USENIX Association
Board of Directors' Meeting
Minutes
December 5, 2000
New Orleans Marriott Hotel
New Orleans, LA

The regular meeting of the USENIX Board of Directors was convened at the New Orleans Marriott Hotel in New Orleans, LA on December 5, 2000 at 10:55 AM.

Attendance:

USENIX Board of Directors:
Dan Geer
John Gilmore
John "maddog" Hall
Peter Honeyman
Andrew Hume
Mike Jones
Kirk McKusick
Avi Rubin

USENIX Staff:
Gale Berkowitz
Barbara Freel
Dan Klein
Jane-Ellen Long
Monica Ortiz
Toni Veglia
Ellie Young

Guests:
Barb Dijker, SAGE
Dan Appelman, USENIX Attorney
Jan Saëll, EurOpen.SE
Nick Stoughton, Standards Liaison

An executive session was held from 8:30 AM to 10:55 AM.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Honeyman moved to accept the minutes as amended, and was seconded by Hume. Passed: All in favor.

Changes to the Agenda

The following items were added: SAGE, AFS workshop, co-sponsoring the Middleware conference, and new ideas for conferences. The 1999 Form 990 was moved into the regular agenda.

Action Items

Action items were reviewed. Most action items were either completed, in progress, or included in the agenda. Young commented that it looked like publishing a compendium of the best of USENIX proceedings was not going to happen because of a lack of response from the committee.

SAGE

There was a short discussion on the relationship between SAGE and USENIX. Dijker said that until the business plan is produced it is not yet clear whether complete separation is necessary or appropriate. Dijker asked for clarification on the systems and network administration conference. Geer responded that the Board was in support of holding this event, and that Rob Kolstad will run the conference. It will have invited talks and tutorials with no refereed paper conference proceedings. A venue in a first tier city, and Dallas in August seemed like a possibility. The conference would be co-sponsored by USENIX and SAGE. Dijker expressed her opinion that this should be a SAGE only event from its inception and they could hire their own management staff to do it. It was suggested that all services such as conferences be addressed in their business plan The Board authorized Young to proceed with booking the venue.

Report on Review of Bylaws

Hume reported that there are two parts to the bylaws revision. The changes to the bylaws are relatively minor with respect to allowing electronic voting. He would like the Board to consider a model whereby USENIX elects a President and Directors, and then the other officers would be voted upon by the elected Directors at their first meeting after they are seated. There was general approval of this direction. Hume will follow through with a revision of the bylaws that reflects this direction.

In order to allow SAGE to conduct electronic voting, the Board needed to approve changes in Article 8 of the SAGE Articles with regard to voting. The original text of the Articles states:

"Every Voting Member of record, as of the date of delivery of a ballot, is entitled to one vote. Ballot delivery, collection, authentication, and tabulation methods shall be in accordance with USENIX STG Policy."

The text of the Articles will be changed to state:

"Every Voting Member of record, as of the date of delivery of a ballot, is entitled to one vote. Ballot delivery, collection, authentication, and tabulation methods shall be in accordance with

USENIX STG Policy, with the addition of authorization for SAGE to conduct elections by electronic means in addition to, or instead of, postal mail."

A two-thirds vote is needed by the Board to change the SAGE bylaws to allow this.

Hume moved to change the SAGE Articles, and was seconded by Rubin to change the bylaws to allow electronic voting by SAGE. 7 approved and 1 opposed (Jones), and the changes in the SAGE Articles were approved.

Report on Budget FY 2000

Young summarized her report on the third quarter financial statements and estimates for the year-end. At the start of the year we had budgeted for a small deficit, but depending on the final accounting for ALS, attendance at LISA, and the stock market we could end up with a small surplus.

First Draft of a Budget for 2001

Young presented the First Draft of the 2001 budget and emphasized that this is a very early first draft. Because of the crush of major conferences this past Fall, the conference office transition, new registration system and all the new (and not enough) staff, she was not able to give an accurate budget for ALS in particular. The SAGE budget does not reflect any changes in dues nor activities, even though we expect there will be changes pursuant to our discussions and their business plan. The draft also did not contain the system and network admin conference or Linux Developers workshop. The assumptions on the draft are based on: conservative attendance at conferences, flat membership growth, and no membership or fee increases. The annual Reserve Fund Distribution is estimated to be $355,000, to be used for Good Works. After this meeting a final budget will be prepared for the next meeting which will contain changes made at this meeting and adjustments based on our final accounting of the 2000 events.

The following are comments on the draft 2001 budget:

- Hall suggested that the matching funds for SAGE Certification be included in the budget, as well as an indication of where the funds would come from. Jones asked if the funds should be pulled out of the reserve fund? Jones, Young and Honeyman would look into this and make a recommendation.
- Honeyman suggested that we increase the allocation for student stipends for USITS. Jones suggested that outside support for students also be sought. Honeyman would like all to be funded.
- Gilmore suggested that we again conduct the audit for 2000. Young explained that the auditor supported the suggestion to conduct an audit every other year, given our assets and liabilities, with a full review in alternate years. Hume suggested that an audit be conducted in years in which new board members take office.
- Geer offered to have his firm, @Stake, conduct a computer security audit of the USENIX offices, pro bono.

- The Board would like us to not have a large deficit for ALS.
- Young suggested that perhaps it was time to look at other options to renting office space, especially when our lease comes due. Gilmore requested that Young investigate the cost of purchasing a comparable space for the USENIX offices.
- Gilmore suggested that administration percentage allocation for SAGE might be higher given the transition
- Gilmore observed that conference net revenues seemed to be decreasing, and asked what could be done to increase revenues? It was suggested that we examine different alternatives for increasing net revenues for conferences. It was suggested that program committee members be asked to cover travel expenses whenever possible, and USENIX would continue to offer support to those who cannot obtain it.
- It was suggested that the conferences offer more wireless cards and we have more access points and base stations.
- No decision was made about the suggestion for a $500,000 challenge grant in matching funds for SAGE Certification until the source of funds can be identified and the 2001 budget is approved.

Break for lunch from 12:40 PM to 1:35 PM.

Appelman and Klein left the meeting.

Request for Changes in Registration Fees and Member Dues

Young presented a proposal for increasing registration and membership fees.

After much discussion, **it was moved by Honeyman, seconded by Rubin to increase the late registration fee to $100. Passed: All in favor. It was moved by Hall, seconded by McKusick to raise ALS fees by $100. Passed: All in favor. It was moved by Honeyman, seconded by Hume to raise the fees for both technical sessions and tutorials registration fees by $10 per day. Passed: All in favor.**

It was agreed to keep the membership fees unchanged. It was suggested that ads be procured in ;*login*: to reduce membership expenses. It was suggested that we look in to offering a retirement and/or low-income conference and membership rates. It was also suggested that we account for the $75 student fee as subsidization for our good works student programs.

Standards

Stoughton gave a report on the Standards activities. He stated that they spent considerably less this past year than what was budgeted. . There were substantially fewer meetings to attend, and also he had difficulty getting someone to attend all the planned meetings. Stoughton submitted a proposal requesting $50,250 for Standards work for 2001. The budget for 2001 was adjusted down to accommodate the number of scheduled meetings and availability of standards representatives.

There was a discussion about what standards efforts we should or should not be supporting. A straw poll showed that the Standards reports are read in *;login:*. It was suggested that the current work in POSIX be continued until the current standards work in this area is complete, which is expected to occur in 2001.

USACO

The USACO proposal for $51,200 was submitted for this annual computing competition for high school students. Hume would like us to get more publicity for this. He also suggested that there be a regular column in *;login*: whereby a question is submitted by students in each issue, and the answer is revealed in the following issue. He also suggested that recognition of our support of this event be promoted elsewhere. **Rubin moved and was seconded by Honeyman to accept the USACO proposal. Voting in favor (7); 1 opposed (Gilmore).**

Future City Competition

Polytechnic University submitted a proposal in the amount of $39,000 for the Future City Competition. **Gilmore moved and was seconded by Hume to reject the Polytechnic proposal. Voting in favor of not funding the proposal (7); 1 abstained (Honeyman).**

Mentoring Youth in Boston

A proposal was submitted by Lesley University, in collaboration with Polytechnic University, in the amount of $50,000, for the Computer Clubhouse Network. The aim of this project is to provide computer mentoring and training for underserved children at an after-school learning center. This is a expansion of the Settlement House project that was previously funded by USENIX. It was suggested that Margo Seltzer be asked to be the liaison to this project.

Honeyman moved and was seconded by Hall to accept the Lesley University proposal. Voting in favor (5); 2 opposed (Gilmore and Geer); and 1 abstained (Jones). Lesley University will be told that this is a one-time award.

Berkeley Foundation for Opportunities in Info Technology (BFOIT)

A proposal by BFOIT was submitted for $15,000 to increase representation among students of color in the computer-related studies at U.C. Berkeley. A variety of strategies have been proposed. **Honeyman moved and was seconded by McKusick to fund this proposal. Voting in favor: 5; opposed: 3 (Gilmore, Geer, and Jones).**

Proposal for Student Stipends for NOSSDAV conference

A proposal was submitted for funding student scholarships at NOSSDAV 2001 in the amount of $15,000. **Jones moved and was seconded by Hume to reject this proposal. Passed: All in favor. The proposal was not accepted**

Report on ReX

Berkowitz gave an update on the project, stating that two exchanges have occurred to date. The goal of ReX is to promote international research exchange among institutions (versus individuals). There has been some difficulty establishing exchanges. Much of the funds have not been spent. At the end of the year, Stichting Nlnet will reconcile their expenses for the year, and assure that each institution spent equal amounts.

Honeyman suggested that we develop a database of students who are interested in participating in exchanges. Berkowitz will work with Honeyman to develop a proposal for establishing a database/registry of potential students and institutions.

Break from 3:15 PM to 3:35 PM.

Update on Conferences

Security. About 150 fewer people attended compared to the previous year. Attendance at tutorials was also lower than in previous years. Competition from other Security conferences, the location (Denver), and tutorial topics were offered as reasons for declining attendance.

ALS. Around 650 people attended the technical conference, and around the same number as the previous year (2400) attended the exhibition. The quality and attendance of the technical sessions improved significantly. Tutorial attendance was lower than expected.

OSDI/WIESS. Attendance was 373, which was100 more attendees than the previous OSDI, including 50-75 walk-ins. WIESS attendance was around 100. If an excellent chair could be found, WIESS would be repeated.

LISA 2000. As of today, there are over 1900 registrants and 422 exhibitors. The workshops have been successful and should be repeated. It was suggested that small workshops be co-located at our other conferences whenever possible.

Linux Kernel Developers workshop. Young submitted a proposal for two-day workshop in March 2001. It will be by invitation for 50-60 developers. She had also been approached by the Open Source Developers Network about co-sponsorship. Young estimates the cost for this event to be around $20,000, and will be offset by sponsorship. There was a sense that this event should be held, but OSDN should participate in a limited way.

USITS 2001. Young reported that there were 70 + submissions, and the pre-registration materials were in production.

Java VM 2001. Young reported that 50 papers were submitted and a program would be finalized in mid-December.

Annual Technical 2001/Boston. The submissions deadline has just been extended and another 27 papers may be received. There may be around 70 submissions. There were more than 60 submissions for the FREENIX track.

ALS 2001. This event will be held in early November in Oakland. Hall suggested that the extreme linux track could be replaced by an embedded linux track. It was hoped that we would eventually shift the dependence on exhibition revenue to the technical conference and tutorials.

Tcl/Tk. O'Reilly will be handling this event in conjunction with their Open Source conference. USENIX has contributed ideas and offered to help with promotion.

File and Storage Technology (FAST). The Call For Papers will be released soon. The event is January 2002 in Monterey.

Smart Card/Cardis. Honeyman reported that plans for that event are on track, and the conference is tentatively scheduled for December 2002.

BSD Conference

McKusick submitted a proposal for USENIX to take over sponsorship of the annual BSD conference. There was a discussion about its impact on FREENIX, and whether or not this makes competition for FREENIX. **McKusick moved and was seconded by Hall to accept the BSD Conference proposal and to hold it in early 2002, so as not to be in competition with FREENIX. All voted in favor (8).**

Geek Cruises

Hall suggested that some of our events might fit into the Geek cruise format, for those events of smaller size (around 160 people). The cruise organizers would be responsible for all logistics, and USENIX would be responsible for all content. Marketing would be handled jointly. This could be considered as an alternate location for small events. Hall suggested that we could negotiate the terms of the contract and share of profits. Most felt that if we did something like this a 3-day cruise is more plausible.

AFS Workshop

A proposal was submitted to conduct an AFS (distributed file system) workshop in conjunction with the Annual Technical conference. Honeyman and others were supportive of doing this once a year and Filderman would be asked to submit a proposal.

Middleware

Honeyman is on the Steering Committee for this conference, which is a composite of three smaller conferences (distributed network environments, middleware, and European mega-middleware). The event is held in Europe. Honeyman recommended that USENIX support this event and use of our mailing list and some limited promotion.

Public Domain and Practice Conference

Gilmore described a conference on public domain theory and practice that is being organized by the Red Hat Center. The audience would include an inter-disciplinary group of lawyers, technologists, historians, musicians and others. It is currently being planned as an invitation-only conference. Gilmore felt that it should not be an invitation-only event and should include students and others. USENIX could contribute content and participants. There was general support for this, and Gilmore would solicit a proposal for the Board for how USENIX might participate.

New Conference Ideas

The following were submitted as potentially new conference topics:
- XML technical conference
- ASP
- Databases
- Embedded linux (Hall to champion)
- WAP and wireless

Hume will look into contacts for XML. Geer volunteered to champion ASP.

Update on EurOpen.SE and NordU

Jan Saell gave a report on EurOpen.SE and NordU. Membership is growing, but they need more resources. They are also large enough to start their own technical groups. Plans for NordU are going well, and will be held in Sweden in February. NordU is expected to break even financially. Plans are underway for NordU 2002. They would like to find other sponsors in Europe for this event. NordU was asked to submit a proposal to USENIX to fund international speakers. McKusick will work with EurOpen on a proposal for funding from USENIX for NordU speakers.

Agenda for USENIX BOF

The purpose of the USENIX BoF is to answer questions from the membership. Agenda items include: State of the Union; SAGE restructuring; and ideas for workshops.

990 Report

Gilmore suggested that we misrepresented ourselves with regard to Part IV-A, Support Schedule. Specifically, he questioned our allocation in 1996, of the gift from Rick Adams. Berkowitz would bring this to our accountant's attention.

SAGE

Honeyman moved that $75,000 be offered as matching funds for a SAGE Certification Challenge Grant, and seconded by Rubin. In favor: 6; opposed: 2 (Geer and Jones). The matching funds are to apply to donations received after December 5, 2000.

Dijker will revise SAGE Policies regarding the use of discretionary funds.

Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, April 3, 2001 in the Bay Area. The meeting after that will be held in conjunction with the USENIX Annual Conference in Boston, on Wednesday, June 27, 2001.

Honeyman moved to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Rubin. All voted in favor (8). The meeting was adjourned at 5:41 PM.