



Sakai Board: Communications
Board Minutes of Jan 5 2006

Added by Mary Miles, last edited by Mary Miles on Jan 14, 2006

Sakai Foundation Board of Directors
Conference Call
January 5, 2006

This document contains minutes from the conference call of the Sakai Foundation Board of Directors held on January 5, 2006. Corrections, suggestions should be sent to Joseph Hardin and Mary Miles.

These minutes capture both the discussion and formal resolutions of the board. Simply because something was discussed does not mean that it is the agreed-upon position of the board. When the board makes a formal resolution to approve an item, it will be noted as such in the minutes. If there is no such notation, readers should assume that the minutes are simply the notes of the board discussions.

Board members present: Joseph Hardin, Brad Wheeler, Ian Dolphin, Chris Coppola, Jutta Treviranus, Lois Brooks, Mara Hancock, John Norman, Chuck Severance, Mary Miles (staff)

Topic: Review and formal approval of minutes from December 6, 2005.
The minutes of December 6 were discussed. The board agreed to review the posted minutes and submit any additions and/or changes to Mary Miles no later than January 12. At that point, the official minutes will be posted on the Confluence site.
Decision: In the future, minutes will be completed within three business days of the meeting and sent to the board for review. Within 7 days of receipt of the draft minutes, comments and/or changes should be sent to Mary Miles. At the end of that 7 day period, she will post the official minutes on the Confluence website.

Topic: Update on Community and Open Source Projects
Brad Wheeler reported that there will be a Kualu Board meeting next week. There is now a "foundation" module that is under development and the IU Foundation is an early investor.

The SIS group that was getting together at the Educause conference is working on a planning grant. Institutions expressing the most interest are University of British Columbia, San Josquin Delta Community College and Georgetown University.

Chris Coppola reported that the March release of OSP 2.1 is on track. They are working very hard to make sure it will synchronize with the latest point release of Sakai.

Chuck Severance reported that version 2.1.1 is to be released very shortly (within a day or two) and 2.1.2 will follow closely behind.

Brad announced that the Indiana and Michigan Libraries grant was funded by Mellon for \$438,000 and the work on that is already underway.

Topic: Vancouver Conference Discussion

Wende Morgaine joined the meeting for this topic. She has agreed to serve as Program Co-Chair for the Vancouver Conference. Wende asked whether there would be a co-chair nominated to serve with her, perhaps someone from UBC. Ian agreed to discuss this with Ted Dodds to establish if a local UBC volunteer was available. It was suggested that Wende and Joseph jointly put out a call for a co-chair.

Wende asked whether the time had come to charge Sakai partners for attendance at the conference. This led to a discussion on various methods of billing attendees. Wende agreed to provide a document to the board showing charges from break-even fee to \$100 each. She will work with Mary to provide documentation on recent charges. The board members were very sensitive to the questions surrounding charges for Sakai Partners at these conferences. The conferences have become a very important community building tool, with organizations sometimes sending many people to a conference to give them all a chance to meet the people they have been corresponding with on email lists and get a good feel for the community. At the same time, the Sakai Community and its Foundation are subsidizing the conferences at the rate of US\$60K or more for each one. It was agreed that any decisions made in the future will only be done after community-wide discussion.

Wende also noted that as we expand the conference for an additional day, it may be an opportunity to offer some longer sessions for people moving forward into the use of Sakai. One of the things suggested was a Sakai boot-camp for developers. Wende had discussed this idea with Chuck who suggested that this may be a developer tutorial day which could be done on a fee-for-service basis. Both Wende and Chuck felt this would be a real help to the community, and would also help in breaking even. Two questions arose:

1. Do we have a boot camp day
2. Is it for fee only?

Joseph agreed that there should be a boot camp day and agreed that some of the sessions could be for fee. Everyone agreed that we should avoid a pre-conference situation where people don't come because of the cost involved. This can be alleviated by having some sessions that remain free for those attending. Ian noted that JA-SIG has been holding for-fee pre-conference sessions for a while – pre-conference day that are either all day or half day sessions, and suggested talking to someone there before making a decision. While the numbers are not huge, it does allow a detailed exploration of certain subjects. Ian agreed to find someone from JA-SIG who would be willing to discuss this issue with us.

Brad noted that chargeback schemes could be counter-productive. He asked whether it would be better to change the Sakai annual fee to \$12,000/\$6,000 and keep the conferences free. Chris suggested that we agree that the pre-conference sessions on the first day are a good idea and decide on a fee at a later time. Chris also suggested a hybrid payment scheme – a mix of pay and free sessions. The newbie session was greatly received and should be repeated more than once. Others would be happy to talk

for 2 hours and make yourself available for 3 or more hours if needed. This would not be a good way to teach someone something, but it would be a great solution for several different topics.

Wende will work with Mary to produce a document showing various pricing options. Every effort is being made to open the call for proposals on January 23. If the pricing document can be completed and passed around via email as soon as possible, we should be able to make a decision by the next board meeting on January 19.

Joseph agreed to provide 3 or 4 positions concerning conference costs which could be posted for discussion. Since budget considerations are a big part of this discussion, he will put up budget information by the end of the day on Monday and then the board will figure out who will draft the positions that would then go out to the community. After Wende and Joseph work on the cost documents, Joseph will send out a notice to the advocacy group saying that this has come up and we would like as much discussion as possible.

Action(s):

1. Ian will contact Ted Dodds regarding a possible UBC volunteer to serve as Program Committee co-chair.
2. Wende and Mary to work on pricing estimates based on past costs
3. Ian to find a JA-SIG conference planner to discuss their pre-conference structure with the Sakai Board.
4. Joseph to post 3-4 alternative positions on pricing.

Topic: Budgeted Positions

Joseph asked the Board to review the ongoing budget document. He suggested adding two positions to the list: financial management support for the foundation (Lon Raley) and bug manager position.

QA Manager

Release Manager

Webmaster

Community Liaison

Communications Manager

Financial manager (.3 - .5)

Bug Manager (0.5)

A discussion ensued regarding whether someone could contribute a qualified person for one of the roles listed. Would the board look at the qualifications and consider taking that effort as a contribution above and beyond the membership fee. Chris asked whether we can consider people contributions, someone dedicated to a staff role, as an equal to someone who is totally dedicated to the foundation – a staff donation in lieu of a membership fee. If this is acceptable, it should be codified and that contributed person would be considered an equal with paid staff.

Topic: Staffing – QA Support Position

Chuck reported on plans to bring Megan May (Indiana University) on-board in this position through June. There was no objection to this. Chuck agreed to prepare a proposal to hire Megan May as the QA Support Manager in the amount of \$20,000 and submit to the parties involved.

This led to a discussion as to whether these positions should be funded or donated. Lois expressed the feeling that if we pay for the position, it provides a certain degree of control. Joseph responded that earlier the question of sponsored or donated staff was raised. He stated that if there is a MOU agreement set up and a University sponsors someone from their staff to do some work, we have just as much control over them as if they were paid by the Foundation. He suggested that we proceed in a rational manner and if the opportunity arises for a company or organization to donate staff, and they fit our needs, we accept it.

Lois asked for clarification concerning the balance between board control and the oversight of volunteers and a more dynamic community where people step in as they choose. To what extent are we encouraging a community dynamic, and to what extent are we saying we need to get some MOUs going and have some control over the situation. Chris responded that from a community building perspective, the staff, whether they are contributed or paid, are facilitators. They just help everyone else be more effective. They have some authority and accountability that is different from the volunteers.

Brad commented that he sees a bug manager and QA manager as on-going, highly mission critical things that will benefit from a very formal donated line or a paid position, whereas ad hoc positions, like a program chairman is for a limited time and are therefore good targets for community volunteerism.

Various levels were identified:

1. Critical positions that have high accountability factors for development and release of our project (compensated or sponsored staff member)
2. Volunteers that step forward to make things happen at the level of code development.

Chuck suggested that we don't start with the idea of the low bidder first and then if you don't find the right person, we pay them. He felt that you need to start with the right person and then payment is a possibility to get the right person. If we didn't have the funds for a QA Director right now, then we would go after a volunteer. As long as we focus on getting the right people to do the job, we should be ok. The board agreed that a clear process needs to be developed for what Chuck is doing with Megan. That will make it clear to the community that we are looking for sponsors, resources for positions like this as well as make it clear that we are doing this.

Topic: Sakai Face-to-Face Board Meeting (date/place)

February 25 was identified as the best date for the next Sakai Board meeting. The meeting will be held in New York City. Vivie will be unable to attend, but most others will be available. Mary will work on finding a location and advise the Board as quickly as possible.

Decision: The next face-to-face meeting will be held in New York on February 25.

Location to be determined.

Topic: Joint JA-SIG/SAKAI board Meeting – report of Discussion with Jonathan Markow
February 24 has been identified as the best date for this meeting.

Action: Ian was asked to advise Jonathon of this decision.

Topic: IMS Discussions

Joseph had a discussion with Ed Walker who asked if a few board members would talk to their board. Joseph, Brad, Jutta, and Chuck will follow up on this.

Topic: Status of Sakai Associate partner Relationship – JISC

No progress has been made on this issue since before Christmas. One question raised was: what would JISC look like inside Sakai? It was agreed that this was an interesting question to bat around on email over the next week or so. Joseph asked what we would like JISC's perception to be inside Sakai? Ian asked, in the event of an associate partnership, how JISC would appear to Sakai members and to the foundation. There was no resolution of this issue.

Topic: Follow-up on Georgetown proposal for Sakai to become a Partner in the Sun Center of Excellence on Scholarly Things

There was nothing to report on this issue. Lois will continue to follow-up.

Topic: Report from SCP WG

SCP: Chris/Mara – Chris just sent email in this regard. Recognize that we are moving forward on this so will continually be checking to see that we are not being perceived as a roadblock, especially in terms of 2.2.

Topic: Executive Director Job Description & Date for Posting

Jutta, having just hired someone in a similar position, will send around documentation of that position and Joseph will work with her to finalize the job description for posting on January 21.

With no further business before the board, the call ended at 2:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Miles