

NACIS BOARD MEETING AGENDA - SBM 2026

Date: Feb 28 & Mar 1, 2026 Board Meeting

Time: 1pm-6pm Atlantic
12pm-5pm Eastern
11am-4pm Central
9am-2pm Pacific

Location: Online

Zoom Meeting

Saturday -

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83156820928?pwd=1BoMFDayfldjhaqmssk6uQuBxBVata.1>

Sunday -

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86029141970?pwd=DpWdmzCo0aJ1tU2oblw1f7ARGcELy0.1>

Motions passed:

- Motion to approve the Revised Conference Organizing Document
- Motion to approve the Revised Volunteer Coordinator Proposal
- Subsequent motion to appoint Daniel Huffman as the new Volunteer Coordinator
- Motion to approve an invitation to Margaret Pearce as the keynote speaker
- Motion to approve the Milwaukee conference logo color scheme and general design
- Motion to approve the proposed AOD agreement with UVA via the Business Office
- Motion to approve the budget

SATURDAY

Executive Office (non-voting)

- X 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*)
- X 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*)
- X 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

Welcome and Approval of Minutes (Vicky)

- Welcome!
 - Schedule
 - February 2026 meeting minutes will be available before the next meeting.

Vicky - I was thinking about this morning. I've been attending this meeting for 5-6 years now. There are more on our shoulders this year from a number of different angles. We were elected by our membership to navigate these obstacles. I know this is a challenge. I'm not looking forward to it. I am looking forward to having these conversations with this group of people. I know we can navigate this all together through mutual respect and trust and the common goal of serving our membership.

Thank you all for being here and showing up. Showing up in committee meetings. Writing documentation. Putting forward initiatives and proposals.
I just wanted to acknowledge this wonderful group of people.

I'm going to set group rules and expectations. Josh is our timekeeper so we stay on task. I do not have breaks put into the schedule. We can play it by ear.
I have an estimate of when our daybreak will be. We may or may not meet that. Let's aim for that.
We don't have February minutes today. February is already a short month. We'll have the February meeting minutes next month.

Report: Finance Committee (Neil Allen)

- Set the financial stage for the coming year & preliminary budget as proposed by committees. Present the budget spreadsheet as a working document to amend and approve by the end of SBM.
- [Copy of DRAFT budget](#)

Neil - Thank you everyone for all your input over the last several weeks. I just wanted to start off setting the stage. I've been involved with NACIS since 2021. The cultural practice was to pass negative budgets - they never came to fruition. At the time all we had was CP, the conference, a smaller board, and a smaller website.

This is looking at the overview. The \$142k is not set in stone. This is what the actual cash in the bank is going to be as reported to the IRS.

2020 was a false spike. We got a refund from the hotel. If you take that out of the equation, we've been on a gradual slide over the last couple of years.

This is the column that we need to focus on today (2026). I start every spreadsheet with income. Proposing \$136,000 from the conference. That is gross, not net. We do have a little bit of a quandary - we are increasing the fees but the volume is lower. That is a little concerning.

We have very few channels for income. Membership, AOD, store, and measly royalties and income from investments. \$173,000 projected income.

Then we break things down to expenses.

(Neil goes over all the expenses line by line)

We saved a bunch by not hosting the SBM in person. Website has a larger than normal expense due to the needed redesign that we'll talk about later.

CP is an increased budget from last year.

Awards and DEI are asking for the same amount as last year.

Net on the conference is guessed at \$10,000. That's to make us look competent. Ideally it should be 0, but we need to have an income to fund other initiatives.

(Review of the spreadsheet)

Bottom line that I want to reinforce - the board needs to understand that their responsibility is to not spend funds we don't have available. We need to curb spending. Vicky was setting the stage - anything identified as discretionary spending - we need to cut by x%. We need to figure that out today. Don't take any of this personally. This isn't your money or my money, it's the membership's money. Some of this may be hurtful, but don't take it personally.

Thanks for your participation today.

Nick - I have a process question. Are we deciding money at each point, or returning to the money at the end?

Neil - I would prefer we bring up each committee's section while we talk about it. I'll bring up their budget and adjust it live.

Nat - The agenda is mostly lined up by committee and working group. But there is also some bigger questions. Like: "Do we need to raise membership fees more", "Do we raise conference fees" "Should we be doing fundraising". There are bigger pictures of financing the organization that are not committee specific. I want to make sure we keep those in mind, that we are not restricted to only cutting existing committees and only enhancing revenue by using only the tools by committee here.

Neil - The income channels are what they are. We are forecasting the membership fairly conservatively. We have already increased the membership fees on every level. We aren't seeing that to the income tune that we were hoping.

Susan - What I do is try to itemize our expenses for a conference I don't know how many people will be attending. Keeping in mind the minimum required by the hotel. Then I divide it by the guests. If we have 200 attend (we haven't been that low for decades). Last year I did it, if we had 200 people attend, it would have been over \$700 for the registration? Who among us would spend \$700 for the meeting? I don't know what else to do?

Neil - We're going to need increase the conference fees. Even if it hurts. This isn't getting any less expensive. One of my solutions is potentially add a technology fee to the registration fee. So people know that it helps to cover video streaming and those other services. My understanding among other conferences is that is very common to add a technology fee.

Susan - Going back to the unpopular idea to charge a fee to see the videos right afterwards. After COVID, we had a huge uptick in membership because of the videos. The international participation was substantial because of that.

Neil - Technology fee only available to the membership that could possibly work out. Or charge it to the membership at large?

Vicky - This came up in a finance committee email. Natural Earth - everyone uses it - it's a free resource. Maybe we can highlight a wikipedia donation?

Neil - Going back to Nat's original question. We can try to adjust the numbers as we can. We can attempt to increase income, but we can't funnel those into this year's budget.

Nat - My question was, where in the agenda do we talk about other income streams?

Martha - Other Business

Report: Executive Director (Jenny Marie)

- Executive Director report

JMJ - During the past year, the most wide-reaching task that I completed was the deduplication of files and upload of documents to the new NACIS Google drive. Kate and I wrote a brief document about the Google drive which was distributed at a Board meeting earlier this year.

Last summer, I started working on a media policy with Hannah; that is a work in progress and we will be coordinating with Kelsey later this spring to finish it up.

I am also creating, based on previously existing documents, a clearer (aka bullet-point) description of Board member responsibilities and expectations for fall 2026 onboarding.

I researched, compiled, and supplied to Martha documents and information to provide a foundation for anticipated bylaw updates.

I made calls in the fall to nearly elected board members and officers.

Late in 2025, I was contacted by O*NET, an arm of the Department of Labor; they were requesting names and contact information of individuals who could assist in revising their program's classification of Cartographers and Photogrammetrists. I am disappointed to say that I was able to supply only one NACIS member's name. I contacted half a dozen individuals directly, all of whom said no, and sent a request out to the Board but received no replies at all. This was a missed opportunity to influence how cartography is described and understood at the Federal level.

Alexis and I will be working on a proposal template during the spring and early summer.

And I served on the following committees or working groups: Ethics (which I chair), Finance, Governing Documents, Governing Documents, and Web Revision

Thinking about today's heavy lift, approving the 2026 budget, the past practice has always been to approve a deficit budget because it was assumed that the unknown amount of profit from the annual conference would balance out the entire amount of expenditures during the year. 2025 soundly disproved that hypothesis. Because of surrounding circumstances, attendance at the conference was much lower than anticipated. Additionally, costs to put on the conference and to conduct regular society business are ever increasing.

I do not think that we can assume in the immediate future, specifically 2026, 2027 and 2028 but potentially beyond, the large conference attendance that we saw in 2023 and 2024. Smaller conference attendance needs to be considered our new normal – and that translates to smaller profits.

It is the responsibility of the Board to budget and allocate funds so that the society lives within its fiscal means. NACIS no longer has a financial cushion to absorb programs and projects as it has in the past. This year's Board needs to step up to this responsibility in a way that no previous Board has been asked.

I encourage you to have at hand the proposed budget so that you can refer to it though out today and tomorrow's discussions. Ask questions, kindly, to make sure that you understand what each line item represents; if you don't understand something it is highly likely that someone else does not also.

Everything in the budget needs to be scrutinized through the lens of these questions:
Is this a discretionary or a non-discretionary expense?
How is this a necessary expense to keep the organization viable?
How does this expense bring value, and what kind of value, directly to NACIS?

Budget decisions cannot be made emotionally. Numbers are numbers; money is money. If the funds available or anticipated can't support an action, activity or program, that desired thing cannot be in the budget or it must be modified to fit within the budget. You may hear suggestions from Board members to reduce funds available to a project or program that you lead. These suggestions are not personal but are coming in the spirit of creating a balanced and sustainable budget for 2026 and establishing the ability to continue to do so in the future.

The Board has been responsible for NACIS committing and spending funds that it did not have available. This practice needs to stop. You are the group to reform our historic financial practices.

NACIS's future financial security begins this weekend.

Report: Business Manager & Finance Committee (Susan, Martha, & Neil)

- 2026 NACIS Annual Budget

Martha - I'm currently working on doing some preliminary organization of things for Milwaukee 2026. So that I can get that information to Nick. So he knows what rooms, what size, etc... I'm also starting to work on our 2027 proposal. I'm working with Michelle to get the latest copy of our RFP. Working through that. Making sure we are asking what we actually want to ask.

Report: Director of Operations (Kate)

- [2026 NACIS Operations Report](#)
- [Website rebuild project status](#)

Kate - I'm going to skip the report. No news except the Website rebuild.

I wrote this up to be a quick summary.

Neil - How old is current website?

Kate - It was designed in 2014, but migrated to Gecko in 2019. They took what we had and recreated some of it.

This wouldn't have been my choice to do this project this year given the financial constraints. We're lucky to have such a good vendor already on board. Having a robust estimate and a plan and a vendor that will allow us to break it across two years.

Nick - I have some technical questions. On one end, Gecko would make us an amazing website and it would work. On the other end, we get a wordpress template and get an event brite plugin. I'm having a hard time from the proposal figuring out where the troubles come from? This proposal has a redesign and a rebuild of the backend.

Kate - You're right that there is the Frontend, which is old and out of date and needs a refresh. Then there is EventSquid. That isn't integrated into the website. The missing chunk is the membership system. We use WooCommerce. It's complicated in that you can buy one-offs or subscriptions or memberships. Those are all separate, but interoperable WooCommerce plugins. That's connected to Stripe. That's the part that is failing.

Martha - It's pretty much non-functional. I mean it's functional in that it kinda keeps track when people renew their membership and it somewhat keeps track of when it expires. The plugins are so outdated. The different plugins are updated to different levels. Nothing is integrated anymore. We are at the point where close to half of the membership renewals have a glitch that Susan and I have to track and update manually.

Simple tasks that shouldn't need any manual work do. When it came time for people to register for the conference last year, we were constantly getting messages - "hey, I'm supposed to be a member and paid my dues" - but the membership wasn't reflecting that. Anybody that skipped a year, it didn't update.

Kate and I spend two months manually updating thousands of entries. The old platform doesn't function anymore.

Nick - Is this proposal for Gecko to build a custom backend? Or going to use a plugin?

Martha - Gecko is going to implement a new version of WooCommerce. And convert us over to the new system.

Kate - We're dealing with 12 years of custom code. Gecko agrees that we don't want a custom backend. Just use standard plugins. WP backend with WooCommerce.

(chat questions about other services like Squarespace)

Kate - Those exist. What's missing is the vendor to manage it. I'm not going to be here forever, and most of you are only here for 2-6 years. For long-term stability, we can't rely on volunteers to fix things going forever.

Lily - Can we trim more of the frontend and UI/UX stuff?

Kate - The proposal from Gecko is that they will design a couple key pages, but then we do most of the legwork moving it over.

Lily - Seeing this in context of the entire budget. I'm more focused on the backend stuff. I think some of this stuff needs to be done eventually, but the backend is the most essential. Whatever possible to be pushed down the line.

Kate - I can get a proposal from Gecko to only replace the membership system.

Neil - I get it financially. I have to tell our membership what we spent on a website. Kate has done a good job explaining what Gecko's resume is and why we're in this position. If we can get a more parsed out, itemized budget, maybe we can work it out. Thanks to Kate's negotiation skills they broke it into two years and reduced the first year commitment.

Nick - Might be worth thinking about all-in-one conference sites if we separate the content of our site from the backend stuff. I'm sure this is how much this stuff costs, but it's a lot.

Kate - The cost isn't the software, it's the time from the vendor. It's great people want to volunteer, but will that be true next year, or the year after that? This project doesn't actually touch the conference stuff. Sched and EventSquid are separate.

Martha - In addition to membership, it's also the store.

Neil - Those are small numbers. Out of the gate, they don't pay for themselves.

Martha - I know. I just meant that it's integrated with our membership system.

Nat - Most of our budget is on-going annual expenses. Some of our website budget is ongoing stuff. This update project is a lump. It's a one-year or two-year discrete lump. Normally something like this would be a capital expense. I wonder about the possibility of approaching the membership with a call for donations. It's a hard-sell. We haven't done NPR style fund drives. We have the budget as a lump. But from a continuing standpoint, I wonder about thinking about things like this differently. We need to have a system that is sustainable in the future.

Neil - You can have it on more than one leg than that. A telethon for the technology fee. Ever since the video streaming came on board, our funds have steadily gone down.

Susan - Our profits from the conferences have never been that great. Now we have a \$25k expense. So our conference would have to make even more profit, to have offset that cost. Even a \$75 technology fee will help, but we need a lot more people to contribute.

Neil - If you took away what E3 costs, we would have broke even on the conference. Right there shows we need to do something about it.

Susan - There were great plans to have sponsorships. The first year we had about \$2k worth of donations in the past. That takes someone shaking the bushes, not just a donation button on the registration form.

Some of the hotels want to charge \$15-20k for wifi. I have made enemies resisting that. That could cost us at some point.

Neil - More need for this technology fee. You're going to have to tack it on.

Mike - I don't think it's unreasonable for non-profits to run occasional capital campaigns. Other groups would do it for building improvements, etc... There could be something interesting in a bit more of a formalized capital campaign.

Kate - A few points. As far as building the whole thing with volunteers, look at Stage 3 - it's a lot. Without it being someone's full-time job, I'm doubtful its something a volunteer could complete. I had a question for Neil. It's is possible to get a loan?

Neil - It's unprecedented.

Susan - I doubt it. I can't even get our Credit limit extended. I don't think we could. What would we use as collateral?

Neil - We'd be a high-risk loan. Due to our trend line.

Kate - I would like to do a straw poll about this. And encourage anyone to message me privately.

(poll ran - slightly leaned towards doing something else - 7 move forward, 10 do something else)

Neil - Where does this leave on the budget?

Kate - This doesn't seem like an acceptable plan to most people. I'm going to have to go back to Gecko to see if they can estimate the cost of replacing just the membership system.

Neil - What is the provisional number we can put in there?

Martha - That number may not be passed. We need to spend that money this year. Maybe we can spend a lot less, but for now, in order to have a budget, we have to plan for it. I would move that we allocate up to \$26k to go toward to that task. Right now we have to spend a large chunk of money and we have pass that.

Nat - This is a case where the push to get the budget to 0 isn't going to work. We have spend the money one way or the other.

Neil - We can't count on money that is not actualized. Financially, it's my duty to not pass a negative budget.

Susan - This may not be the year we do E3 and use the money to use on the website development.

Lily - I'm having a hard time deciding what to vote here so the committees that go last don't get all their budgets cut just because they went last. Can it be more of a preview of the budget? I like the fundraising and technology fee ideas.

Martha - Typically we do make adjustments to the numbers as we go through, but we don't approve till the end. We go line by line at the end.

Report: Ethics Committee (Jenny Marie)

- Ethics Committee report

JMJ - The ethics committee received one report. We resolved what we could. We have heard nothing else. I anticipate not having anything else to report. As a reminder, the membership on the Ethics committee is bound by the way the committee is structured - Executive Director, President, Vice President.

Martha - Without giving away any confidentiality, anything the others of us needs to update/change/adjust going forward?

JMJ - No.

Proposal: [Conference Organizing Proposal](#) (Vicky)

Vicky - A proposal put together by past and present organizers to stream line and make more clear to the board and our members and attendees certain conference proceedings: related to invited speakers, branding, and expenses.

Zhaoxu - Thank you for putting up the proposal. Regarding to parts of the proposal of invited speakers, I'm sending the full DEI response in the chat. We are concerned about this proposal in three aspects.

#1 - Invited speakers requires additional vetting or approval by conference organizers or the board. Traditionally the DEI speaker series are organized by the DEI committee. Ownership was clearly designated. Don't want to have one committee oversees another committee. This will build unnecessary pressures. A lot of our communications involve sensitive information. If they want to go over all the people, it would be really complicated and we would run out of time.

2 - We are not sure about the intention about the proposal because it didn't specify a specific problem. Some background information would be great

3 - DEI has offered 7 proposals since last year. Conference organizers have every information about our speaker series, including timeline, workflow, email templates, and our objectives. We just worry about ownership, intention, and transparency. We like the intention, but would like to work with you all to make it better.

Vicky - I'll address some of those. Organizing the conference is a two-person enormous burden of work. With invited speakers, even the conference organizers need to follow procedures. This has grown on the organizers. We didn't have a speaker agreement until Pittsburgh. We should be doing that for every speaker.

There are so many moving pieces to the conference, the organizers need to have eyes on all the pieces. No one is asking to be deeply involved in the process.

The Speaker series and the invited speakers are great. Those are highly rated every year. We just want the conference organizers to be brought along all the way. Without any last minute surprises.

Hannah - I am going to speak to this from the conference planning side. I've gone through 3 of them. On the planning side, a lot of the board members don't see some of the fires we put out.

(Hannah talks about specific instances)

I've had this conversation multiple times. We need a system in place. When we're planning the conference, we are making sure we have all these things sorted.

The goal for this is for everybody to be on the same timeline. If you invite people, what are they going to talk about? Send us this on the same timeline as everyone else.

Honestly, next year we may have to revise this. Cause maybe it doesn't work. But then we change it.

Alexis - I've been on a lot of conference organizing committees. This is very standard. I've been shocked that there wasn't more documentation. I'm sure it'll get revised going forward.

Zhaoxu - I didn't know any of the details. I'm aware that the timeline of the invited speakers does not match the way other speakers are asked to apply. We have to talk more about this before placing a proposal, because it's really relevant to how the DEI committee is organized. We talked to Nick and Jen. We proposed several solutions. We are not happy with the language where our speakers have to be approved by the organizers. We understand the problems, but are not sure that this is the solution.

Vicky - I want to note that we need a resolution to this. The call for proposals goes out before our next meeting.

Lily - I'm a little confused with 1.1 - "approved by the board through a proposal." Does that mean the board as a whole approves the speaker series, and the conference organizers approve the specific people? Or does the entire board have to approve the specific people? Does that incur delays? I would want communication faster than once a month board meetings.

Second is on the point, cc'ing a bunch of people. It can be overwhelming to have 10 people cc'd on an email when you are invited to something. And there are no guarantees that Reply All is used. Could it be smaller DEI, co-chairs, and Susan cc'ed?

Vicky - I'll answer the 2nd part of that. I had a real hard time finding a keynote speaker. I think part of that was I was emailing from a gmail account. Having more of a nacis.org email presence legitimizes it.

Nick - For the approval by the board. There is a footnote noting that this is not a moderating process. In the same way a University approves 200 promotions in 2 minutes. It should just be a record-keeping for the organization. It is the responsibility of the co-chairs to carry out what the board says.

In terms of cc'ing. I get cc'd every day on stuff I need to know. People don't need to respond, but they have that record keeping.

Lily - For the co-chairs and DEI. It seems from this proposal, if we say at a board meeting, they get invited, and they say no. Do we wait for the next entire board meeting? This is my concern, slowing down the timeline. That creates a logistical and timeline issue that potentially slows things down. If there is a non-board meeting way to get approved, that would work.

Josh - We can do votes and approvals via emails. You do not have to wait for a Zoom or physical meeting to pass things.

Nick - Having a list to work down could work too. I like that as an amendment (voting via email)

Kate - To the invited speakers, I'm curious why the invited speakers need to be invited from the entire board while most conference speakers are approved by the organizers? If it's for record-keeping, just send an email. No other speakers do need approvals.

Nick - This would apply to the co-chairs as well. I like expanding things to more democratic and transparent processes.

Kate - I'm all for transparency. I'm comfortable leaving the conference decisions in the hands of the co-chairs who have been elected to this job. I don't need to be consulted every time you all need to make a decision.

My main point is #2. Doing this will make it extremely hard to do the newsletter. Having to have every newsletter out a week in advance, with commenting and edits. I also update the conference webpage. I would appreciate clarification around the problems it was trying to solve and where it would be applied vs not applied.

Vicky - I do want to note about #2. It refers to substantial new graphics and communications. This is not every Instagram post. It's things with the NACIS logo and language on them. Last year, I made items to give away to volunteers. It had NACIS on it. That wasn't approved by anyone. Eric Johnson made beautiful ornaments, ran them by Hannah and I, and we would normally approve them so no rules were broken. But in hindsight, it's probably good that if something is created and distributed with the logo on it, the board needs to see it.

Kate - The word "routine communications" is kinda vague. That would make me concerned doing the newsletter. I feel like this needs to be enumerated a bit more. Is this mostly intended for people outside the board?

Vicky - We can clarify the language.

The board is clearly not pleased with this. I'm concerned with the timeline considering the call for proposals are opening soon, and speakers are going to be receiving invitations soon.

Martha - Is it related to conference related communications? Is it expected to get approval? A branding document should be created. So that for newsletters, Kate has our rules and then she is free to go on as normal. Or CP - they have their way that they use our logo. There are some communications that we use all the time.

Conference expenses, part 3. My concerns is that Susan and I do a lot of on the fly payments. Do we need to get approval for every little thing? Need some clarification on that as well.

Vicky - My understanding on that is it is related to outside speakers. We usually take the speaker out to dinner, that kind of thing.

Martha - It says "all conference related expenses" which is very wide.

Nat - This is a meta point. I'm co-putting together a book. We have an indigenous author who is contributing a large chunk of the book. The author has a handler who we have to go through. The whole thing has been structured for the convenience of the institution - to cover them. It's been a nightmare as the people trying to organize the book. It's been a mess and nobody is happy. One of the things that would have been useful, is to talk through, what are the things that are going to cause trouble? What are potential cultural clashes? That is the basis of this

proposal. I want to see this document actually have a little more background. The meta questions of what annoys people. Is it because of language? What are the crisis points that we are trying to avoid? Making that clearer would make this easier. That would go a long way without having to have so much detail.

Mike - Section 4 is pretty important, it helps frame this as more of a mutable ongoing object. One of my high-level takeaways is that this is looking for a level set. "These are the things that can help the conference organizers." It can be revisited every year with the conference organizers every year. We need to remember to have these conversations. We need to have more discussions about this document be more mutable.

Report: NACIS Shop Committee (Lily)

- Following last year's successful local printing, continue to print locally in Milwaukee with shakyhands.co - repeat success from last year
 - Light colored Comfort Colors shirt
 - Pocket
 - Design on front and back
- Map Monster pins return - successful in 2024, new design for 2026
- New: Tote bags (limited run of 15 to test)
- New: Hand printing a few thrifted shirts with NACIS logo on linocut stamp
 - Limited cost
 - Creative content for the Instagram
 - Some people were interested in purchasing more than one shirt, if there were multiple designs (via post-conference survey)
 - Successful at another conference - University of Kentucky DOPE

Lily - Last year we had a net profit on all the shirts sold. We got a lot of complaints about the lack of shirts. The online shop is basically always a net. We don't lose money on that. It has been declining, because it has been awhile since there has been new designs. Maybe new designs might generate more revenue. My estimates for revenue from the online shop is low until we get new designs.

Some of this is coming from the post-conference survey. People were saying more diverse kinds of things - bigger things other than just stickers and luggage tags.

People loved the wagon. I would need someone driving to the conference to bring it.

Just saw Nick's proposed design for the logo. Last year people like the light-color, the pocket, and the comfort color tee (slightly nicer tee). I exchanged emails with Shaky Hands which is a union owned shop in Milwaukee. It's a nice thing to say to the members that we've chosen to print locally. This printer is affiliated with the Milwaukee tool library; maybe that would be an interesting group to invite to NACIS?

The quoted cost is \$18-20. No limit on colors. The pricing is determined by the size. I would like to sell them for \$35 instead of \$30. I'm suggesting 45 shirts.

Thinking of experimenting with a NACIS tote bag. Would try 15 of them. Would be printed by Shaky Hands company. Just the NACIS logo, not the conference. So if all 15 didn't sell, we could sell them next year.

This Map Monster pin, Josh made it last year but we didn't get it in in time. The pin from 2 years ago were awesome. Rebecca sold them for \$6. I think we could sell them for \$8. They are cute and last forever.

Next idea would need a little more approval. I like to do linocut printing. My idea is that I would buy 20 shirts from Goodwill and print the logo using a linocut block. Sell for \$15 since it is a thrifted shirt. My biggest question/concern - can I do this as a non-official design? There might be minor variations compared to the official logo, is that ok?

(showed a list of break-even numbers)

I need a final design for the t-shirts and will work with the co-chairs on that. I'm open to new submissions for the online store. And I would like a wagon for Milwaukee.

Vicky - I want to note that Silas, Nat, and Lily did a phenomenal job during the conference last year. Multiple people told me how much they loved everything about it. This was some of the best shop work that I've ever seen in the decade plus attending these conferences.

My initial thought is print more and charge more. I appreciate you putting in the break-even numbers on the slide. I would: minimum 50 shirts, 10 bucks for the pin, tote bags.

Neil - I think financially this makes sense. It's a low risk on investment. You could adjust a few prices to be a little higher. Remind people this is also a donation. Maybe don't print more, but charge more.

Alexis - Can we offer the shirts and totes with registration? This might loop around to the website issue.

Lily - There has been some pre-order in the past. It can be messy. There is a cutoff on when you can order shirts since with the local printer there is a cutoff date.

Alexis - It could be early-bird only and encourage people to register?

Martha - From the standpoint of the registration people, it's perfectly doable to purchase ahead of time. My concern is the same as Lily's, we have to have a cutoff date. But no reason we can't add a separate button to purchase ahead of time.

Lily - We can have a few extras to have people buy at the conference.

Martha - For the linocut, is that a NACIS night in activity?

Lily - I was going to do that ahead of time, but it would not be hard to bring it with me if that was of interest.

Vicky - One of the reasons the map-swap is so popular, after sitting in a room for a while, people like doing things.

Lily - I like Jessi's suggestion of having it as a donation. Have a minimum donation or bring your own shirt. I would have some with me, but people could bring their own too.

From comments in the Zoom: Jenny Marie offered to bring a wagon and Alexis offered to bring extra brayers for printing at the conference

(some discussion on some tshirt options relating to registration and shipping)

Neil - This doesn't sound terribly controversial. We can green-light this.

Report: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (Zhaoxu)

- [2026 DEI Speaker Series](#)
- [Indigenous Member Waiver](#), [Fee Waiver Memo](#) (Discussion is moved to April Meeting)
- [2026 Charitable Organization Donation](#)
- DEI Annual Board Training
- [Continuing to Improve Community Engagement at the Annual Meeting](#)

Zhaoxu - First presenting the speaker series. It's largely the same as what we have done in the previous years. We will invite 4 speakers. 1st session is them presenting their works, 2nd session is a panel session. Previously, we covered registration fee and gave honorariums. What we had last year we underspent our budget. 3 works but ideally we want to have 4 speakers. We are imposing a 3 tier level honorarium system. Speakers from Milwaukee will get \$500. Speakers from other places in Wisconsin and Minnesota get \$1000. Other states/countries get \$1500. We are trying to prioritize speakers from the local locations.

Speakers will only be only reimbursed for the day that they are presenting, not PCD and not post-conference field trips.

The procedure is new to this year. We've heard the co-chairs problem and offer our solutions here. We are responsible for providing timely information to the co-chairs and working with the finance committee.

Everybody on the board can suggest speakers. These speakers are largely suggested by the public and the DEI committee. We learn a lot. "NACIS is different because we have this series". We definitely have to choose speakers that have works relevant to cartography.

To bring down the other costs. Instead of donating \$1000, we are proposing to only do \$700. And adjust the training to bi-annual. So every board member has a chance to do the training, but we don't have the \$500 expense.

The registration and honorariums are the maximum cap. We are trying to find local speakers to keep that number as low as possible.

Hannah - I really like the proposal on the tiers. That shows we have put more thought into it. How we are prioritizing folks, giving this amount for locals, etc.... That is something we can improve over time.

On Jim's point, would it be better to give honorariums to people willing to invest. In an ideal world, I would love that. If we can encourage them to stay the whole time, that would be great so our members can talk to them and they can see what we are about. "You're required to stay the whole time" seems a bit off.

Martha - Addressing Nat's question about making them staying at the hotel. That was a question in the past - some people were not comfortable staying there and they would rather use the honorarium for their own choice.

DEI training moving to every other year: that's missing out on the point that we want every board member trained before the conference.

Vicky - I wanted to note that this theme is really exciting. It's timely and well-considered. I also want to note that DEI's meetings are regularly scheduled and well run. It's a really solid demonstration with getting non-members involved with board activities.

JMJ - I have a question going back to the DEI training. I'm curious how many of the board is required to do this for their work? (*about half raise hands*)

Neil - Getting into the financial weeds. I value DEI. It is an item that is only in our expenses and not in our income. We do get some registration for that, but that is difficult to parse out. I have a problem with the line items, in that they are spending more than they spent last year. It is lower than what you proposed last year. I would want to see some sort of cutting of the budget as much as possible.

Lily - Our goal is to underspend. That's hard with passing the budget this year. We'd like to invite a few people from Milwaukee. We hope that a number of the folks can be from the surrounding areas. One of the folks being a student (which has a lower registration cost). What we are hoping for is the flexibility to invite folks who aren't from this region in case it is hard to get them to say yes. We want to approve a higher budget with the hope of lowering. If we have to pass a lower budget now, we can.

Neil - I understand that and am appreciative of it. The honorarium is a fairly new thing to NACIS. When we are in this budgetary crunch, we have to get creative. As part of the community engagement, they are getting something from it even if it isn't financial.

Alexis - Quite a few members who go to NACIS already do focus on this stuff. Is there an opportunity to pull from our membership for this series for this year? Considering being creative, Nick does this sort of stuff. We have other critical cartographers in academia. Maybe there is a way to mix and match with some of the people who are already going.

Lily - A goal of the speaker series is to bring in outside voices that we don't always get to hear. I think we would be comfortable with having one of the 4 being a regular attendee. I would really like 3 to be people who don't regularly attend.

Zhaoxu - Not only doing critical research, but inviting people that have experience in that research, that relates to a certain background or identity. We can discuss the possibilities to bring NACIS people into the panel or sessions, to further bring down the cost a bit more. I'm not sure about cutting down the donation to \$0. Maybe \$500 is fine. That's a really dangerous message to our community.

Vicky - One thing I like about last year's sessions was bringing in Dr Meghan Kelley as facilitator in the panel discussion. That was a great way to integrate our invited speakers into the conference. Putting DEI sessions as "DEI Sessions" it's almost a tokenization. Having more NACIS membership integration into the session, I think that makes it clear that DEI is integrated into our community vs being in it's own box.

Hannah - To add to that. That was also a plus last year. DEI opened this door for me. My struggles, including planning the conference, how do I work this conference where the door has been opened for me, but I'm only allowed to sit at a specific table? In some spaces I get invited but I can only stay in this one spot - implied or not. I don't want to be the animal in the zoo. If this is the last thing I can bring to board as I cycle out - how do we bring the membership that are now currently part of it - where do they fit in? How do they speak up? I'm glad Zhaoxu and Lily are running for the board, but some members are not ready for that. Bringing them in through the DEI committee is great. Bringing in outside people is great. But I would like to see, it's no longer a "DEI" series. Every part of our conference is thinking about this. The door is opened for me but then it's like the World's Fair of 1904. Can I not be considered a DEI speaker because I am a Cartographer in my own right? Think about the members that we can bring in. Panelists. Moderators. Folks who have been coming to NACIS.

Neil - I agree with Hannah. The stuff she is talking about is free to do. As for Zhaoxu, we are not asking to remove the DEI community, we are asking to pare this down. Everybody is going to be hurting to some extent. Sleep on things tonight and come back tomorrow.

Zhaoxu - I represent myself and I have to represent my committee. It's really hard to say something about it right now because of my role. How DEI fits into NACIS is a great debate and we can keep discussing it.

The other things we have done. Indigenous Fee Waiver. I have attached two documents. The legal consultations. Have your questions in mind and bring them back in the next meeting.

The annual board training I heard the comments and we can discuss again tomorrow.

The final one: Continuing to Improve Community Engagement at the Annual Meeting. This was a proposal from last year's SBM. In the printed program, there are sections where to go, where to sit, land acknowledgment. We are trying to do this again. We have reached out to committee members and other board members. About where to go and where to sit. Then work with the conference organizers to take these recommendations for the printed program. That's a really simple proposal.

Vicky - Review the Indigenous Waiver materials for the April discussion.

The initiative to improve community engagement. That went really well this year. I do want to suggest that we have someone local to review these suggestions. There are always nuances to an area that we don't want to get wrong.

Nick - Is this a proposal or update? Are we promising to do a field trip?

(discussion on who is doing what and what is a proposal vs suggestion)

Neil - I would propose you bring in the Outreach Committee as well

Report: Communications and Outreach Committee (Kelsey)

- Social media
- [Mentor program report](#)
- Outreach

Kelsey - Just a summary. I've been focused, as the main Social media coordinator, on getting a sustainable plan, getting it organized, regular updates, updating the website, mentor program. Outreach is something Vicky and I are thinking about more. General communications about the conference during and after. We'll talk more tomorrow about conference planning.

We've been posting on LinkedIn and Instagram. We've had really good organic growth. Over 300 followers as of today. We have really good engagement on both platforms. Especially with content about members works (maps). We haven't done any ads for our SM. This is all organic. The plan with SM is to continue with the trajectory this year. We post about once or twice a week depending on content. Trying to stay focused on member-related content. We aren't currently posting on BlueSky. We have an account. Or get an account on Threads. We are using Buffer to post to all accounts - free account allows for 3 SM platforms.

Vicky - Thank you for doing this. It's been a delight to see the engagement.

Kelsey - I've been taking notes and getting ideas for content - NACIS shop and DEI speaker series for example

Nat - This ties into the AOD report. It would be great to coordinate what we're doing with what you're doing.

(discussion on working together)

Alexis - If anybody wanted to send a map for map of the week, what's the best way to do that?

Kelsey - Slack, email, or account DMs

Vicky - We asked about SM use in the post-conference survey. I can't speak to what our student members are using, but it would be good to take a look at that.

(discussion on what 3rd SM to target)

Website Subcommittee

Kate - Conference organizers are the ones that should be driving updates to the website. I'm happy to help, but you should be driving what is posted and when - don't wait for me to come asking.

Hannah - Do you have a spreadsheet for the timeline?

Kate - That was for the NACIS news. Starting in September there is a cadence and that is on the spreadsheet.

Vicky - The general cadence for updating the website. Call for Proposals goes out, Call for Proposals closes, usually end of May. Sometimes gets extended, sometimes doesn't. Schedule comes out end of June. Registration opens mid-July.

Mentor Program

Zhaoxu - Alexis, Jen, and Mike joined the team. Sent out the announcement already. Thanks to Kate and Kelsey for helping us. We have received 57 applications - 42 mentees and 14 mentors.

There is still a disparity between the mentor and mentee count.

(talks through which areas still need mentors)

We are still working on pairings. We are discussing adding 3 mentees to a single mentor if there is a perfect match.

Future plan - finalize the pairing list by March 5th. Send out an email to recruit more mentors. Send out a pairing announcement on March 16th. Then kick-off meeting. And send out regular monitor emails each month for 3 months.

Vicky - That you so much for doing this. It's an enormous undertaking. This program is clearly popular. We get a lot of messages about it. I'm not sure how much further we can badger our members to be mentors.

Kelsey - I signed up to be a mentor. It limits you to 6 interests. I have more areas I can be a mentor in.

Zhaoxu - You can only sign up for 1 primary interest, and up to 6 minor interests. I'm really grateful for all the board members who signed up to be mentors.

Nat - I've been mentoring for 3 years now. I've done it as 1-3-1. The structure that we've been provided works really well for 1-1. It's harder to manage 3 people's expectations. Thinking about how to structure the program from 1-multiple. It's certainly doable. I would need more support for how to have a micro-seminar.

Second point - in terms of interests. One way to think about it. Divvy up by different career tracks and different subject matter. Have two lists.

Mike - About being a mentor. I've done it in previous cycles. We have a ton of people across our organization who are amazing and talented and would make incredible mentors. I had this myself - am I a mentee or a mentor? In our conversations with people, our colleagues, our members of the society - "you'd be a great mentor, consider this."

Vicky - Encouraging mentors needs to be year-round thing. Lily made a great comment - it is ok for someone to be a mentee AND a mentor. You can double-dip.

Neil - Would it make a difference to have a sticker for the name tags?

Vicky - There are buttons.

Zhaoxu - Out of the 42 mentee applications, 30 of them indicated that they are new to NACIS.

Outreach

Kelsey - Vicky and I are working on a list of local groups (GIS programs and universities). Not much to report just yet, but we are actively working on this. Thinking about what type of outreach, either for the conference or the organization more broadly.

Vicky - A couple of years ago we had a list of HBCUs and Minority-serving institutions to reach out to. Maintaining a list that highlights awards and what not. We are updating this list. But also state and regional GIS groups. Getting on their newsletters. I'm emailing the NY state GIS.

Lily - I wanted to emphasize how awesome this is. Making it more clear on the NACIS website that we can send official invites if that is what people need or want. I know we've done this before, but making it more clear to people that it is an option.

Neil - I put in the chat a registry for all the GIS-Ps in the country. Might be worth mining this list.

Report: Nominations Committee (Vicky)

- [2026 Nominations Committee Report](#)

Vicky - Hannah had to step back from this role. The whole committee has had to step up. It takes a village to form a slate. I do want to note something that I missed. Treasurer is up for re-election. I reached out to a great candidate this morning, but they've been pretty busy today (wink wink).

Neil - This would be my final turn. There does need to be someone in play for the next one. Perhaps Martha and Susan can make recommendations.

Vicky - Two discussion items. Last year there has been some discussion asking for a bio or some preliminary information through the nomination form. Right now we collect name, nominator, and email address. Is that something we want to do? This is something I can carry forward to the next nominations period.

The other suggestion is really interesting and worth considering. We usually only have one student nomination for the board. But if we rank all candidates together and make sure the top student candidate is elected. The potential deal-breaker there is if we have 2, how would that work for the SBM stipend?

Any comments on asking for any preliminary bio or a "why?" field?

(no discussion)

Alright, we can add a why field to the nominations form. I'll work with the committee to get the wording right.

The other one, having all the people running in the same pool. The top student gets on the board, but if there are multiple students in the top 4, then we'd have 2 board members who are students.

Lily - This was a little thought from my brain. I had someone talk to me wondering whether they should run as a student or a full board member. At that point, there is some gambling on which route is more likely to get elected.

Jessi - Functionally what is the difference between the student and the board at large?

Vicky - Student board members have one term and get more money to go to the SBM.

JMJ - I think that our regular board members and student board members are defined separately in the bylaws. I would feel uncomfortable running those in the same slate. It needs to be a separately named election to fill a specific kind of seat. Even though once they are elected on the board, we treat them, and they function as, full board members. They are on the board to

represent a specific population that we need to hear from. No problem with a student running as a full board member. That's their decision.

(discussion on if this is legal)

(discussion on why this came up)

Vicky - xxx has accepted the nomination for the presidential track. This is an off year for secretary but Josh is stepping down. xxx has accepted the nomination for that. Bylaws says they can be appointed. They would take over till the end of the previous term.

(discussion on how long the appointed position lasts)

Three director-at-large positions on the ballot. None of our current members are running for re-election. 6 folks that are committed to running. I do not have their bios and statements yet. I do want to take this opportunity to review the prompts. Anything to adjust/add/change? *(nothing)*

We'll have the bios for the April board meeting. If you have any concerns that you don't want to air publicly, feel free to contact anyone on the nominations committee.

Proposal: Volunteer Coordinator (Mike)

- [Volunteer Coordinator Position](#)

Mike - There is a link shared that I encourage people to open. To provide context: we discussed this at the last meeting. The biggest questions were on the appropriate position within the organization and the title. Today I wanted to solidify the direction we want to go.

A couple of discussion topics here. Susan mentioned a personal connection to a volunteer coordinator role. Also wanted to discuss the coordinator vs director discussion.

Susan - The person who runs it is the Executive Director. I have to read over this doc to see if it's even close to being similar.

Vicky - Thank you for your work on this. We are in agreement that we need this role. It's just where it falls in the organization chart. I hate to make this about money, but an Executive Director role costs money, a coordinator role doesn't. For the two year test period, I would prefer to see it slotted in the coordinator level.

JMJ - There is a cost regardless of what level if they are expected to attend the SBM the board lunch at the conference.

Mike - As it stands now, this is effectively growing the board by one person.

JMJ - Is this position really focused on the annual conference?

Mike - Yes. It hasn't been specified as such, but that is the bulk of volunteer opportunities.

Martha - I misunderstood then. I thought it was for the board for the entire year. Like the website.

Mike - I've been framing it as the bulk of helping people engage at the conference. But it could be clarified that if a committee needs somebody to help, that can happen throughout the year.

Kate - I would rather not limit it to the conference. I think it's worth the additional cost.

Mike - It's an appointed position. 2 year probationary period, with a following 5 year term.

(discussion on what the current nominee would like to do in regards to only conference vs all year)

JMJ - Are we anticipating that this person is committing to 7 years? 2 years probationary period + 5 years? Or is it 2 + 3 years to make a 5 year full term.

Vicky - That's a good point. My thinking is that it would 2 + 3.

(discussion about the term length and how that works with the probationary period)

Mike - I'll make some clarifying edits. How do people feel about the title? Director of Volunteers. I'm leaning towards changing that to Volunteer Coordinator?

(straw poll on Executive Director level vs Coordinator level)

Vicky - Can we put it up to a vote?

Josh - Wait till tomorrow until the document is fully updated?

JMJ - Who does this position report to? How is the probationary period be structured?

Mike - This position would report to the board, if that's a thing. The board would determine whether it was successful after the probationary period.

Martha - Any of those type of period typically report do the Director of Operations. We could amend the organizational chart to include Volunteer Coordinator.

Vicky - Kate - is that acceptable to you as Director of Operations?

Kate - Sure I guess.

(discussion on who they report to)

Vicky - Let's do this for two years. Report to the President. That makes sense because the President gets the random "I want to volunteer" emails.

Neil - Would it make sense to report to the VP-Elect? That person is also learning the ropes and what needs to be done. 80% of it is going to be conference related. It's still probationary. It could be TBD how it fits in. This position is going to have to provide data.

Vicky - I'm good, assuming it's effective immediately, to meet with them regularly. To make sure the role is set up for success with regular coordination and email copying to Jen and Nick as they get the Milwaukee conference rolling. So there is regular communication as we figure out what it looks like in practice.

Jessi - Would this take over the Map Gallery oversight? Currently that's done through Awards.

Vicky - I thought that was conference planners. We do have a list of regular volunteers: that would fall under the Volunteer Coordinator's purview. See that all those are filled.

Martha - It's going to vary as we learn what needs coordination.

Mike - At least for the probationary period, it makes sense for it to report to the President and we can reevaluate after 2 years.

Report: Awards Committee (Jessi)

- [2026 Awards Committee Report](#)

Jessi - We met last week. Corlis Benefideo was awarded w/ot the money because it was in absentia. Don't know what to do with that. Gave out 32 travel grants at \$500 per for a total of \$16k. We would like to affirm the importance of these. We have the student competitions: 2 \$500 awards for the cartographic design and research ones. 2 \$500 to the student dynamic competition. Lots of people who participate. Undergrad we gave out. The committee would like to suggest that we pause for a year since we have trouble getting people to apply. Get in contact with the Outreach committee. But put a pause on it for a year.

Amy Rock will take care of the Map gallery.

Total of \$19k we gave out last year. We put in the same request as last year. We are asking to pause the undergrad. Student awards for the dynamic map and cartographic map should remain untouched. Anticipate cutting travel grants but are waiting to propose a number to see what is available.

Vicky - I know you came in blind. Thank you so much for putting in the work. Also, thank you for reaching out to Amy Rock proactively.

Martha - That's one of those things that got lost in the documentation transfer.

Jessi - I have updated the forms.

Neil - This is one of those things where we're giving money we don't have. I would recommend reducing this by 50%. Not touching the awards for the student mapping competitions, but cutting the grants.

Jessi - We discussed cutting the grants amount. We would prefer fewer grants, rather than smaller grants.

Neil - However you want to manage. The fund as a whole I would recommend reducing. Maybe discuss tonight with your committee members.

Martha - As a member of the awards committee, I agree with Neil on this. There aren't a lot of places we can slash funds, but this is one of them. Hopefully other initiatives can generate more income. Hopefully this isn't permanent. Right now we have to slash our travel grants. The more that we can encourage donations, a lot of them are earmarked for travel grants.

Neil - We at Eastview have been doing some work for Tom Patterson. He was going to give us all the content. I at least talked him into taking some sort of amount and providing that for student travel grants. I have no idea what he is going to make or submit. He is committed to NACIS student travel grants. We'll see what comes of that - it's money promised not money earned right now.

Nat - Regarding the Carlos Benefideo awards. I would suggest we suspend it indefinitely.

Martha - I agree. There has been a lot of confusion about the CB award. We tried to tighten up the conversation and details surrounding it. It did not progress. It's not a budget item right now since it's an off year, but I agree it should be suspended.

—

Vicky - A couple of housekeeping items. Thank you for coming today. It's a slog. The conference planning proposal doc - get any changes in the doc by 9pm eastern. Tomorrow looks like - but it's going to be pretty active. If you need to add items, make sure you add a time.

Neil - I want to underline the stage we set this morning. It's tough, it may hurt your feelings or the optics, but the numbers are the numbers. It's going to be rough. But come back being creative and positive.

Play around with the numbers, and that final percentage, and see what your cut can do for the health of the organization.

Kate - We'll be revisiting the website proposal tomorrow. Something else to consider as we thinking about all of this. We are positioning ourselves as the premier professional organization

for cartography: a visual field. We have AOD because we are setting ourselves as standard-bearers as high quality design. Our website does not in any way support this image. And there are hardly any maps on it. We can leave it. We can get away with just fixing the membership database. But is this something we want to be presenting ourselves to potential members. Something to think about.

Neil - It is a one-two year shot on expenses. Unfortunately we are cash basis. This should last 10 years. It is an investment in the organization. Despite it being a big byline for this year. It's an investment rather than a pure expense. This one seems to be more outward facing.

Kate - We'll do all we can do make it more maintainable. Maybe we'll do a redesign, but hopefully the backend will be more maintainable.

SUNDAY

Executive Office (non-voting)

- X 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*)
- X 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*)
- X 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

Welcome (Vicky)

Neil - Hopefully you saw my email yesterday. We are going through the Kentucky effect (our budget looks like the state). I would rather not be heading down to Charlotte, rather than going to Charleston. Zhaoxu and Lily gave me amended numbers on DEI and the Store. You can see the needle is corrected a little bit.

Josh - How hard and fast is the never below line?

Susan - I think it started when we signed contracts for a hotel. It used to be 2 years in advanced. We're guaranteeing that money whether we go or not. When there are extenuating circumstances like COVID or post-COVID, we have gotten a lot of grace from hotels that were

struggling. Once that contract is signed, and one is signed, then we have to have that money. The line is not enough, if we signed two contracts.

Neil - Part of my draconian methods of cutting this budget. I'm trying to set a stage that is fair and just for Nick, Jen, and possibly xxx. Short term losses for long term gains.

Martha - If we were to cancel Milwaukee, we owe them nearly \$70k.

Susan - The hotel at this point would be counting on a \$50k food and beverage pre-tax. But also they calculate the lost revenue from hotel bookings.

Martha - Between 340-180 days, 70% of our rooms and 25% of food. That goes up after 180 days.

Susan - That's pretty standard.

Martha - As soon as we get our next one signed, which will be soon. We'll have another \$50k for a full year out. $\$70k + \$50k = \$120k$ plus that we are committed to.

Susan - We can't cover that.

Neil - If we get below that line, then we are flirting with insolvency. We can't make good on our debts.

Martha - Not that we have any intentions of becoming insolvent, but we have to account for the worst possible situation.

Proposal: [Revised Conference Organizing Proposal](#) (Vicky)

Vicky - While this proposal originated with conference planners and is geared towards improving that process on the planners end, there are a lot of moving pieces involved in planning the conference that we all work on together and I think it is a better proposal with feedback from stakeholders across the board, and I appreciate the honest and constructive comments and suggestions.

Some people asked about what problems this solves, and while we covered a lot of that yesterday, here is a little more from my experience, because if you weren't involved I think some of this discussion sounds like it is a big fight, and it's not. Last year's coordination between co-chairs and DEI went really well, this process improves every year, and this proposal will help to codify that ongoing improvement as the planners and the board change every year. The room for improvement here surrounds scheduling, the day changed and there are cascading effects from any swaps like that, but that was communicated early enough to avoid any major snafus. A speaker dropped out and was replaced, more updates to the planners along the way would have helped.

Communication was done over slack and email which make tracking changes more difficult because sometimes it was a slack message one person to one person, or it was in the coordination channel we set up, or it was an email. It doesn't sound like a problem but it made referring back to the information more confusing, and this is true not just for DEI but all multiple factors. With the benefit of hindsight, having a single clear method of communication - not slack, where messages disappear - and being read in to emails with updates to conference information would prevent a lot of heartburn.

Invited speakers, no matter who is doing the inviting, should have approval from someone beyond the inviter, which is why we are asking for the board to review and approve these (by email vote where possible). The speakers should have signed speaker agreements on file with NACIS, with clear delineation of the inviter so when those funds are being allocated they come from the right pot of funds. There was a lot of confusion, a lot of back and forth around that this year that could be avoided.

We removed section 1.5 - not because it's not important, just because it is outside the scope of the proposal. I think this is important, and I think we should look at this not just for invited speakers but for all presenters. NACIS is a lot of people's first time presenting, and a lot of people present at their first conference. If we can make that on ramp smoother, we'll all benefit, and I'll send out an email this month to get a group together to review speaker guidelines with an eye towards first timers.

Zhoaxu - We are really happy with your considerations of our comments. "Invited speakers are coordinated by the conference co-chairs" I'm not sure about the coverage of the word coordinated. Is that just logistics or communications? If the invited speaker has some questions or inquiries - do they contact the co-chairs or the inviter?

Vicky - We switched out "coordinated" a couple of times. The co-chairs do the coordination of the rooms, and the timing, and all of that. The talking to the invited speakers would still be done through the inviter.

JMJ - This isn't the sole document about how to work with speakers. This is the document that really addresses how these tasks are taken on within NACIS. The question about who does the speaker talk to if they have questions or concerns, that needs to be laid out in a document that is specifically geared to the needs of our speakers. This document is how is the individual groups within NACIS coordinating.

Lily - Speaker contract? Not the exact words. Is that the email inviting them? We haven't a more formal contract before. The language about a contract isn't in this document, does it need to be?

Vicky - Speaker agreement is in the Google Drive. It's sort of a contract. We only started doing it 2-3 years ago. We only do for the invited speakers. We also took out the conference expenses entirely.

Mike makes a motion to approve this proposal

Jen seconds

12 approvals

0 opposed

0 abstentions

Motion passes

Proposal: [Revised Volunteer Coordinator Proposal](#) (Mike)

Mike - Thanks for the updates and feedback. I updated the document. Thank you to Susan for the follow up with her investigation. What we are proposing is somewhat in line with Bob's group. What you provided was some great input on how to formulate this position. Quick summary of what changed. First and foremost was a title change. I adjusted the language to describe this as a non-voting, appointed position. I added some language in that first paragraph about who they report to - reports to the current President. I removed creating and updating the org chart from the responsibilities. Last paragraph I made some significant adjustments to the language around the probationary period. Thanks for the feedback. This feels more clear

Martha - Thinking about the term in general. Right now we have it being discussed at the SBM. Most of the board roles over at the conference with the exceptions of the two directors and the ex-officio board members. I think it's a good idea not to have this position turn over at the conference, since that is the busiest time for that position. I don't think we can leave it variable. It should have a cutoff date of March of that year.

Mike - That makes sense. Do we want to do it January 1st or what?

Jen - It mentions the idea that the coordinator would come to every meeting. But we also mentioned that we don't want them to come to any meeting that would cause expense.

Mike - We didn't land on a conclusion to that.

Martha - Realistically, that isn't going to really matter until next year's SBM. Maybe we can put in that part of the probationary period is to see if their attendance is required?

Lily - When would this start for this year? April or May start period? If it's Jan 1st then it's a year and half till they start.

Vicky - My thinking on this is that we would have it be effective immediately. Vote to approve it and have a subsequent vote to appoint Daniel - assuming they are still amenable to it.

The term would be whatever we decide. May 1st makes sense. Call for proposals is still open but the conference planning is still ramping up. May 1st is off-kilter with the other appointed roles, but it makes sense.

Mike - Start immediately, but the 2 year term starts on May 1st?

JMJ - Probationary period. I hope to make it again in 2028. This isn't an evaluation of the individual holding the position, but an evaluation of the position itself. Usually when you see things about probationary periods, it's about people in a new job. It's a good idea to test-drive the position for a couple of years. I personally would be more comfortable if the explanation was more clear about the position.

(discussion about the wording)

Nick makes a motion to approve this with the edits talked about

Kate seconds

12 approvals

0 opposed

0 abstentions

Motion passes

(discussion on whether to appoint the person directly)

Nick motions to appoint Daniel Huffman in this position as long as they are interested

Zhaoxu seconds

12 approvals

0 opposed

0 abstentions

Motion passes

Vicky - Thank you to Mike for handling all this.

Report: *Cartographic Perspectives*

- Do folks want a written report here? I have done so in year's past, but not this year or the previous year. I am happy to provide either.
- Top level notes:
 - Published 3 issues within a calendar year without backdating for first time in seven or eight years (long before I took over)
 - Already scheduling content into our third issue for this year
 - First issue of 2026 will be out in March/April
 - Jack Swab joined the editorial team (cartographic collections), Margot Carpenter stepped down

- This year we will finalize new policies on corrigendum, name changes, and conflicts of interest (including AI) with the launch of a 'policies' page
- We are undertaking a survey/review of our sections to see if they meet the needs of the current nacis membership
- We hired student reviewers to handle citations checks
- Budget down to 16.3k (when I took over it was over 20; I have tried to reduce it each year)
 - Proposed areas of further tightening: Copyrighted materials (we never use this and it's too small to be meaningful); Student Award (down to 1k?); Board meal (it's sad I can't reward them at all, but budgets are gonna budget!)
 - Not sure where else is feasible. That takes us below 16k for a fully functioning academic journal
- I would like to explore potential means to turn CP into not solely a budget negative, but without removing our open access status that is difficult

Jim - *(goes over all the above notes)*

Want to do a survey. We want to do this somewhat regularly to make sure we are meeting the needs of the readership.

I would like to explore ways to make CP not a negative budget solely. We are the Gold-Standard Open Cartographic journal, so we can't sell ourselves. I would like to explore options.

Neil - It is net budget negative, but it speaks to what our core mission statement is.

Jim - I don't want to abandon this. It's one of the core things NACIS does. If there are creative ways to bring in income. Volunteer subscriptions?

Neil - Budget used to be higher. That was true, but there was such a backlog of publications they rather met their budget. You're a victim of your own success.

Jim - We've historically come in under. I've tried to tighten as much as possible.

If things continue as they have in the last year and half, we are going to discuss making issues larger.

JMJ - How many student paper submissions do you receive per year?

Jim - We publish 6-10 articles a year. About half of those are students.

JMJ - If there were a substantially fewer numbers of student articles, then I was going to suggest moving the award to every other year.

Jim - That's not a bad idea. We give out one for a masters and one for phd. I'm open to that.

Lily - I know some of the books getting reviewed are digital. Can we do digital reviews for all of them?

Jim - That would cut some of the types of books we could review. We have been trying to keep that down though.

Neil - Your largest expense is editing. Is that a pass-through to Huffman?

Jim - Yes, and the layout. We could discuss that. But they work at 50% of their professional rate for us. It's a lot of work. I've been more involved in the copy-editing recently. Daniel has some very specific views on writing, so I act as an intermediary to make sure the author voice is clear. Their work is worth it considering the quality.

I'm cut elsewhere to make for it, we've added the two student employees. They get about \$100 an issue. They are just doing citation checking. We've found out that the citations were not right. They were sloppy and inaccurate. We went through and realized, for relatively cheap, it protects us and makes us a better journal. And it brings them into the fold, and gets them ready to step into other positions. I was really excited that I don't know either of the students - we are reaching people outside our small group and bringing them in.

[Report: Membership and Analytics Committee](#) (Nick)

- Post-conference survey results

Nick - (*presentation*)

The upshot is that people love the conference. Comments were overwhelming positive. Fun to read through all the comments. Most of what we'll focus on is where we can improve, but keep that in the back of your head. A lot of people call it their favorite conference.

Overall satisfaction with the conference. 1 or 2 were neutral, the rest were satisfied or very satisfied. No one was unsatisfied.

Is the value worth the cost - in this period of inflation, it's remarkable that no one said no to a cost raise. A small increase can make a big difference.

Broke it down by different parts of the conference. A lot of good and very good.

Qualitative comments that I invite you to go through: People wanted to do more hands on for PCD. Not sure how that would work, but I like the idea. Presenters need to stick to time better.

Text size adjustments for captioning. Online part of the map gallery is sometimes hard to see.

More formal way to provide feedback on maps. More stuff in the shop. Captioning is really good to encourage people. People mentioned that we are getting better and they appreciate that.

New members don't know who to go to if they have issues. Request for all-gender bathrooms.

Martha - Last two years I've asked about it. The bathrooms that are built can't be rebuilt at the drop of a hat. We can keep asking?

Nick - That's all we can do.

Neil - I think it's a self-selecting group. No negative reviews is a little concerning.

Vicky - The post-conference survey used to be 30 pages long. Nobody filled it out. Two years when Lily jumped on, they revamped the survey and added a lot of thoughtful questions. They made it a \$0 committee by using an account they already had access to.

Lily - Jen made the charts. Nick led the charge to put the survey through the NACIS website since we were concerned using my University account about the data.

Mike - One of the bits of feedback that was interesting was AI usage and policy. Maybe that's too big a topic to dive into at this moment. Perhaps an upcoming board meeting can cover that?

Nick - If you have a specific inquiry, we can do a word search and collect all the comments.

Neil - Initially I'd suggest see what other conferences do about AI.

Jen - I think they were talking about Kate's talk. I don't think that is the type we're talking about? We don't want fake maps made with AI, but images is ok? We should distinguish. It is complicated.

Code heavy seems to come up a lot. I usually zone out. I think it might be worth thinking about - putting that in the first-time speaker policy: for coders and non-coders and semi-coders. What would make for good presentations that all could enjoy. Maybe have a code-heavy session. I think they were talking about PCD.

There were some positive comments about the Unmapping workshop. The one on Saturday I ended up not going because it seemed really similar.

Alexis - In reference to bringing in first-timers or describing what certain events are. I was thinking that a free way to do an orientation is to do a first timers zine.

Nick - I love that idea and it would go well with NACIS 101.

Report: Conference Planning Committee (Nick)

- Sponsorship discussion
- Keynote proposal (also: what happened to XKCD guy?)
- [Logo sketch](#) (with [color/font guide](#), and loose [color inspiration](#))
 - Some details are unfinished/not quite right yet
 - Proposal: to move forward with this color scheme/vibe for CFP, will bring full proposal with more refined graphics, style guide for branding and merch, etc to next board meeting for approval
- CFP coming mid-March based on last year's text with deadline in mid/late-May

Sponsorship

Nick - I want to start with a discussion about sponsorships. A small company outside of Madison who are long-time members of NACIS asked if they can sponsor the Tuesday night out or the NACIS night out. How do we feel about that? I wanted to take a temperature check.

Vicky - Yes. Give us money.

Mike - Plus one. There is probably a little bit of nuance, but yes.

Hannah - I want to hear from long-term members how we have dealt with sponsorships before. I want to be able to communicate to the membership. What are the guidelines? So we don't accept one, but "oh, NACIS doesn't usually do this". We really need this. How was this communicated before? How do we communicate it now?

Martha - When I first came on the board, 16 years ago, sponsorship came up every couple of years. There always the fear that if one company contributed a lot to the conference they would expect concessions. We have had people ask to be in the map gallery as like a trade show booth. We've tried to stay away from that format for that purpose. That's the past history.

Neil - We were trying to not show any favoritism. But the economics are demanding that we accept some form of sponsorship. Whether there are logos at the registration table? That would be pretty unintrusive. Some people would throw a fit, but those are the same people that would not pay \$700 for a conference registration. I'm all for it.

Mike - I grimace at "NACIS - presented by...". There is a way to do it so that it is empowering to companies in the industry. Help give them some publicity. It sounds like there are ways we can potentially structure this. I would want to keep it on the table given our current financial state.

Nick - I think limiting or being very specific about all this.

Martha - I agree we should be looking into this. I know there are a lot of organizations out there right now, that lists on their website the gold sponsors, etc... The money doesn't go to NACIS night out, or the lunch - they are contributing to the pot to help us pay for the event. If we do this, I'm voting for keeping Tom Patterson's ideas for video sponsorship - country level, continent level, global level, galaxy level sponsorships. Video sponsorship never worked. We have to find another way to reach out to those companies.

(discussion on how hard it was to sustain)

Neil - We didn't have the YouTube videos then.

Nat - Going back to the objections about the trade show. I think it could be a useful addition to the conference. Having a presentation is great, but have a place to have demos is even better. I've found it useful to talk to the software people directly.

Software, books, geodata vendors, etc... If you restrict it to a single table it wouldn't grow out of hand.

Martha - I think that's an interesting idea, logistically it will be very problematic. We are so limited on hotel space at this point. Unless we are willing to redevelop the entire model, we are spaced out of that idea.

JMJ - I think the idea of a trade show is something we would need to talk to the membership about. The Map Gallery is a community space. It reflects the personalities and the work being done by NACIS members. It supports the work with great pride the work of our student members. I'm concerned that if we go to a trade show we would lose that. We'd lose something that I'd think NACIS members really like. Over and over again we hear, we come together to spend time with our cartography family. I'm afraid if we introduced a commercial element, especially in the Map Gallery, it would take that away. We can't offer tables or booths comparable to other conferences. We would have to do so much work to structure the trade show experience, it would be so much work.

Nick - I'm going to nix the trade show idea for 2026. I'll put together a proposal for an unobtrusive sponsorship.

Lily - Accept only sponsorships from companies with less than 100 employees.

Nick - Or it could be based on locality. I'll put together something for next meeting.

Keynote Proposal

Nick - First test of the proposal we just passed. We don't want to put this out publicly so we need to have some sort of way to handle that. Jen and I want to invite Margaret Pierce. She's a former NACIS president, best cartographer in the world.

Alexis moves to approve the speaker proposal
Jen seconds

Zhaoxu - How much does the keynote speaker typically cost?

Nick - \$1500 honorarium and registration and hotel

Hannah - During my session I tried to keep it the lowest I could. I offered \$1000.

(discussion of various honorarium fees based on speaker)

(discussion on where the keynote honorarium comes from - comes out from the conference expenses)

Lily - Does your assumption cover that she would stay all 3-4 nights?

Nick - Trying to see what our budget is first.

(discussion on the potential honorarium for Margaret)

12 approvals
0 opposed
0 abstentions

Motion passes

Nick - I assume Randall Monroe is not giving a talk?

Hannah - The last communication was with me. I reached out but they never responded to us.

Logo

Nick - I discussed the logo with Kelsey and Lily. Sort of inspired by the Milwaukee people's flag. For next meeting I'll put together a formal proposal with style guides. Since the CFP will come out in a couple of weeks, I'm asking for approval for this color scheme/vibe. There are still some details I want to play around with more.

I'm thinking about a two color screen print. Dark blue and golden color on a lot of light backgrounds.

(discussion of the angle of the logo text in nerdy detail)

Hannah - Small flag. Iteration of the NACIS logo. Are we ok with changing the colors?

Neil - That's very common. We've done that a lot over the years.

(discussion of adding the dates)

Lily moves to approve the color scheme and general design
Zhaoxu seconds

12 approvals
0 opposed
0 abstentions

Motion passes

Call for Proposals (CFP)

Kate - I want to make sure we coordinate on the CFP. But I will be out of the country for the near while.

Nick - I don't have text, but I'm planning on reusing text and getting dates and getting that out in the next couple of weeks with Jen's help. What do we need to do?

Kate - There's an email that goes out. Martha has stepped in with the mentor emails, so she can help you if I'm not back.

Nick - I'll get that together. Coordinate with Martha. Update the website. For the initial CFP, do we have to deal with any forms?

Kate - You need a functional submission form. Gravity Forms.

(discussion on website form details)

Nick - I'll be in touch with Kelsey about all the social media stuff

Martha - We also need to make sure that all the CFP stuff (travel grants, et. al.) are ready to go live on the website.

Vicky - Translations as well.

Nick - We have samples from last year that we can modify

General Conference Stuff

Vicky - Gareth is one of the PCD co-hosts. Do you have second? Or do you need assistance identifying one?

Jen - That's on my todo list to reach out to Gareth to see if he has a suggestion.

Vicky - After the conference, I got a nice message from Aly. She was surprised we didn't offer a discount for unemployed. That's a non-starter now. The job market sucks right now. We have a lot of unemployed members looking for work. We have Slack channels, but if anybody has ideas of what we can do to support our unemployed members.

I had the idea of a headshot station and offering free headshots. Just to offer something, anything, for our members. I'm an ok photographer. Could ask Dan Coe to have a map for the background.

(chat ideas - panel, headshots, resume workshop)

Alexis - Daniel might be a great person to talk to about this. We were lucky to have Daniel speak to our class. A big portion was about the Cartographer's Alliance they run.

Nick - Feel free to reach out if you have other ideas

Report: *Atlas of Design* (Nat)

- Bringing back [proposal](#) from last meeting, with budget (see Treasurer's report) and [agreement document](#) from University of Virginia Press. Please review before the meeting.
- Separately, the editorial team is looking at assembling a separate promotions team with focused promotions plans, specifically a sustained social media program and academic course adoption. Proposed budget is for expenses like mailing lists, bulk email, etc. Very modest first-year efforts based on cost-effective increase in sales.
- We are also exploring the details of off-shoring printing, to reduce costs for next year's v.8
- We have initial pricing on how to warehouse our back stock in Minneapolis for lower cost than keeping it at East View.

Nat - The big thing I'm bringing to the board is this agreement with UVA Press. Framing that is the proposal I brought last meeting. A few developments on related fronts.

Any questions based on the document?

Kate - I was wondering if this means we can't sell on Amazon?

Nat - UVA will handle selling through Amazon

I would like to propose that we up the sales projection. This was assumed we don't do any better with a publicity push than we did last year with no marketing at all. We can do better so let's budget for that. Say that we'll at least do as well as we did last year.

The timing, if we agree to this agreement, I'm not sure how many weeks it'll take to get the boxes out there, the books processed, and getting them online. I'm guessing it'll be a month or two. That gives us a chance to email our membership that prices are going up.

Volumes 1-6 don't have a ISBN barcode on the back of the book. We've been stickering them for Amazon. I don't know how many of them are stickered already. We may have to hire someone to sticker a bunch of books. Until we sign this with UVA, we aren't going to know how the details are going to work.

UVA will not take our entire stock. East View will do that, but will charge us a decent amount.

I've found a place locally that will deep store pallets of books for quite a bit less. You have to pay an hourly rate to go in, once a year, take the crates off the pallet and ship them out - the next time we need to send them to Virginia. That's a better deal. We still have to insure those books. It'll be an on-going expense, but lower (fewer pallets and lower per pallet costs).

Neil - Is the stickering on the budget?

Nat - No. I don't know the cost. I don't know if they want the stickers put on, or the stickers supplied. We'll get an agreement and then we'll talk about it. I do know it's probably a few hundred dollar project.

Neil - If you don't have a line item for it, it'll come out of other parts of your budget.

Nick - So when we look at the budget at the end. What is the forecast for sales?

Nat - I'm looking at what we sold last year and thinking we can do as well or better. We don't know. We'll do our best. This is a new vendor and new setup. We don't know how well it'll work. Worst case scenario, our hope is to break even. We break even if we have similar sales as last year.

Some of our efforts will take some time to ramp up. One of the big things we are doing is trying to encourage course adoption. Getting a mailing list. Get a basic teacher curriculum guide - how do you use AOD in your classroom? There will be some ongoing process that we'll still be working on in October.

JMJ - Could you explain the calendar for this? How long will it take, and when, will books be packed and shipped to UVA? How long until UVA is ready to sell?

I understand you wanting to help balance the budget. But if there is a substantial amount of time that the product is not available to sell, then there is no way to meet last year's sales. UVA can't begin to advertise it until they are ready to sell.

Nat - We won't turn off our ability to sell until UVA is ready to sell. We aren't sending everything to UVA anyways. I don't know how long this will take. They don't want to waste time. But there is still the matter of getting the physical stuff into inventory, and getting it into their system. I hope it'll be soon, and they would love to start getting the revenue.

Nat - Will people race to buy before the price goes up? Yes, but the whole point is expanding our market. There will be people who are not on our mailing list, who will be buying it from UVA. The sales for last year were presumably people not discovering the book for the first time. Our NACIS market is pretty saturated.

Neil - Will UVA share the list of people who they sell to?

Nat - I don't know. I'll look into that.

Neil - Just as a note. AOD brings in money, so yes it is an expense, but this is an attempt to increase sales, I don't see from a financial statement it is a hard sell.

Neil makes a motion to approve the proposed agreement with UVA via the Business Office
Jen seconds

12 approvals

0 opposed
0 abstentions

Motion passes

Nat - Second thing to talk about is the promotions. We met with the editorial staff. They are interested in coming up with specific tasks. What are a few action items to get help with. "We're looking to do this project, come help us." Kelsey I would like to talk with you since there is significant overlap.

I threw a \$2k budget up there. I'm anticipating buying a mailing list here and there. Paying for bulk emails on MailChimp. We are trying to keep it modest in terms of cost. Industry standard is 3-10x ROI. Only doing things we have some sort of sense that we think it will pay off.

Neil - Will you have mechanisms to track that?

Nat - Not really. Just if sales go up. We'll talk to UVA about discount codes to see if such and such worked. We are already looping this all together.

We can't launch anything until we have the UVA thing in place. We're in the planning stages.

Neil - As far as the \$2k byline. What are you going to get from that? Are we comfortable with spending that?

Nat - We won't know for another 3 months. But we wanted to have a fund, so if there is stuff, then we have money to pull from. \$2k I thought was a relatively small number. We're not going to spend the money without having some clear thought that it'll boost sales.

Neil - UVA is not going to be doing any promotion whatsoever right?

Nat - Promotion and publicity are two different things. Promotion is getting into the bookstores. Publicity is getting people to go to the bookstores to buy it. We are doing that. Promotion is not just distribution, it's getting bookstores to buy and getting it to them. They are expanding the exposure, just not running a publicity campaign.

In talking with RJ Andrews, the Infographics person, he noted that by buying in the US, we are paying substantially more to print. Mir from our editorial team is working with folks in Asia sources to get quotes for off-score printing. According to RJ the price will be half to a third per piece. That affects our production schedule. We're looking at the cascading effects. We'll have a better idea come October. Opening submissions around the conference.

(chat question about tariffs)

Nat - Even with 100% tariffs, that still saves us money.

We'll be rejiggering the production schedule based on that. Might mean the submission deadline gets moved up.

Neil - You'll know the numbers pre-SBM next year.

Nat - I want to have those numbers ready by the fall.

Neil - So we'll see those numbers by next year.

Nat - Wish us luck. The end looks good. I'm really hopeful we get more profitable, higher numbers sold, get rid of the backstock and get this process financially rejuvenated.

Report: *Governing Documents Ad Hoc Committee* (Martha)

- [Governing Documents Committee Report](#)

Martha - Our committee has not met this year. We have had informal discussions which are in the report. We have ideas on how to move forward. We do have a few loopholes in our bylaws that need to be looked into.

No where does it say that board members have to be members of the organization. We have no methods of how to remove a board member. We should look into formalizing, concretely, how the board members are kept on the board, removed from the board, code of conduct policy, attendance policy, etc...

During our meeting I came up with a few more notes. That's covered under the TBD. Right now the committee is just Jenny, Nat, and I. I would really like another person or two to volunteer. Bylaw changes are a pretty significant thing. (Jessi and Jim offers to rejoin). I included a schedule for what we are going to do and how we are going to do it to make changes at the annual business meeting.

Nat - Do we have any reference point on whether theses bylaws meet governmental requirements?

Martha - That is on my list to look at.

JMJ - I took a look at the statutes for incorporating in Wisconsin. The most recent version are requiring you have a method to remove board members. We need to make sure we are in full compliance with the statutes of the state.

Other Business (Everyone)

- Slack updates (Vicky)
- [NACIS fundraising ideas brainstorming](#) (Vicky)

Vicky - Slack updates. If you aren't active, please post job postings, creative work, keep engagement going year-round. Robert Simmon wanted to start a book club to talk about Radical Cartography. Daniel has been in there promoting CP book reviews. It's a great way to keep our members feeling like their membership is good year round.

Other thing is fundraising ideas. There is a document to put stuff in there. It's just brainstorming. If something sparks something useful, that would be great. Barf ideas into that.

Nat - I think we need to have a dedicated development/fund-raising committee. We don't have a separate committee focused on developing revenue streams. There are a bunch of different ways that could go. Any number of things around how can we get more money. Everyone knows that any institution of any size has a development department. It would help us get back on track financially.

Neil - That's really right. That's where we struggle. We've been leaning on the conference for so long. Now the economics are not to that advantage anymore. It's really down to AOD and Lily selling \$30k worth of shirts.

Alexis - I think the committee is a great idea. Do we need a proposal to make a committee?

Martha - The president can make any committee she wants. You need to determine whether it's an ad hoc committee or a standing committee.

Nat - I would suggest the ad hoc is assigned to develop a plan, structure, mission statement for the permanent committee. They determine "what do you do, what's your goals, what's your structure?"

JMJ - I like the idea of an ad hoc committee be created to scope how this would function. My concern with it being a committee solely staffed by board members, is that board members roll on and off so rapidly. There may be a loss of forward motion in the work of the committee. The ad hoc committee needs to consider how to recruit individuals who have a devotion to the society. And ask them to serve on the committee, for longer than a year or two. Fundraising isn't a thing you can drop into and out of quickly. It's a long game.

Neil - 4 year term makes sense. It's going to be conference dependent.

JMJ - I've always thought that past-presidents would be great. But the burnout is real.

Hannah - My idea is to ask our retired members who would still love to be involved. I feel like that is a good way to tap them to be more involved. They have a wider network. Someone with institutional knowledge, but hasn't been involved in a while. I would discourage the past 3-4 presidents because it's too close.

Vicky - I will form an ad hoc committee for immediate discussion with priority being reaching out to folks like xxx and forming more of a structure on the committee.

Neil - Somebody on the finance committee needs to be on that ad hoc committee. (Neil is voluntold)

Vicky - Couple of board members have indicated they are interested. I'll send out an email to the board after this to make sure I get everyone's interest.

Review & Approval of Annual Budget (Neil, 90 minutes)

- Line by line review, amendments, and approval

Vicky - Alexis is getting a proposal template. It's getting ready. The next time you have a proposal to make to the board, please loop in Alexis to test the template. I used to facilitate week-long workshops (both hybrid and remote). Alexis and I discussed some strategies for keeping people engaged. I want to thank everyone for staying engaged and present and active. This is not only one of the most difficult board meetings subject matter wise, it's also been one of the most pleasant because everyone is engaged. Thank you everyone.

(Neil goes through the budget line by line)

Neil - This is the number that Susan and Martha proposed. I suggested a tech fee. Got the figure by looking at the website development + E3 streaming divided by 300 people.

Susan - That was based on Louisville. I'm hoping we have more for Milwaukee. It's a dart. An outstanding keynote speaker could make all the difference. It's a conservative number.

Neil - I want to add on the tech fee. Do we need to vote on that?

Susan - Martha and I price out the costs, then we come up with a proposed fee for registration.

Martha - I'm iffy on \$75 for person. I'd rather have \$25 per day. That's more equitable.

Neil - We've increased the membership fee from \$50 to \$75. Based on 350 members.

Martha - Which is quite a bit decrease in members - we're being conservative on that.

Neil - That is what it is. We're going with the conservative number. It comes out a bit more because the affiliate fee went up more.

JMJ - So the membership number. Is there any relationship between our membership numbers and the previous year's conference?

Martha - I wouldn't say it's an exact correlation, but it is a trend, yes.

(questions in the chat about whether students are charged as well, and whether the tech fee should be called "tech fee")

Neil - This isn't fleshed out just yet. We'll have to come up with a proposal on all this.

JMJ - My concern about having a separate tech fee, we would have to explain what it was for. I think it would be smoother to just raise conference registration fees.

Neil - We'll have to pan that out. We put on there tech fee/video streaming/maybe wifi. I'm not convinced E3 is going to stay the same. They have been incredibly economical and have not raised their fees. I cannot believe that will stay stable.

JMJ - Next question that will be raised is "Why am I having to pay a tech fee for a video that I'm in the room consuming in real time?"

Neil - We'll have to figure that out. Let's move on and table this because it won't change the numbers today

Nat - Why are the membership numbers going down so much?

Susan - It's somewhat suppressed because the Tacoma numbers were so inflated. They don't always stick around. There's always a blip registering for the conference so they have save the difference in price. But that doesn't mean that they'll renew. There will be a steady increase when the CFP comes out, and when the program comes out. We can up that number, but we can't assume it'll be the same as last year.

Martha - I would also argue that the economy and job market are in worse shape than last year.

Susan - We also lost a lot of membership because of things happening in the administration. We are getting nailed on all ends.

Neil - Moving onto AOD.

JMJ - Nat has suggested increasing UVA sales to \$9k. I thought the increase was going to be, to make the sales from all sales equals last year?

Nat - I would pay attention to the bottom number.

(discussion on what the final number should be)

Neil - This is Lily's updated store estimates

(discussion about the specifics of the store estimates)

Neil - Putting a fundraising line just as a reminder. We have very modest other misc sources. This is where the Tom Patterson stuff comes through. But I have no idea what that is going to be.

Now for the big lines items. The expenses. We're keeping stuff extremely trim. We spent \$9k last year for the SBM. Kudos to everyone for making this weekend work remote. It's a huge budget saver. Saving \$1500 on food as well.

Our corporate expenses are pretty trim unless you can see something?

(talk about the deposit for Milwaukee)

Those are the type of line items that we have no idea. That's what I saying yesterday. Those are the kind of things that can come back to bite you. They are almost impossible to prognosticate.

Jen - There's a question about removing Zoom.

(discussion about using University zoom accounts)

(discussion about line items that aren't used anymore)

Martha - Lifetime achievement type of things. Historically we haven't removed those line items so that we remember we had to spend that money at some point.

Neil - That's why I leave it on here longer than it needs to be. To make sure it has definitely gone away.

Getting into the website and hosting. I put the website rebuild as provisional. Modest costs otherwise.

Kate - I'll point out that when I first came on, I did a lot to consolidate our expenses about DNS and web hosting. So that's already been cut. As far as the maintenance item: if the website is not funded, then the Gecko line will have to be higher. More maintenance requests, that takes more time. Per request, it usually ends up over a grand. It's low if we don't do the website rebuild.

Neil - Fair enough. Wasn't sure if we were going to debate the website rebuild. We were discussing, can we just do the membership part of that. That was going to require you Kate to ask them what that might be.

Kate - There was no business days to ask them. They know I'm going to be gone. It depends on where we end up with this. Yes we go ahead, or I ask for a quote for just the back end. Depends on what the board thinks is best.

Neil - The other option is just to go to Gecko saying we only have \$13k to spend this year.

Kate - We could structure that two ways. See if they can and will just do the backend and how much that would cost. Or continue with the plan and schedule the start date towards the end of the year. So only the first payment is due towards the end of the year. That pushes it to next year, where our financial picture might be different.

Martha - I don't think we should amend the figure. We have to budget for worst case scenarios right now. If we decide to move forward where Gecko charges less, then great. But today we have to pass a budget.

Alexis - This website just needs to get done. I'm imaging how much work Kate et. al. have to do. The website being the front page for this institution. AAG did a shoe-string fix and it's a nightmare. Really count on the energy this board has for fundraising.

Nick - I was thinking the worst case scenario we push all the conference stuff on a 3rd party website. And we just put content on our website.

Kate - There is nothing involved for the conference in the website rebuild. We already have our conference registration on a separate vendor and so really the only conference stuff is the page. Sched is separate as well.

Nick - That makes me think we can get by another year without a overhaul.

Neil - We may have to come back in the next meeting in April and pass a provisional change. But right now we have to go with that number.

Susan - EventSquid is working fine. But if our membership database is not accurately recording it right, and people can't register at the member rate (and they are members) we have to go in at the worst time and troubleshoot each of those issues. The membership side of things is mind-boggling complicated.

(discussion on EventSquid)

Kate - Jump in to answer Nick's question about why we can't just move the membership to the conference system. Because we use it on our own website to restrict access to members. Member only vote. Other pages that are members only. Our site needs to have the membership system for that to work.

Lily - I really do think this probably needs to happen now. The hard thing for me is seeing how far from the budget we are. I don't know what else to cut. I would be ok adding in estimated fundraising numbers. DEI has already cut our budget in half. Jim has cut CP as much as he can. This is just a commentary that we are getting farther and farther down and there is less and less things to cut. Yet this still needs to happen.

Neil - I hear about putting some fundraising numbers. But we have no idea what those are or could be. We just put together an ad hoc committee.

(discussion on which number to cut so as to balance the budget)

Mike - We have a simultaneous chicken and egg thing going on. The website rebuild is the big key item putting us into the negative. We've talked a bit about a potential solution to that. Fundraising. The ad hoc committee for funding capital. That's still very much in process. It doesn't feel like we can truly answer whether we can do the website rebuild unless we secure additional funding.

It feels that there needs to be a provisional revisit following some fundraising discussions.

Neil - We can add a goal of \$26k to fundraise. Can we really budget for that though?

(discussion on goal vs budget)

Neil - The conference is really our only mechanism for raising funds. Just because we are a non-for-profit, that doesn't mean we can't generate profits from the conference.

(discussion on raising conference fees to handle website funding)

Kate - I was thinking back to something Nat said yesterday. Is there a way to consider this a capital expense? It sucks that this upgrade that we will enjoy for a decade, hits us all at once. I'm not an accountant.

Neil - We're not an accrual based company, we run on cash. So we have to take the hit when we take the hit.

Susan - There is money in accounts right now. One contract signed for this year. We could initiate part of this website rebuild. If something were to happen, where we don't make money on the conference and we lose a lot of money, then we would have to think about a virtual 2027 meeting. It's happened and it was successful. People appreciated it at the time. The conference costs a lot of money, and if it doesn't bring in enough to cover costs, and if you don't know when you are planning it and making all the arrangements, you don't know how many people are going to register. That's wild and crazy, that's a possibility.

Neil - Or you go to the ICA method of every other year. The conference has to make money. That's the only source that will pay for all our initiatives. We can nickel and dime AOD for example, but that's only bringing in \$10k/year or so.

Susan - We have to spend a minimum. There is room for things. We have a \$50k min before taxes and fees (which are exorbitant) which isn't hard when coffee is \$100/gallon. I could cut back on things that make it nice for people. Breakfast break. Opening reception food. The hotel goes crazy because I'll say we have 300 coming, and I'm ordering food for 75. They say this is ridiculous but I still throw away food. We could cut back on some of things that we do that are nice. Get a little bit leaner. Granola bars are \$70/dozen. Just order less. People can buy their own breakfast. Not have the extra extra. It won't be pretty.

Neil - To continue your thought, can you save an extra x amount of dollars?

Susan - I can try. I have the menus now and I can see what we can do to keep it not much over the \$50k we are required to spend.

(discussion about the price of coffee)

Nat - I've been thinking about how we've been approaching this budget. AOD has this problem that we don't know how much we are going to sell. We can guess or hope. If you are a sales business, part of our budget is a target. What's our sales target? What's our revenue target? I would suggest we set fundraising budget to something besides 0. By the end of the year, we are going to get an additional x amount of revenue. Charge the ad hoc committee - you have about 9 months - how are you going to do that?

Josh - We are below the never-below line. We can't crash and fail. We need to restock and be above that line before we count on initiatives where crashing and failing is an option.

Nat - We are at the point where we need to raise more money. We need to figure out how to do it.

Neil - Just because we want to do something and we think it'll work, that isn't realistic. I'm not a sales person. Even your committee isn't into advertising and promotions. We have to work with what we got.

Moving onto store expenses.

Lily - Cost would go up a bit for the shirts since we are printing more.

Jen - I feel like our framing - we have a broken website that we might need to fundraise. But that doesn't compute because the fundraising is so uncertain. And we need the website. As we get lower on the list we can make some drastic cuts and then fundraise for those things. In that case we don't have a broken website.

Neil - AOD expenses. I don't see a lot of chances to reduce.

(discussion on a particular line items for AOD - Mailchimp fee and promotional budget)

JMJ - We have no track record for this line item (*promotional budget*). For the membership, we have many decades of numbers. This is completely different. I think for the idea for use to recoup this cost, should it be spent completely, there needs to be at least 100 volumes sold. That's a bit of a red flag to me cause it's an additional 100 volumes on top of everything else. Can we reduce the cost to \$1000 to decrease the pressure to sell 100 volumes. It's only 50 additional and there has been an opportunity to experiment. But it's not as much as a heavy lift.

Nat - If we do that, we should take some money off of the income stream.

(discussion of income vs expenses related to AOD promotion)

Neil - CP Expenses. Need to push a couple of expenses from last year to this year's budget since they weren't paid out last year.

(discussion on amortizing award over two years)

Neil - Awards

(discussion on amending some of the numbers)

Jessi - Hill I will die on - don't cut the student awards. You can cut the travel grants and people might not notice, but they will notice if you cut the student awards. That's a 50% budget cut for us.

Neil - Just to outline, these cuts are not in perpetuity. These are just to course correct.

(discussion on the importance of the travel grants)

Neil - DEI expenses

Zhaoxu - We cut in half our expenses. Honorariums went from \$6k to \$2.5k. Getting local speakers.

(discussion on DEI training line item)

Neil - Down to the bottom. We have a negative budget. I'm opening the floor to discussion.

Vicky - I have a probably controversial opinion. The DEI donation. That's a student grant right there. Can we put a pause on it for this year? We're a not-for-profit and that does not directly benefit our membership. It does in a wholistic sense, but it is discretionary.

Zhaoxu - Originally it was \$1000. We can decrease it to \$200, \$300. If we can offer even a minor amount, it's a prestige for NACIS to honor the local nations. Some cartographers work with the local Indigenous groups.

Neil - I get it, but we need donations too.

Alexis - Could we earmark a travel grant for an Indigenous student? Save the money but you ensure that there is still Indigenous engagement.

(discussion about the Indian Land Tenure Foundation donation - DEI moved money around to fund it)

Neil - Are we ready to put it to a vote?

Nick - I would consider not streaming videos and putting the website update to \$10k.

Nat - Could we say that we will cover the cost for the membership part of the website rebuild, and we will try to fundraise to cover the gap?

Nick - That's what I'm proposing.

Kelsey - There is something to be said for a dramatic change that communicates to the membership that we are not in a good financial position. These things that are nice to have are perks, but aren't guarantees. We can bring it back later, but assuming we would always have it is not realistic. The tech fee is quite expensive.

Neil - That's a black number then. We're basically taking away from the video expenses and affording a website. The membership will either have to understand it or riot.

Hannah - We're not streaming, we're recording. We can communicate to the membership - we are in the red. We're not going to record this, unless you people raise money. If we raise \$20k by May (or whatever the deadline) but know that we are not capable of doing this because of this. So there is no surprise come October.

Mike - Communicating clearly what we are doing, quickly. Be that the video recordings or other cuts.

Jen - Martha makes a good point in the chat. We might not get E3 back at the same price. We could survey the membership and say if this is something you wait, we can add the tech fee. Then they have choice and we are less of a bad guy. E3 is so good and they are very good at what they do. It kills me to sever that tie. But that 20k is what we need to go back into the black.

Susan - Can we revisit the idea of people paying to see the videos? They are so important to people to show an employer, or use in classrooms. They can't be free for everybody.

(discussion on embargoing the videos to just members)

Neil - I like Hannah's measure. Email the membership and say that we can't afford it. We need either a stop-gap measure, or a donation, or we may have to add a tech fee at some level.

(discussion about how the membership is always upset about something)

Hannah - Our responsibility is to make sure the organization doesn't sink. We might upset them this year, but there will be NACIS next year.

Kate - I would like to observe that the people who are least involved in the website are offering quick and easy solutions to things. That is just not realistic. Easily making our membership work with YouTube, and making only the current members in our membership system see the videos - what if their membership expires? There is a lot of working pieces behind the scenes. Assume that there is more complexity that you are seeing.

Neil - We don't need to entertain the idea of monetizing the videos. We need a stop gap to raise the fees or we don't do it. It either continues on as it is, and we get it funded, or it doesn't happen.

Susan - E3 is holding the dates. There have been times I remind them a month before the conference. We may have months to get a handle on what we think we can raise.

(discussion of E3 costs)

(discussion of various solutions to the budget)

Lily - Do we have a platform for accepting donations?

Martha - The website has a button. We can move it to the front.

(discussion on whether we can amend the budget if we successfully fundraise)

(straw poll to determine what to cut)

Neil - E3 is out of the budget. The website is in.

(discussion about the specifics of the budget that is going to be voted on)

Kate - For telling the membership ASAP. Who owns doing that? And do they have the tools they need to go forward?

Hannah - Vicky and I will work on it together. But the signatories would be the board.

Jen makes a motion to pass the budget

Nick seconds

12 approvals

0 opposed

0 abstentions

Motion passes

Closing (Vicky)

Vicky - This has been a tough meeting. We have had to navigate a lot of difficult conversations and wild ideas. Thank you for doing it with grace and humor. Budgets were cut by 50%. I really hope a lot of these cuts were temporary, and will be restored as soon as we can. Thank you all.