HGS BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Date: January 16th, 2024 Meeting held via Zoom
Quorum confirmed, meeting called to order by Paul Britt (HGS President)
Time: 6:20 pm

2023-2024 Board Members

Paul Britt (P)	Penny Patterson (PE)	Kenneth Mohn (S)	Linda Sternbach (VP)
Fang Lin (T)	Glenn Lowenstein (TE)	Caroline Wachtman (E)	Ted Godo (EE)
Bill DeMis (D2)	Troy Meinen (D3)	Judy Schulenberg (D1)	Sharma Dronamraju (D4)

Board Present

Paul Britt (President)

Kenneth Mohn (Secretary)

Caroline Wachtman (Editor)

Fang Lin (Treasurer)

Sharma Dronamraju (Director)

Glenn Lowenstein (Treasurer Elect)

Linda Sternbach (VP)

Troy Meinen (Editor Elect)

Bill DeMis (Director)

Ted Godo (Editor Elect)

Judy Schulenberg (Director)

Paul Britt – Introductory Remarks

Agenda:

The meeting opened with brief introductory remarks by Paul Britt. Paul continued with the agenda and asked if there were any issues, comments or additions to the agenda. There were none.

Discussion and Approval of the Minutes: Paul opened a discussion on voting for the December Minutes with two corrections, Remove Troy Meinen from Present and Reverse the names on the motion to approve the minutes.

Motion:
Motion to approve the November 2023 Minutes as Final with minor correction. Penny Patterson so Moved and Fang Lin Second the Motion. There was no discussion, Vote passed Unanimously.

The Final corrected Minutes for December can be found in the HGS Dropbox under: Dropbox\HGS Committee Report & Board Minutes\Monthly Meeting Minutes Reports\2023-2024 Board Minutes\Final

Treasurer’s Report – Fang Lin

The Treasurer’s Report is on file in Dropbox. Fang Lin presented the Report and the results for mid-year. Fang showed that the HGS finances were healthy between July 1st and December 31st of 2023. In this period, there were only two months of net loss. Overall spending is on track. Fang did notice several social events went over budget, but they made up for it in Revenue, for the most part. Events cost more but also earned more.

Fang showed the Total Equity chart (Table 1). There were no shares sold since May of 2022 and no investments pulled out since June of 2022. Our Total Equity was $2,619 for last month. This was only due to the unrealized gains we had in Schwab account. At this point, we have enough equity to cover the next 3-6 months.

Starting on July 1st, 2023, our Total Equity increased $107,804.

The performance of the HGS Major cash accounts has increased in the past 6 months.

Fang noted on Table 1 that the dates on the charts were not accurate, and she was not sure how to change the dates.

The Chase checking account has $65,981 on balance but we need to be aware that there is an upcoming disbursement of approximately $37,500 to the Scholarship fund.

The Schwab One Money Market Account had an increase of $13,451 from End of June to end of December. We did well have the dividend reinvested into a money market account. Paul noted that the Finance Sub-Committee is meeting tomorrow to discuss investing some of these funds. Meeting is at 4:00 pm tomorrow. Paul will refresh everyone on this meeting invitation.

Fang showed Table 2, which is the Operational Revenue and Expenses. We ended up with a $20,000 loss in December. In the period from July 1st to December 31st, we ended up with more than $40,000 in Revenue.

Figure 3 shows Total Equity and Schwab Account. We are doing well.

Figure 5: The source of Revenue was shown on a circle graph.

The largest income was:

- Sponsorship 46%
- Registration 33%
- Membership 9%
- Donation 5%
- Royalties, advertising, short courses 7$ (2%,3%,2% respectively)

Paul asked what the difference is between a sponsor and a donation. Fang said Donations go to the General Fund.

Advertising is a small part of Revenue. Bill DeMis talked about the benefit of a paper bulletin, If we went to a paper bulleting or a smaller “Kinko’s” version of the bulleting, we may be able to secure more advertising as people like to advertise in places where the document could get passed around.

Caroline Wachtman (Editor) pointed out the issue is the number of viewers on our online bulletin is low and that affects the advertisers. Paul said this is something we need to look at in a future date.

Paul asked if any sponsor for any event could provide ads that we can use at our discretion in website and bulletin to encourage more advertising. This can be quarter, half or full page ads. Bill DeMis suggested we do this with Core Labs.

Figure 6: Fang Lin went over Expenses by category. Expenses were broken out as follows:

- Social Events 31%
- Meeting Expenses 17%
- Payroll 18% (21% with fees)
- Rent 5%

Fang Lin then presented the Actual vs Budget for the past 6 months (Figure 7). The green dots on the chart are actual Revenue and the red dots are Expenditure. The Bar Graph in Figure 8 shows this same information in a different format. On the Bar Graph, the Red bars are cumulative and the Blue bars are Monthly.

Fang summarized the Profit and Loss by activities for the first 6 months as follows:

The Top 3 Profit Generators

1. The Gala ($24,280.72)
2. Student Expo ($21,999.65)
3. Golf Tournament ($20,219.78)
4. Sporting Clays (though had more expenses than expected) $4,003 profit.
5. International Explorationist dinner $2,508 Gross profit
6. Scholarships have raised $37,500 to date and should have enough funds to cover costs.

Jeff Lund has paid Scholarships from the Interest of the Scholarship fund. Penny Patterson said all money goes to Scholarships. Paul Britt pointed out that all money goes to Scholarships after we net our dinner, venue and staff costs. Jeff Lund mentioned that the donors expect some cash to pay the HGS cost of Scholarship Night. For the HGS, Scholarship Night is a net Zero event.

Fang went over Figure 9 which shows G&A Costs.

The Bulletin shows a small loss. This is expected and Paul Britt mentioned that in the past this loss was just buried in G&A.

Figure 11 & 12 showed Actual vs Budget. Two charts show the 6 month results. Figure 12 shows a projected Profit if we remain on track with our budget and activity. Fang Lin noted the Student Expo did very well on the Budget Vs actual. Paul noted that this event happened before we did the budget (hindsight is 20/20).

Fang Lin pointed out that the mid-year report is ok, but the Committees need to review budgets and be aware of their spending. Paul noted that there may be some timing issues in the budget numbers. On the Special Interest Gala Bulletin, GCAGS donated $15,000 for the Bulletin. Caroline Wachtman (Editor) expected the Bulletin to be all negative. Special issues draw more revenue for the Bulletin. Advertisers like the fact that special issues tend to be more heavily distributed.

Fang concluded with the report and more details are found in the Dropbox file.

Paul Britt said what you saw was a statement of financial position and a Monthly profit and loss statement.

Penny had a question on page 7 where Scholarship Night shows a large profit, but it is a zero sum event. Fang Lin pointed out HGS can use revenue to pay for the Norris Center, Staff time and Meals.

Fang also pointed out we had some great events with good turnout. The Norris Center is expensive.

Linda Sternbach said the Norris Center has raised costs. However, the Norris Center is quality and is flexible on minimums. Norris is flexible. A question was raised, can we get sponsors for meetings? The HGS needs an organized effort to solicit and secure sponsors. Paul Britt pointed out that other venues are similarly expensive. Mohn said Norris is a good venue and in a good location for access from all parts of Houston. Judy Schulenberg said the Norris Center is convenient. Paul asked if there were any more questions.

Motion:

Penny Patterson motion that we accept that we approve the Treasurer's Report with changes to the two date corrections.

Troy Meinen Second the Motion.

Vote: All in Favor, Motion is Approved.

Secretary Report – Kenneth Mohn

New Membership Applications Report:

We have 9 Active Member Applications and 2 Student Member Applicants. One Active member did not show a degree, but a quick search showed a strong Geologist (Charlie Kergaravat). All applicants meet the qualifications for their respective Membership. Here is a list of the Applicants who were approved by the Motion below:

January 2024 membership report (for February 2024 meeting) 9 Active Member Applications, 2 Student Member Applications						
First name	**Last name**	**Membership**	**AAPG #**	**HGS sponsor**	**Employer**	**Degree, Major, University**
Jerry	Okose	Active	Yes		Elitar Consult	MS - Geophysics, University of Lagos
Daniel	Hughes	Active	Yes		Lapadanco Inc.	MSE - Geological Engineering, Princeton University
Yoryenys	Del Moro	Active	Yes		Oxy	MS - Geophysics, University of Oklahoma
Ashna	Abraham	Active	No		Stratum Reservoir	BS - Petroleum Geology, University of Houston Downtown
Charlie	Kergaravat	Active	No		TotalEnergies	PhD - University of Pau Geologist
Amanda	Reynolds	Active	Yes		Encino Energy	MS - Geology and Planetary Science, University of Pittsburgh
Anthony	Zak	Active			Aviles Engineering Corp	BS - Geology, Lamar University
Maurice	Gilbert	Active	Yes		Sempra	BS - Geological Engineering, South Dakota School of Mines
Jess	Kozman	Active	Yes		Katalyst Data Management	MS - Mechanics of Sediment Movement, Michigan State University
First name	**Last name**	**Membership**	**AAPG #**	**HGS sponsor**	**Employer**	**Degree, Major, University**
First name	**Last name**	**Membership**	**AAPG #**	**HGS sponsor**	**Member since**	**Age**
First name	**Last name**	**Membership**	**AAPG #**	**HGS sponsor**	**Employer/Professor**	**Degree, Major, University, Exp. Graduation**
Muhammad	Siddiqui	Student				University of Houston - Downtown (Bachelors in Geosciences with a concentration in Petroleum Engineering)
Austin	Bruner	Student		Gene Rankey		MS - Geology, University of Kansas

Motion:

Bill DeMis Motion that we approve the New Membership Applications as shown.

Glenn Lowenstein Seconded the Motion

VoteL All in favor, The Motion is approved.

Time now is 7:30.

Next on the Agenda were Major Items for Discussion:

Scholarship Night and handling of Expenses (Paul Britt):

Item 4A: The Calvert Scholarship Fund raised over $40,000 with ExxonMobil contributing again to the Fund.

The issue is last year we ran into a deficit as staff time and overheads were high. It was decided to charge these costs to HGS out of the funds raised to offset expenses to HGS. This was a little on the high side of $5,000. This year, we have localized more of the work to volunteers to reduce the staff time to 10-15 hours. We need to establish a cost on a per hour basis and allocate it to Scholarship Night as all proceeds will go to scholarships, after we just cover our costs.

Linda Sternbach pointed out that there is no transparency on billing of hours by the office.

Paul Britt pointed out that Larger HGS events are different where we charge based on actual Net Expenses. With respect to the Staff, all we can do is look at reports. Paul said he finds the allocation of time to not be onerous. He sees no problem. Penny Patterson suggested helping with transparency, Andi could make a report of her time on a weekly basis, and we could review this. Paul said we need to track monthly, if at all. Troy Meinen said everything is Zero Profit at the HGS and everything that goes in (referring to income), goes out. The other piece of contention is the cost of the office. Troy said we could break the office and staff costs evenly over all events except for the Scholarship Night.

Paul Britt noted Scholarship Night is an outside event. We should be able to cover our costs. If we can get staff time reduced, we still need a full time person in the office. Paul pointed out that if we do an event where all profits go out to scholarship, it would be after expenses. Paul noted that Andi's timesheet is substantially lower. We are currently looking at significant reductions across the board, but we need someone in the office.

Sharma Dronamraju suggest we save money by using more volunteers. Linda Sternbach said we have already reduced the staff costs by not having easels, no handouts, and other efforts that will reduce our costs this year. Most of the work that Andi does, and does well, is answering the phone. Linda said we never know how much is shared on Scholarship night. Linda agrees with Troy that costs should be spread over other events.

Paul Britt said our goal is to give more work to the volunteers to do the heavy lifting. There is a cost here that we need to control. Last year the office staff cost was $200,000. Andi is very good at anticipating and Looking Forward on Events. She knows what needs to be done and when. We need to make committees aware of the cost to call the office versus doing the work yourself as a volunteer. Paul said he would be fine charging the time to the event, otherwise the cost needs to be made up somewhere else.

Fang Lin had two comments:

1) From a chairperson standpoint they should dispute charges as much as possible.

2) Fang thinks it is fair to comp. the cost ($30-40K) to G&A.

Paul noted that Under G&A the total expense is $200,000 which has to be recovered somewhere. We must keep the HGS running. Paul said we would discuss Scholarship Night again next month.

Item 4B: The Bulletin: Linda Sternbach submitted a discussion point for the HGS Board to consider on Event Advertising. She suggests the Bulletin reduce to 5 issues per year. She also proposes a sophisticated Newsletter. This would allow the Bulletin Editor more time to put together material and content. With better content, we should be able to encourage and target advertisers based on the content of the issues we publish.

This proposal has some good advantages:

- Every 2 Months the Bulletin is published allowing the Editor more time to prepare.
- The Newsletter will cover the event announcements and the Bulletin will focus on content.
- On a current readership basis, the Bulletin announcement currently goes out to 14,000 people with 30% viewing the Bulletin.

Paul Britt said he would like to give Caroline Wachtman (Editor) a minute to talk.

Caroline said there are ways to modernize the Bulletin and make the content more accessible. Looking back at the old Bulletins, they had less content. Caroline said she spends 15 hours a week working on/writing content. The HGS Bulletin articles are not Peer Reviewed, and big companies (Majors and large independents) don't publish material. Small independent companies and individuals (consultants) do publish. We need an Editor going forward who is dedicated to improving content and the Bulletin.

Sharma Dronamraju suggest we see how we can beef up the bulletin by recruiting more people to publish.

Paul Britt commented that Pdf publications are old fashioned but 1/3 of our members look back on this. We need a recorded history. We also need to have searches for things like field summaries and type logs. It would be good to get content from our speakers. Going back 20 years, we had good technical content from the speakers. It is hard to get even a short abstract from speakers in a timely manner. Paul said this will be a running discussion.

Linda Sternbach had comments on content. She said there are other sources for content. She noted SIPES is newsy in their Pdf Newsletter. They put in information from outside sources and the internet. Linda said we should remove the small monthly events from the Bulletin and put them in a Newsletter. This would allow the editor more constructive time to prepare content for the Bulletin. Paul suggested we push this forward with future discussions. He suggested 3 or 4 of the Board members take this into further discussion.

Item 4C: Educational Outreach – Field Trips: There is a budget for $5,000 for Educational Outreach. The committee has asked for $2,500 to take students to the Museum on January 25th and 26th. Bill DeMis noted this is a great excursion. Paul said since it is already in the Budget and the Budget is Approved this is not a problem and does not require a Motion. However, Paul said he wants the Chair to know he has $5,000 in the budget and there were no specifics for this budget item.

Item 4D: The Geothermal Conference. Linda Sternbach said the Geothermal Conference was cancelled. This was a significant portion of the budget. She said they may do a virtual event. We need to go slow on new conferences. The person pushing this conference was Malcom Ross. Since it was 120 days before the event, we lost a fee of $1,000. However, the total expense could have been $6-8K if it had not been successful. Everyone agreed this was a wise decision.

Sharma suggested a Hydrogen Event. Paul said Penny can note this for next year.

Item 4E – North American Explorationists Equity Private Dinner. Paul Britt discussed the Equity Dinner with Mark Hamzat. This would be a zero cost event for the HGS and Mark talks about raising money for the HGS. It is worth a try. Let's review it and consider it for next year under a Private Equity Event for HGS Members and take it out of the North America Umbrella.

Item 4F Office Move is going forward. We may execute the lease tomorrow.

Paul said the time is getting short and everything remaining to review can be found in the reports in the Dropbox folder.

President-Elect Report – Penny Patterson

Penny submitted her Report. She wants everyone to send her information on Meeting events looking forward so she can add it to her calendar. The Africa Conference is moving forward.

Editor and Editor Elect Report – Caroline Wachtman Ted Godo (not present)

Caroline Wachtman added the following:

- In the Spring she will have some member profiles in the Bulletin.
- There has been a ton of positive feedback on the Art Contest.
- You can vote on the Art Contest through February.
- At the February meeting, we will decide on the Winners.
- Caroline is interviewing new members. New Members see value in the social interaction and the content of the Technical Talks. Caroline congratulated Linda on the quality of the talks.
- Technical articles also have interest and Caroline is looking for more content.

Paul Britt said he wants the entire Board to vote on the Art Contest. He wants 100% participation on the Board.

VP Report – Linda Sternbach –

On Technical Talks:

- Linda did not fill April and May.
- There is a Zoom talk tomorrow with around 40 people at $20 per person.
- Charging $20 for the Zoom is a good thing and a lot of participants like the Zoom format.
- Linda is not doing a June meeting.
- The March meeting speaker is Mike Sweet.
- We need to work on our successors, Nominations for next year.

Directors Report – Sharma Dronamraju

Sharma's report is in Dropbox. Sharma is asking for help with Sponsorships to help fund the Crawfish Boil (It is officially called the Shrimp Peel). This is a great social event. We need to pursue sponsors, so Sharma is asking for contacts.

Directors Report – Bill DeMis Bill's report is on file in Dropbox.

Directors Report – Judy Schulenberg Judy's Report is in Folder, CEC Budget Request change report in folder.

Directors Report – Troy Meinen Troy's report is on file. Troy did not have Exhibitors report.

President Report – Paul Britt

Paul noted the following:

- The Office Report is in the folder.
- Nominations – Paul is working on this. He will send a confidential e-mail searching for anyone who could run as officer.
- Paul will compile a summary of the G&A Report and send it to everyone to share with appropriate chairs. Please keep this confidential. He will send it out tomorrow.
- Paul did not get to **Item 12D** on his list: **Review of General Meetings.**
- There was no old or new business to review.

We discussed the date for the next meeting. After some discussion the date for the February Board Meeting will be the 20th of February at 6:15 p.m.

Motion

Motion to adjourn Penny Patterson

All in favor, meeting adjourned at 8:38 pm.