

## **Minutes for IGDA Board Meeting 19 December 2013**

Due to technical issues no board meeting minutes are available for this month, but the Appendix is available and shown below.

## **APPENDIX TO MINUTES Pre-Meeting Updates**

### Group/Main Updates

#### **Chair: (Dustin)**

No updated provided

#### **Events: (Dustin/Tom)**

No update provided

#### **Finance: (Ed)**

In summary November was a solid month with savings in some areas offset by unbudgeted expenses in others to bring us in right about on budget. Detailed comments:

See "Budget vs Actuals 2013 Budget" tab on the attached spreadsheet.

Membership income provided a \$2K positive variance to budget as has been the trend lately. That was the only revenue this month so Total Income was also \$2K positive.

On the expense side we saved the usual \$3.5K in budgeted website expenses. We also "saved" \$2.2K in budgeted MIGS expenses but this was offset by other Kate travel expenses.

So, we should be up by about \$5K for the month right? Unfortunately we had two unbudgeted expenses that cancelled that out. The first was a \$2K expense to reserve a room for the GUR SIG conference. We will recoup this expense but not until early next year. The second was a one time \$3K expense to the IRS to allow (as I understand it) for us to file a group tax return that includes chapters (see attached doc).

Once all this is added up along with many smaller variances we finish the month \$200 better than plan.

See "Statement of Financial Position" tab.

Cash plus Accounts Receivable is about \$90K. I'd still like to see this over \$100K by the end of the year but at this point I may not get that wish.

See "Membership \$ Comparison" tab.

Total Membership income for the year is now over \$285K which is almost \$100K better than last year. Great job!

#### **International Growth/Formalization: (Dustin/Luke)**

No update provided

#### **Membership Group: (Ed/Sheri Rubin)**

Finish 1st year member mails: These are now in the hands of staff/Talley to get updated with correct links and implemented with the YM system.

Meet 2x/months: The group continues to meet at least twice a month and is keeping up-to-date on current membership trends

Value proposition development: We continue to grow our list of tangible benefits including items like a discount to GDC Vault and various conferences; Ed and Kate continue to work to line up other benefits for members

Increase individual membership numbers: We have surpassed our initial target goal and continue to work to grow our membership roster

### **SIGs and Chapters: (Luke/Sheri Rubin)**

In recognition of the crucial role they play, at the Board virtual off-site meeting held this month, Chapters received top billing for discussion as one of the key areas that the Board will be focusing on going forwards. There was a range of discussion amongst the whole board, which primarily centered on the ways that the IGDA could better support chapters and leaders of chapters as well as discussing the ways that communication between IGDA and chapters could be improved. Kate, Tristin, Luke and Sheri are to get together separately and maintain the momentum achieved during the meeting.

### **Sponsorships/Sales: (Dustin/Ed/Tom)**

No update provided

#### Individual Updates

##### **Brian:**

No update provided

##### **Dustin:**

No update provided

##### **Ed:**

As usual I did my treasurer duties with twice monthly financial calls to review and approve all major expenses. I also worked with Kate and Diann on the new budget for 2014. In addition I attended calls for thee Membership and Sponsorship committees and several full board calls. I also helped Kate with contacts to various developers and publishers.

##### **Kate:**

- Participated in the board's mini-offsite on 13 Dec, 2013.

#### IGDA Website:

- Continued working with YM on the creation of the Chapter/SIG "at a glance" pages. Working out some technical issues on what is feasible; we may not be able to implement exactly what we want, but close.
- Continued working with Tristin on various Phase 2 tasks, which is chiefly preparing for Chapter/SIG leader use of the site, aiming for January.

#### IGDA Insider (Multibrief):

- Continued to review IGDA Insider content on a weekly basis
- Since 1 Oct., advertising revenue from IGDA Insider: \$46,640 (IGDA cut is 20% or \$9,328)
- Tabled the concept of a Business Resource Directory and Dedicated Email for future consideration.
- As of 11 Dec. mailer, open rate is 25% and averaging a.001% drop out rate.

### Chapter/SIG Engagement:

- Numerous with various chapter leaders about a wide range of issues, from getting meet-ups going to funding to formalization
- Discussing restarted/new chapter activity in Argentina, Egypt, Georgia, and Portugal
- Continued negotiating chapter formalization with Montreal and Japan

### Events:

- GDC 2014:
  - Finalized and signed contract with UBM for GDC 2014. Initiated media partnership and obtained IGDA pass codes.
  - As per sponsor outreach (see below), still soliciting numerous companies for potential support.
  - Still investigating potential venues for the 20th anniv. event
- Still working with the board on finalizing the 2014 HQ event strategy beyond GDC.

### Studios/Sponsors/Benefits:

- Negotiated an Ouya dev kit discount for IGDA members in North America, with int'l support to follow
- Continuing to pursue studio affiliations, sponsorships and long-term software discounts (where appropriate) with numerous companies within and around the game industry.

### Travel:

- Visited SF, 9-13 Dec. to speak at the QA & Loc Forum and at Google HQ, in addition to conduct numerous business meetings for IGDA support (chiefly GDC-related)
- Planning expense-covered trip to London in mid-January for the Mobile Games Forum

### Research:

- Continued working with Wanda Meloni and Celia Pierce on the forthcoming "Developer Confidence Index" survey.
- Plan is to launch the DCI survey and yield results/report in time for GDC in March

## **Luke:**

### Board

- Usual meetings etc
- Attended the virtual "offsite" meeting of the Board
- Gave feedback to Kate on proposed initiatives
- Worked with Sheri to overhaul Board Blog
- Continued engagement with UKIE
- Outreach to TIGA
- Met with Sheri to discuss Chapters/SIGs
- Met with Sheri to discuss Scholars
- Resolved issues with IGDA's webserver to restore wordpress sites
- Liaised with IGDA Scotland formalization team

### Scotland

- Usual meetings etc
- Scotland Board Offsite to prepare for 2014
- Executed the GamesWest event
- Continued engagement with sponsorship expert
- Liaised with prominent female community members re formal WIG engagement

### Scholars

- Worked with Tristin to continue promoting the GDC applications
- Worked with volunteers to continue updating the website for 2014
- Outreach to the IGDA Foundation about the Eric Dybsand Memorial AI Scholarship
- Recruiting judging panel for 2014
- Dealing with enquiries about Scholars

### **Tristin:**

#### General:

- Finalizing november and lifetime membership cards to be sent for production
- Various website updates: events added, news posted, member benefits updated, etc
- Drafting outline to begin providing Chapters and SIGs an overview of tools and features that new IGDA.org provides
- Finalized IGDA Chicago elections (Congrats Heather M Decker-Davis, Patrick McCarron, Sheri Rubin, Neal Sales-Griffin, and Eric Shofe!)
- Worked with IGDA Puerto Rico re: various chapter administrative items
- Pulled a roster of members for IGDA Detroit
- Worked with Learning, Education, and Games (LEG) SIG on steering committee elections
- Worked with volunteers managing Academic Chapter relations to update existing records, discuss ideas for how to get more these groups more involved
- Introduced a handful of midwest chapter leaders to a group looking to expand a regional event
- Copy written/edited/sent, mailer approved/sent for four (4) IGDA Insiders since last meeting
- Documentation outlining IGDA's use of "powered by PechaKechu" nights created
- Membership verification on a handful of projects for curating on Indiegogo/Kickstarter
- Continued handling of both member and non-member inquiries via web, email, phone

#### GDC 2014:

- Received IGDA member discount and posted online; will begin promoting it via mailers/social/etc
- Prepping for volunteer recruitment

#### Update from Academic Chapter Volunteers:

- The application and chapter spreadsheet have been updated and reorganized. We've caught up on our backlog of emails and are now following up on some

recent applications. We're also working to reach out to existing chapters to verify and update information on file.

**Sheri Graner Ray:**

No update provided

**Sheri Rubin:**

Board

- Attended all board calls, meetings, and participated in email discussions
- Continued moving forward on items related to the appointment of Sheri Graner Ray to the board including preparations for a news release item as well as working with staff on preparing email alias and other changes.
- Cleaned up and presented the November meeting minutes to the board for review ahead of our December call
- Worked with Luke to discuss potential options for improving and branding the IGDA board blog ([igdaboard.wordpress.com](http://igdaboard.wordpress.com)) and fix related tech issues.
- Worked with Vice Chair (Tom) to go over elections process and help determine potential nomination committee members, elections cycle, and resources needed to ensure that the entire process goes more smoothly and the nomination committee is selected on time this year. Reviewed updated elections manual draft for presentation to the board.
- Provided ED (Kate) with feedback on our Operations Manager (Tristin) per her request for a future performance review
- Worked with Vice Chair to finalize draft of Contract Review Policy that was sent to the board in email for approval; will be approved during the board meeting instead.
- Prepared a board blog post covering our update of the October meeting minutes on the IGDA site, announcement of December meeting, and reminder on elections; currently pending review from the Chair (Dustin) before being posted.
- Worked with the board to help reach a consensus on the top 5 areas the org should be currently focused on in preparation for the December mini-offsite.
- Continued my reach out to chapter leaders as a result of agreement from the board only call. This was due to the board's desires to better understand them, their needs, the way they operate, etc. since Chapters was to be a huge focus for the board moving forward as well as being in line with our efforts to better engage with our members and volunteers more directly.
- Continued to work on improving my tracking of all major initiatives, tasks, and updates needed to ensure things were not 'falling through the cracks'
- Prepared general update/action item threads as well as personalized action items/updates for each board member to ensure everyone was properly informed all initiatives and tasks including deadlines.
- Provided feedback to the ACSI committee per their request in their update for the November meeting minutes appendix.
- Proofed first of non-regular board blog updates that Luke drafted as part of the board initiative he is leading to add more updates to the board blog.
- Attended mini-offsite providing information, feedback, and solutions in regards to creating directions for each of the 5 main areas. Started moving forward with areas already assigned as part of my duties (Chapters and Processes/Roles).
- Continued attending finance committee calls to fulfill my board responsibilities and provide any answers/historical knowledge that is still 'stuck in my head'.

- Continued attending membership committee calls and providing support and resources (including contacts, information, etc.) to help our group move forward in accomplishing its goals.

### Chicago Chapter

- Tried once again to get an IRS login ID and file the e990, will be trying again after allotted time has lapsed that IRS told me to wait.
- Prepared candidate statement and nomination form to run in the IGDA Chicago BoD elections (which have since passed and I won a seat)
- Continued to do follow-ups from the November talk I gave for the chapter and we're making preparations to do a special workshop in February
- Connected with Raph Koster to talk about him coming to speak for IGDA Chicago in celebration of/timed with his Theory of Fun 10th Anniversary book launch; he is confirmed to speak and we will be reconnecting after the new year to schedule a good time for him to come out
- Continued Treasurer duties including collecting documentation to go with our expenses, handling volunteer reimbursements, collection of sponsor payments, etc.
- Worked with board in preparation for our December Holiday Charity Mixer
- Met with contact at local studio to talk about ways they might be able to help support the chapter
- Started preparations for board offsite
- Helped with responding to various chapter inquiries from external parties as well as supporting current volunteers with initiatives
- Continued working on plans to create a transition/succession for current board members, staggered seating options, and to move forward with designing and implementing a volunteer management program that works for our area for better sustainability (main planning discussions to happen once the new board term starts.

### Miscellaneous

- Continued helping where possible to proof read the IGDA Insider items for typos, grammar issues, bad links, etc.
- Reported any website issues to staff for investigation and fixes
- Worked on connecting ACSI Chair, Daniel Greenberg, with the ICRC folks who reached out to us for participation
- Helped proof/edit the ACSI statement on the Gambling/Games billboard issue
- Continued attending weekly chapter chats when possible, facilitating the chat for normal moderators where needed
- Participated in several SIG threads and initiatives
- Acted as liaison between IGDA and GGJ (as I sit on the GGJ board in the IGDA's seat) for promotion and other items

### Scholars

- Had a check-in call with Luke to see where we were at and next actions
- Continued checking in with volunteers David, Drew, and Ross on their help for the program and its promotion
- Connected volunteer Justin with Luke to get access to the resources and materials he needed to help us out
- Participated on several discussion threads and created list for reach outs for potential judges.

- Discussed potential options for improvements to the program and went over issues that have come up that need to be iterated on for the next event's application process.

### **Talley Management Group - Submitted by Diann via Kate:**

#### Membership:

- Renewals
- Developed Reporting Templates
- Ongoing Member Communication

#### Accounting:

- Continued Budget Development
- Monthly Financial Processing
- Worked with GUR SIG on GDC 2014 planning
- Re-established Group Exemption Filing with IRS

### **Tom:**

No update provided

### Non-Board Group Updates

#### **Anti-Censorship and Social Issues Committee Update:**

##### Laws of War and Video Games: The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Roundtable:

ACSI Chair Daniel Greenberg accepted the invitation by the Red Cross to participate in a discussion of their new video game initiatives at their headquarters in Washington DC. In addition to members of the ICRC and the American Red Cross, there were representatives from the American Society of International Law, the US Marines, and directors of video game programs at American University and George Washington University. Conspicuously missing were any other representatives from the games industry. Participants from the Escapist and ECA did not make it, and representatives from the ESA and other video game companies did not accept the offer. This is possibly because of the Red Cross' disastrous initial foray into video games in 2011, which generated headlines like: "Is the Red Cross Trying to Prosecute 600 Million Gamers?"

"A daily bulletin of the organisation's annual conference two weeks ago recorded an "overall consensus and motivation" to act "against violations of international human rights law in video games".

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/erikkain/2011/12/26/the-red-cross-wants-to-prosecute-600-million-gamers-for-war-crimes/>

My first order of business was to discuss that statement with them. To their credit, the Red Cross is suitably chagrined by the wording of that statement, and is going to great lengths to clarify that they want constructive dialogue with the video game industry. They are not out to criticize the industry or gamers.

I explained what the IGDA is and what the ACSI does, stressing that we advocate for our own members taking responsibility for what we create in addition to asserting our rights to freely create.



The Red Cross gave presentations on International Humanitarian Law and how they would like to see it appear in video games. They have gotten a good response from Bohemia Interactive, in their Arma series, but they would like to work with larger-selling games. The Marines explained difficulties they have in explaining the Rules of Engagement (ROE) to new recruits, and that they give their troops laminated wallet cards explaining the rules (“Marines do not kill or torture prisoners.”). The AU professor suggested that the Red Cross sponsor some low-cost, persuasive play browser games to teach the information, but the Red Cross wondered how effective that would be and how many people would see them or be excited by them. They want to reach million-selling game companies.

I gave several recommendations for doing this:

1. Offer an unambiguous apology for the original release about gamers violating human rights law and do it in a way that laughs at themselves—showing a sense of humor, humility, and a willingness to learn from their errors.
2. Sponsor a game jam (possibly with IGDA) on the theme of international human rights law. The GMU and AU professors both wanted to be part of it.
3. Create a basic summary of the laws of war for game developers much as the Marines do for troops, including suggesting gameplay possibilities for each.
4. Support virtual violations of international human rights law: I explained that to reach AAA developers, they need to understand that the value of games lies not in teaching the information but in letting player characters in military games commit transgressive acts in games and take the natural consequences. I explained that gamers love real consequences, and cited Mass Effect 3 as an example of gamers feeling cheated by not having to face the consequences they had earned, even when those consequences are negative. This means that the ICRC needs to put its stamp of approval on gameplay depicting acts that they abhor and allowing extremely transgressive in-game behavior. The ICRC would become, in essence, the same virtual violators of international human rights law in video games that they initially decried. How ironic. But that’s the only way they can achieve their goal of video games as teaching tool on a large scale.
5. The ICRC must add to all future video game-related releases that it understands that violating international laws in video games can be an enjoyable part of play, and that they have no objection to virtual law violations—they merely want to see genuine consequences depicted as a teachable moment.
6. The ICRC must caution that governments must not make any international law gameplay inclusions compulsory, and that to do so would constitute censorship.

The ICRC reps expressed effusive gratitude for the recommendations and asked to continue the dialogue. I agreed, and offered to help them reach out to other game companies and the IGDA members.

#### IGDA ACSI Statement on Gambling Starts With Games Billboards in Australia:

“The Anti-Censorship and Social Issues Committee of the International Game Developers Association (IGDA) condemns the latest anti-video game billboard attacks from the South Australian government, which has a shameful history of censorship and fact-free distortions demonizing video game creators and players. We support the Australian Interactive Games and Entertainment Association (IGEIA) in their formal complaint:

<http://www.igea.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/IGEA-letter-to-Strategic-Communications-Unit-Website.pdf>

The South Australian government's outdoor billboard advertising campaign, "GAMBLING starts with GAMES" falsely attacks video games as leading to gambling. This wild leap of logic is not only flatly untrue, but it violates their recently cited research, which concluded "This study does not suggest that simulated gambling precedes or follows monetary gambling."

[www.nogame.sa.gov.au](http://www.nogame.sa.gov.au)

We would point out to the South Australian government that plenty of gambling involves no games at all, such as the increasingly popular practice of gambling on the outcome of elections. Trying to stop gambling by attacking video games makes no more sense than trying to stop gambling by attacking voting machines.

Democracy does not cause gambling and neither do video games. Therefore, this blatantly false attack is a counter-productive waste of resources to fix a problem that doesn't even exist.

In the past, South Australia's pro-censorship government has insulted the free speech rights of Australian adults by stalling R18+ legislation and trying to get some games reclassified. For its latest fact-free scaremongering, the South Australian government owes an apology to all Australians who make and play video games, and to everyone who respects facts."

#### NYT Op Ed:

The ACSI committee would appreciate some guidance from the IGDA Board on how to proceed on the rejected NYT op-ed.

My current thinking about the New York Times editorial board is that they are avoiding criticism for their fact-challenged "Broadcast Thought" Op-Ed, and that they are not likely to publish much of anything we could offer that is critical of their actions. Therefore, I don't think we have much to lose by pointing out their apparent violation of their own editorial standards in another outlet, preferably a national outlet with NY connections like the Wall Street Journal. The downside of causing the NYT to reject future IGDA editorials seems remote, based on this experience.

#### Challenging Media Psychiatrist Credentials:

Would the IGDA board support making a challenge to Dr. Keith Ablow's board certification and medical license? The basis would be Ablow's apparent violation of medical ethics by publicly diagnosing patients they have not treated, like mass shooters, in order to unfairly attack video games and gamers.

#### Other Activities:

The ASCI is creating responses in the works for:  
Responses to student questions for student reports.  
Prep for GDC.

#### **Scholars:**

This past month has seen the Scholars team focusing heavily on promoting the GDC leg of the program as well as building infrastructure for the full 2014 program. We added another volunteer to the team and recruited the majority of the judging panel we will be using for the coming year.

In the coming month we will primarily be focusing on recruiting a pool of mentors to draw on and selecting Scholars for GDC.