



Minutes
Gateways Network Working Group Meeting
Via Conference Call
December 17, 2003

Participating: Lisa Gutierrez, Melanie Teems, Robert Pickett, Marian Hrubovcak, Robert Carter, Lynn Bostain, Elizabeth Hughes, Maria Vonderheid, Dan Martin, Paige Weiss, Jonathan Doherty, Skip Meehan, Mike Land, Cheryl Branagan

The conference call began at 10:00 am.

Working Group members reviewed and approved the minutes of the October 8, 2003 meeting.

Conference De-briefing

Bob Carter and Melanie Teems reported on the conference program committee's recent meeting and recommendations for a future conference, including:

1. Schedule the next conference for March 2005
2. Solicit volunteers for the program committee early and maintain that critical method of building the conference
3. Choose a site still convenient but more inviting and evocative of the Bay, specifically a central Eastern Shore site.
4. Build a series of regionally based workshops on evaluation comments about sessions and Network-wide initiatives that lead to and culminate in the next conference – make it a total program

Working group members offered comments on the conference. It was suggested that CBGN consider establishing a cyclical pattern for conferences and regional workshops so that people begin to associate a particular time with them. For example, regional workshops could be held in November and the conference in March.

Overall, Working Group members agreed with the program committee's recommendations.

Brief Update on Product Development Committee

Paige Weiss reviewed the summary of the recent committee meeting included with the agenda. The committee expects to continue with a series of next steps and report back to the Working Group. Paige invited Working Group members to participate in future discussions. A question was asked about one topic posed for future committee discussion regarding CBGN partnering selected outfitters. Lisa Gutierrez noted that the MD DNR Nature Tourism Initiative currently partners with specific outfitters.

Upcoming Activities

Jonathan Doherty noted several upcoming activities likely to be on future agendas: (1) Communications/marketing/promotion strategy – Reingold and the committee will be meeting by conference call next work on an overall work plan; Working Group members are encouraged to send comments on the draft positioning statements as soon as possible; (2) the 2004 budget includes just under \$2.5 million for Gateways – the Working Group can expect to discuss priorities at a coming meeting; (3) Support organization development – this process will pick up again in the new year with a series of Working Group decisions to be made.

Members discussed the amount of grants that may be provided in 2004; past patterns would suggest about 70% of the total appropriated funds. Various factors may affect that level however. Elizabeth Hughes noted she would like to be able to let potential Gateways know of this opportunity as state funding sources are limited. Jonathan noted that nominations for new Gateways should be submitted in January or February to be eligible for grant applications later in the spring.

Bob Carter suggested taking a strategic approach to assessing gaps in the network at a future meeting. He felt that an assessment of core themes and the sites that have the potential to interpret those themes could lead us to both recruiting more Gateways and/or to targeting specific themes that specific Gateways could develop projects around.

2004 Meeting Schedule

Wednesday, January 14

Tuesday, February 10

Wednesday, March 10

Tuesday, April 13

Wednesday, May 5

Tuesday, June 8

Wednesday, July 7

Wednesday, September 8

Tuesday, October 12

Tuesday, November 9

Wednesday, December 1

The conference call adjourned at 11:00 am after welcoming Elizabeth back and congratulating her on the birth of her son!