all the other ones? Has it run its course in terms of volumes? Or in terms of its promotion and distribution that what we need? That would point to different things that we need. Is it time to think of AOD this edition? Where it's more focused on something where you didn't feel like you had to have the whole set to enter in.

Daniel - I wanted to mention that I've heard this in the past. This way encourages more people to buy the backstock. I do think that the longevity of the series has had a negative impact on advertising. We used to be able to work our contacts. After awhile those people say: "I wrote an article about your book. And I did it again 2 years later. I don't feel like writing a third article in 6 years about the same thing."

Nat - This is one of the reasons why looking at promotions that are not dependent on reviewers is important. The novelty has worn off.

I've thought it might make sense to change from numbered volumes to the year. Getting Vol 2024 isn't quite as intimidating as getting Vol 10.

Mike - One thought with the year idea - would it put pressure to meet the cadence? Vol 1, 2 allows more lee-way for the team.

Nat - Put the year on the spine, but still have vol 7, 8 inside the cover.

Any thoughts about the whole structure of payment? Making a legal agreement with UVA press?

As Neil pointed out, what is this going to cost? Who is going to pay for it?

I don't have the numbers because I didn't want to start budgeting until I knew we were moving in the right direction.

Next month is budgeting right Martha?

Martha - Yes. Neil will be sending stuff out early Feb for committees to put their budgets together.

Lily - This proposal makes sense if we go forward with having more Atlases. Would UVA press be willing to push it down the line 2-3 years?

Martha - What is the benefit of pushing it down the line?

Lily - It seems like the finances are particularly bad this year. A combo of a low money making conference and this would be hard on the budget. Maybe a successful conference next year or in two years, there might be more of a budget to do something like this.

Nat - What are the charges in 2025? They are basically shipping. They already know we aren't committed to doing an edition this year.

With the question of how much we are paying for printing. It was real eye-opening talking to RJ Andrews. I did a random form for a country in East Asia that does not have map-related restrictions. They quoted \$6/vol which is less than half. We may be able to get a substantially lower print run. We'd have to push the production schedule back to account for shipping across the ocean. When we propose a budget in 2026, we can get better printing numbers.

The shipping is one cost this year. The other additional cost is promotions. We budgeted \$2000 dollars in 2025 and didn't spend any of it. A similar number to experiment with what would make sense for our community and the team.

I'm thinking the budget is somewhere in the... Taking out shipping, which is a wash, a little bit of net plus for us... Our actual outgo is roughly \$3000 for this year.

Daniel - We'd have to ship books to warehouses. Ballpark in the 100s.

(discussion on costs to ship books to the relevant warehouse)

Vicky - It's hard to wrap my head around this without any relative numbers. What are we looking at here? And what timeline?

Nat - For 2026 and 2027? In terms of outgo, similar in per volume cost. UVA press doesn't charge us for the warehousing. It's covered by the 55/45 net revenue split. Our income, could be

very low like 2025. I don't think it will be, we have access to more sales outlets. It should boost the sales a decent amount. I can hope? This is kinda the problem with being a publishing company.

Daniel - My impression too, is that partnering with Virginia isn't going to make anything worse. It has a potential upside. It can make things easier. But we are still putting out the word in the way we were before. People just have to go to a different website. It might cost a little bit of money to ship things there, but that's it. It's unlikely partnering with UVA is going to lower our sales.

Nick - It would be useful to see all the numbers.

Daniel - We have figured a cover price that would give NACIS the same amount of money as before. \$65. Which is a great increase, but in 2012 we sold them for over 35. Which is slightly over \$50 in today's money. Book has been effectively going down in price for many years. At the higher price, we might cut us out of some subset of the market. There is some cushion there. But that's fine details.

There's always been a significant amount of risk taking in the AOD.

Nat - If we think about the bigger picture about NACIS's options. If we don't do something like this where we get the books into an outlet where they can get into the normal book world - I think we should think about abandoning print books. Go to a web-based thing. Not a bad idea. Celebrate top 25 map projects on a website. Doesn't cost us any cash outlay. We get complaints that people can't afford the book due to shipping already. But we love the book. The question is how much do we love the book? Our current system is straining at the seams. Regardless of how we go forward, going with a publisher is going to be a lot saner.

Daniel - Digital book kinda thing has come up before. If we had a website thing, there wouldn't be an income component to that. The Atlas was never intended to raise money. It was always our aim to not lose very much money. But maybe, "All stories come to an end." Part of that discussion might be a more clear imagination of what the alternative is.

Kate - If we do decide to sign some sort of contract with UVA. How long is the commitment?

Nat - Severable at any time. As long as we want.

Jen - I agree with Lily about the price. Every year for the last 10 years I have made a 250 page hard cover book of my kid. It's \$50 on the Black Friday sale through Blurb. It's print on-demand. That would be equivalent to the Atlas.

Nat - True, but that's without any whole-saler markup. That's without any retailer trying to take a cut. RJ said the standard in the industry is - whatever the printing cost, multiply by 7, that's a

pretty good estimate of the cover price. If it's self-published, you can get away with 5x. We have had way way less of a multiplier than that, like 2x if we're lucky.

Jen - If the choice is abandon, or go this model. Publishing on-demand might be more of a middle ground.

Nat - One of the challenges of that is that the print quality of print-on-demand really varies. There are so many different ways to do this. There are way more than 2 options out there. We really care that the physical quality of the book is high. That costs money.

Daniel - Round up a couple of questions in the chat. The quality of the print, we've aimed to respect the contents. Really get that right. Making it more pricey might make it seem a better product. We talked about that when we first set the price. It's entirely possible that the cost update could be a wash.

There will still be a discount for NACIS members. We talked to UVA about that. As far as wholesale being a big base for consumer base. Not yet, but that's what this partnership could give us. UVA is connected to people. They have distribution lists.

Nat - The biggest player in that is Amazon. We are in the furthest back corner of the dark closet on the third floor. It's wizardry about how to promote on Amazon. That's why you hire people who know what they are doing. Having it fulfilled by Amazon increased exposure - we get less money net but get more sales.

Daniel - This is a revocable deal at any time. We spend a few hundred dollars to send some books to UVA, that's all we need to spend. Not too big of a financial risk.

Vicky - I want to make sure we are providing Nat and Daniel with what they need to go forward.

Nat - I would love tentative approval of the board, but not the budget. So I can go back to UVA with that. I want to start getting paperwork together. If we need to wait until we get final approval of the budget that's fine. Tentative approval with a budget of under \$3000 for 2026.

Vicky - I'm hesitant to approve a money vote without seeing the rest of the budget.

Martha - I'm not comfortable at all with approving anything without seeing any numbers. I would like to see a couple of mockups of what we could expect. What is it actually going to cost to ship these? If we sold the same amount of volumes as the last part of 2025, what would that come out to in the UVA model vs continuing as we are?

Nat - How much certainty for sales do you need?

Martha - We have sales tracked for the last decade. If last year was lower than normal with no promotion or marketing. Base the estimations on last year with a version that is 20% lower and 20% higher just to get something out there.

(discussion on the estimations)

Nat - We can come up with known fixed costs for 2026. Anything over that is based on sales. The basic concept appeals if we can make the numbers work. I'm not hearing that the whole deal is a bust. The structure is fine if we can make the numbers work. If I bring numbers to the February meeting - if we don't sell any books, if we sell 2025 numbers, if we sell double those numbers as income - does that sound reasonable?

Martha - Yes. I agree with where we are going. We just need to have some proof.

Mike - Objectively, what Nat and Daniel feels like the right direction if we want to continue with the Atlas.

Nat - How do they benefit? Name would be on future editions. They have similar relationship with other organizations like ours. UVA puts it in their catalog.

Kate - I want to tease apart 2 things. Do we continue with future editions? Regardless of that, we have an existing inventory that we have to deal with it no matter what. Is this deal for just the past inventory, or does it rely on the future and publishing new versions?

Nat - We can say we intend to. If we hit a budget wall, we can go to them. I have no problem in saying that we have every intention of going ahead with Vol 8.

Is it ok if I ask UVA for an actual agreement?

Who signs?

Martha - Executive directors and business officers. Vicky can sign stuff too.

Nominations (Hannah)

- General updates

Hannah - I have emailed with Kate about this. We are going to announce that we are opening nominations and the deadline is Jan 31st. I have had conversations with folks who we started talking to in Louisville. The goal is by the 31st to have self-nominated folks.

In a few months, I have to go back and check with them that they still want to run. By the 31st I have to just have names and start gathering their bios. Then the committee will meet via email or zoom about who is running. I have a separate thread with Nick, Vicky, Jen and with the members of the executive board - I would like their input on the potential members of the board who are going to be working with you more, and not me.

If you have folks, and are not a member of the nominations committee, send me the names and contact details. If you know people, tell them to reach out to me.

I was hoping to announce by the 19th.

Does this go on our website?

Kate - I was planning on making a newsletter this weekend. I will send it next week. If any committee has other announcements, get those to me.

Other matters

- **Volunteer Coordinator Update (Mike & Daniel)**

Mike - Daniel and I have been working together to get the volunteer coordinator proposal further along. I have a more formal proposal to share. I will send it after the meeting.

We are suggesting and recommending that we don't have any discussion this go around. I want people to take a look at the proposal and next month we can talk about it and maybe take a vote.

Daniel - I posted the succinct version of the larger version. There are some potential ideas that this role would take on. It will be more experimental. We'd come back in a year or two and see if it worked out or not. It's additive to what we are already doing.

You are welcome to suggest ideas in the doc. Things that make sense for someone acting as HR for our volunteer pool. To make sure they are satisfied, they feel appreciated, they get connected to roles that are fits for them, that the organization has a good handle on who is doing what at any given time. That's what we modified things to, for the succinct version.

I am volunteering myself to fulfill this role. If there are other people you want to do this, that's fine. NACIS still needs it.

Mike - Over the next month, please take some time to read through the proposal.

- **Status of subscriptions/memberships on our website (Kate)**

Kate - I wrote it in a document. Our website needs to be replaced. I know this is a bad time. But everything we need to do on the website is way more expensive and complicated than it needs to be because it is so old. I had a meeting with Gecko today about it.

The precipitating thing that happened was our membership price increase, which turned out to be way more complicated than just increasing the price - because all our active members have subscriptions and each of those have to be updated.

This is going to be expensive. Gecko would not give me a ballpark because it can range pretty widely. I'm meeting with them next week to give them answers that will allow them to give us an estimate. They are friendly and helpful and want to work with us as much as possible, but they do cost money.

As far as the membership stuff, I explain under what's next. Instead of throwing money after an old system, it's probably better for me to go in and update 700 memberships myself to set them to not renew. So we can focus on the new website.

Martha - I can help you with that so you don't have to do all 700.

Notice that in the document, this is the “latest” issue. Everything has been getting more and more rickety over the last couple of years. I first asked Kate a couple of years ago when we could abandon this website.

Hannah - Last year we had problems. Even I had issues paying my membership fee. Making sure our forward face for the organization looks good for 2026. I support this.

Kate - I'll have more information after I talk to Gecko next week. I'll keep everybody in the loop.

Lily - Anything we can help with?

Kate - I'm hoping to get a subcommittee running when we start.

Jen - Who is Gecko?

Kate - Gecko is a web-design/web-hosting company. Gecko was kind enough to take us on when our previous host dropped us.

(discussion on some of the technical details of the website)

Jen - Would we stay with Gecko?

Kate - I'm open to other options, but I'm pretty happy with Gecko.

- **Governing Documents Committee (Martha)**

Martha - We had the governing document committee formed last year. We updated our constitution at the annual meeting. We forgot to repopulate the committee. If anybody would like to stay on, or join, please reach out to me. We should have a meeting in January.