

ACM SIGGRAPH Executive Committee Meeting
Saturday, August 6, 2011
Sunday, August 7, 2011
Marriott Vancouver Pinnacle, Ambleside Room

MEETING NOTES

Attendance: Marie-Paule Cani, Rob Cook, Paul Debevec, Jeff Jortner, Dinesh Manocha, Jacki Morie, James O'Brien, Scott Owen, Turner Whitted, Joe Marks, Jackie White, Ginger Ignatoff, Erin Butler, Gregg Talley, Daniel Schmidt, Marc Barr, Jenny Dana, Lou Harrison, Scott Lang, Jaime Radwan, Stephen Spencer, Brian Wyvill

Absent: Jim Foley

Guest: Thomas Ertl, Professor Susanto Rahardja

Saturday, August 6

President Jeff Jortner called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm. Scott Owen passed the torch to Jeff in a symbolic ceremony. Jeff welcomed the Standing Committee Chairs to the meeting and Thomas Ertl, president of Eurographics.

He thanked outgoing EC members: President Scott Owen, Marie-Paul Cani and Jim Foley.

Electronic Motions

To approve the contract with SOMA to make available for sale SVR streaming content
Jortner (motion), Debevec (second), Baylis, Frey, Manocha, Morie, O'Brien, Whitted
Did not vote: Cook

To approve the CAG proposal for the Business Symposium at S2011

Owen (motion), Morie (second), Cani, Cook, Debevec, Foley, Jortner, O'Brien, Whitted

To approve Peter-Pike Sloan as the Papers Chair for SIGGRAPH Asia 2012

To approve the following slate for the Nominations Committee: Barbara Mones, Yong Tsui (YT) Lee and Mashhuda Glencross

To approve that EC members and the Chairs of Standing Committees receive a guest Conference Access pass and 10 Basic Access Passes to both the SIGGRAPH and SIGGRAPH Asia conferences

Owen (motion), Morie (second), Cani, Cook, Debevec, Foley, O'Brien, Whitted
Did not vote: Jortner

To approve that the Immediate Past President serve as a member of the Nominations Committee for one year to ensure a smooth transition

Owen (motion), Morie (second), Cani, Cook, Debevec, O'Brien, Whitted

Did not vote: Foley, Jortner

Meeting Notes

SIGGRAPH Update

Bob Niehaus gave a brief update on S2011. The conference is in a good position. They budgeted for break even, and we should make budget. Full conference registration has already exceeded budget by 150 registrants (3750 actual vs. 3600 budgeted); this surpasses 2010 numbers for full conference. Exhibits are down approximately \$150,000 which is only 3 companies.

Leonardo Update

The contract with Leonardo was a 3 year experiment that has been very successful. Bob is just beginning conversations with Leonardo regarding a future agreement. He is looking at bringing it into the organization under the Publications auspices.

SIGGRAPH Asia Update

Overall submissions are down this year, notably in the Art Gallery and Animation Festival. This is partially due to some of the program chairs coming on late. Exhibition sales are tracking on target and room rentals are up. Hong Kong will be sending candidates through a government grant; this is roughly 30% of registration income.

The SACAG has recommended Professor Susanto Rahardja as SIGGRAPH Asia 2012 Conference Chair for Singapore. Professor Rahardia joined the EC meeting to introduce himself and answer questions.

Financial Update

Jeff Jortner gave a brief recap of the 2011 financials. ACM SIGGRAPH started 2011 with a fund balance of \$2,337,885 and closed the year with a fund balance of 2,507,285.32. Much of this was accomplished through budget cuts from the committees. ACMSIGGRAPH also received a \$22,000 credit from ACM in the publications sales/deliveries. This replaced a \$30,000 charge so it's a \$50,000 swing.

The 2012 budget is very conservative since we did not budget for an allocation from the conference.

DAC Proposal

The Digital Arts Committee is trying to push activities for artists throughout the year. They are using the home page of Art site to show art work and are holding two shows throughout the year. In conjunction with these two shows, DAC would like to do a print on demand catalog. It would be designed by the curator and one of the committee members. DAC does not see this as competition with the conference show.

The EC expressed concerns regarding the following: availability in DL; content selected by a curator instead of a juried process; timing of catalog interfering with conference Art Gallery.

The EC recommended that the content be clearly labeled as to what's juried and what's curated.

Jeff asked for a revised proposal to be submitted as a one year experiment incorporating some of the discussion points brought up.

ACTION ITEM: Jacki Morie will submit a revised proposal for EC vote.

Automatic membership for full-conference non-member registrants

The CAG is supportive of this proposal, but wanted to wait until we went back to LA. The idea is to add the cost of ACM SIGGRAPH membership into the cost of the conference registration. All attendees would automatically become a full member.

Tabled until Strategic Membership Model discussion on Sunday.

Pubs Update

The permission policies regarding images continue to be a problem. Thanks to Alain for sorting the last issue out. Marie-Paule, Rob, James, Stephen, Turner will have a discussion to take to the Pubs Boards to clarify this whole issue once and for all.

Action Item: Group will forward discussion points to the Pubs Board.

New Education Prize

Marc Barr asked for feedback regarding a proposal for a new education prize. There would be no real cost involved. The EC provided the following feedback:

- One award per year would be better.
- Need to have a detailed list of criteria to judge.
- Is there a clear nomination process and selection committee?
- Do criteria include anything related to SIGGRAPH?
- Need to keep a really high standard.
- Could have multiple winners if you had categories—art, computer graphics, etc.
- Think about proposing this as an award instead of a prize. This has to go through ACM for approval.

ACTION ITEM: Ginger will send Marc ACM requirements for new awards.

Awards

Paul Debevec reported that the Art Committee is looking at proposing a second art award.

The Coons Award Sculptor is getting ready to retire and the price of sculptures has gone up to \$1500. Do we try to buy the design? Do we come up with another award?

Awards come out of endowment fund. Expenses are exceeding interest on endowment.

The EC wants to continue giving this sculpture.

ACTION ITEMS: Paul will follow up with sculptor about number he is willing to make.

Ginger will find out about taking funds from endowment to pay for a large order and determine if SIGGRAPH owns the design.

Committee Updates

Small Conferences

- Healthy program
- Co-los seem to be doing well.
- Some thoughts about using SVs for co-located conferences

Publications

- Working with ACM to clarify policy
- Workable business model for SVR

DAC

- 66 people at last committee meeting
- Social site is very active.
- Continue to return art from Traveling Art Shows
- Problem with inactive committee members

Education

- Received donation from Autodesk
- Nvidia Foundation interested in collaborating with a SIGGRAPH-related program. Will hold an onsite fundraising event. Nvidia will match donations and money goes to support Pioneer Mentoring Program.

Nominations

The Nominations Committee is conducting numerous interviews on site. Nominations remain open until December.

External Relations

Scott Owen reported that 5 affiliate agreements are expiring—DCAJ, Laval Virtual, Imagina, FMX and NCACG. Some of these will be renewed on site this week.

Committee Terms/Policies: Some of the documentation related to committees needs to be added to the policies, ie, term length, term dates, liaisons.

Action Item: Scott Owen and Erin Butler will review and update policies.

Sunday morning

August 7

SA 2012 Chair

SACAG has recommended Professor Susanto Rahardia as SA 2012 Conference Chair. He was at the meeting Saturday, where we had a chance to talk with him. He's been chapter chair in Singapore SIGGRAPH chapter for the last few years, and he's served as a persuasive advocate for SIGGRAPH Asia. Professionally, he's a top researcher in Singapore.

Overall the SACAG looked at five candidates. The SACAG feels that Susanto can recruit volunteers and build a strong team. He's also connected within government in Singapore.

The EC questioned his arts connections. Art is clearly not his strength, but he will plan on recruiting strong arts people to the committee.

Motion: To approve Professor Rahardia as SA 2012 Conference Chair.

Approved.

Membership Model

Since the last meeting, there's been lots of activity, including revisions to the membership model, work in a professional development task force with Marc Barr, discussions with the conference groups on collaboration with others, and about the issues around the website and how all the needs of the organization will be included there.

For this meeting, the goal is to look at standing committees, their roles and operational links to the EC. A "straw man" document on committee charges was distributed to the group for review.

Standing Committee Structure/Roles/Communication with EC

Key points of role of the Executive Committee with respect to the standing committees:

1. The Executive Committee is responsible for overall direction, strategies, focus of the organization as a whole.

The Standing Committees carry out the intent of the Executive Committee and bring points back to the Executive Committee as needed.

Clearly, communication becomes the key here, and we all recognize that there's a need to build in more and better communication.

2. The Executive Committee determines the priorities and accepts the responsibility for the overall functioning of ACM SIGGRAPH.

3. The community as a whole builds annual plan of action. This is approved by Executive Committee.

4. Quarterly reports will bring information to the Executive Committee on the activities of the Standing Committees.

Discussion notes:

- Quarterly reports are a lot of reports. Noted that these envisioned as bullet points, rather than a lengthy report.

- Concern was raised that the Executive Committee is setting strategy without the input of the Standing Committees. The vision was explained as both Standing Committees and Executive Committee strategizing together -- the process should be interactive. It was noted that the current language reads that the EC strategizes, with the SCs doing the work. The intent is to be a collaborative, iterative process.

- It was noted that the EC's responsibility is to look across all the committees, noting where

additional emphasis is needed. There's a need to specify the connections to the committees. In response, it was noted that having committee chairs at the meetings helps the conversation. It was also noted that it's the EC's responsibility to own the strategy and own the process, but the EC and committees need to be fully informed and engaged.

- Feedback highlighted – see providing information from committees, but don't see any result of that input, or that there was discussion of why something wouldn't work. It was also noted that there's not enough about committee chairs being informed about discussions, if there's a way to appeal a decision of "no". If there are not in-person meetings, there need to be better procedures for having information flow back to committees.

- If money can be found for in-person meetings, that is best.

- Language needs to sound more like we're all partners. Liaisons were to help with this communication.

Jeff noted that he's going to be meeting with all the committee chairs this week, and looking at how to do that, including conference calls, video meetings, etc.

- Approval of a committee's plans should imply budget approval. Committee plans should include funding.

- When we went to this model, we tried to set up a proper balance between EC and committees. It was also noted that the separate entities have been doing their own activities, which can be good or bad. The viability reports that came in highlighted the activities of each group. Also, there is a tendency to repeat a project, especially if it's been done for a number of years. There may be items that the EC should ask to have included in planning for conferences, for example, like "mobile devices". The view was expressed that there has never been a strategic executive committee. Time for looking at the broader picture generally, that all are heading in a consistent and healthy direction. Additional discussion of different dimensions and components of ways of operating.

Communication with Committees

Jortner noted that he's meeting weekly with Ginger and Erin, just to keep the three of them in the loop. What would a parallel for that be for the group?

- Monthly call with committee chairs, what's going on, what needs more attention. Noted that taking notes and sharing that would be helpful, especially for those not able to be on the calls.

- Discussion of the roles of liaisons, with them in full communications with committees, reporting back on a regular basis.

- Looking at having monthly calls with EC and Standing Committees, there was some discussion of recording these and archiving the files. Questions of propriety of that, whether might open to legal problems.

- Agreement to go ahead with monthly calls.

Liaison Role/Appointment

- Opportunity to have full communications on a regular basis. Selectively participate in committee work.

- Perhaps a liaison is more a facilitator of conversation, bringing items from EC to committee, and back to EC. Liaison could also communicate an issue from the EC that needs follow up,

making sure that happens

- Scenario of monthly call between liaison and committee chair means liaison pays more attention; sidebars keep both up to speed, liaison also aware when committee chair needs to be involved.
- Ideally committee chairs and liaisons choose each other. Example noted of James O'Brien replacing Marie-Paule Cani as small conference cited as good transition. If informal connections can be made, this is seen as the best scenario. Most committees need liaison.

Action Plan for the Coming Year

- Getting to point of agreement on structure and priorities. This requires clarity on goals, so that the discussions have a common basis. Annualized plan makes sense.
- Note on budgeting. Budget approval is in February/March for the fiscal year beginning the following July. Planning for the budget needs to begin in the Fall prior to that, giving time for interaction, mutual feedback, etc.
- Note on annual reports. Clarity needed which material is going to EC, which to have wider distribution as annual report from ACM SIGGRAPH. The latter seems an executive summary would be relevant, while internal report needs to be broader.

Membership Model

The Membership Model was presented at the chapter's workshop, where there was a good cross section of chapter people present. The model presented a fairly complex effort to come from where we are to where we want to be. The general consensus from that group was that there is too much confusion between the various membership categories: ACM, SIGGRAPH, chapter associate, full. Make it easier, keep it simple.

Model presented with associate benefits was way too complex; how will chapter members know who is a full member, who is an associate member. Need to be careful about our wording. There was lots of confusion about associate members. Communication is the key. Need to do a better job of connecting all the units—chapters, conferences, small conferences.

The three strategic prongs were validated: building/defining community, integrating community, and removing operational barriers to facilitate community. The sense of delivering more content really resonated, both delivering content available to chapters and uploading chapter content to be shared.

Scott Lang added that the chapters were also saying that there are a lot of benefits that aren't being communicated clearly. For example, if one of the smaller conferences is in town, there's not a great job of communicating that. There's no easy way to connect.

Concern was expressed that there is an intention to promote things like blog website, before they exist. In terms of broadening membership beyond the conference, the chapters do that at the local level. It's a matter of getting all the points connected, making all aware of other activities. We need to figure out connections in the organization that already exist.

Good for community to have social media, for example. We need to share content more--conference content, locally generated content. For example, letting attendees at Vancouver know that there's a Vancouver chapter.

Another example is to invite those with material accepted for the large conferences to "practice" their presentation at a chapter meeting. This might be very helpful to the presenter as well as being an interesting program for the chapter. Or having presentation(s) repeated in the local chapter setting after the conference.

Delivering real value, spending on communication with chapters, on website, getting all that up to speed, then raising dues is possible. Another possibility is using mentors. Some strategies may need contractors to move forward, rather than volunteers; with budget implications for that. It was noted that leadership is aware of potential burden on volunteers.

Chapters were discussed briefly. Typically, chapters will have a burst of activity, then there will be a change in leadership, and it's hard to maintain that. It was noted that most members of chapters see very little value to membership in ACM SIGGRAPH, since don't want/need access to the ACM Digital Library. Generally, chapter members are looking to the sense of connection to the community; small discounts don't motivate volunteering for the chapter. Goal to educate people, inspire people, get people excited for long-term involvement in SIGGRAPH.

Another point heard from the chapters is to have a single collection point for dues that would then rebate a portion of those dues back to chapters. This would allow for a central database (although this collection of data raised other problems in some countries).

Questions of collecting in local currencies also come up.

Points were raised that chapters in Europe operate differently, often out of universities or research facilities, and this leads to variations in dues charged, content, focus, etc. Some countries only have one chapter, and that is also a different setting. There was some discussion of the language. "Associate member" seems not well understood. In fact a goal of approaching prospects with the idea of joining ACM SIGGRAPH might be the wrong way of going about this.

There needs to be a system of tracking prospects, including on informational mailings (conferences, events, chapter meetings).

Committee Charges

Chapters

Discussion: all agree with the sentiment, but the devil is in the details. The discussions are on ways to make these things happen.

Communications

Discussion: Noted that over the years the communication piece has been the biggest broken piece. Even though some pieces have been removed from this area, there's still a problem that this needs to be made manageable. Need to figure out what support is needed, and what resources are needed.

Social Media

Not just with organization, but also needs to be worked out with upcoming conferences, including both SIGGRAPH and SIGGRAPH Asia.

Digital Arts

Description needs to contain idea that the efforts in digital arts are year round, not just focused on the conference.

Education

The larger charge needs to be broken down. Professional development – change name of committee?? Perhaps work on ACM TechPack for Graphics field. Work with educators.

S3

Experience with webinars.
Publications
ok.

Small conferences

Could channel ideas to/from small conferences, but not clear who to bring ideas to.

Information Services

Need to recognize growing own uses and conference uses; there needs to be an effort to manage resources between the two.

Comments

While SIGGRAPH Asia doubles the amount of work, the resources for it are decreased. Chapters have also grown. Note that there really needs to be a comprehensive model for how the committees support the broader community, and how that will work best. Many band-aid solutions used during the conference that could benefit from consideration when there's not a problem on the table. We need a list of responsibilities for each committee chair. No documentation. EC should have a job description for each committee chair. Outgoing Chair should provide more of an orientation manual.

EC rep to Small Conferences Committee

James O'Brien to serve as EC rep to small conferences, replacing Marie-Paule Cani, who is moving off the EC.

Motion to approve James O'Brien as EC liaison to the Small Conferences Committee.

Interaction with ACM

Jeff Jortner to meet with Alain Chesnais, Pat Ryan, and Donna Cappelletti to talk about interactions with ACM. There are a number of issues that cross a lot of different programs. The idea is to start the conversation on how to address the issues with an expectation of better communication and follow through. For example, things happen within ACM that we hear about at the last minute. The intention here is to start the conversations.

Motion to Adjourn