



CUAHSI
allied for water science

CUAHSI Board Meeting Minutes
Jan. 9-10, 2025

Roll Call

14 members are present, 10 needed for quorum. “X” indicates present

Term expires 12/31/2025

JP Gannon, Virginia Tech X

Drew Guswa, Smith College X

Hoori Ajami, Univ. of California - Riverside X

Anne Jefferson, Univ. of Vermont (Past Chair) X

Jay Zarnetske, Michigan State Univ. X

Term expires 12/31/2026

Safeeq Khan, Univ. of California, Merced

Sarah Ledford, Georgia State Univ. (Chair) X

Amy Burgin, Univ. of Kansas X

Darren Ficklin, Indiana Univ. X

Term expires 12/31/2027

Jon Duncan, Penn State Univ. X

Paul Hanson, Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison X

Melissa Kenney, Univ. of Minnesota X

Ashley Matheny Univ. of Texas, X

Jennifer Merrill, Stroud Water Center X

Diego Riveros-Iregui, Univ. of North Carolina X

Officers: (terms expire January 31, 2027)

Adam Ward, Oregon State University (Secretary) X

Steve Architzel, UC San Francisco (Treasurer) X

CUAHSI Staff Present: Jordan Read, Leah Turner, Summer Conley

Minutes prepared by Ward

Thursday, 9-Jan-2025

08:30 US Eastern Call to Order

Strategic Plan Updates

1. Leah reviewed progress toward CUAHSI's strategic plan, summarizing the pre-read that was provided to the Board. The presentation focused on a critical assessment of progress toward the goals of the strategic plan, using a red-amber-green assessment to evaluate progress.
2. The group discussed the need to establish clear baseline conditions and set quantitative targets to define success for the strategic plan. An implementation plan may be needed to help define these criteria and prioritize staff effort in the coming years.
3. The group discussed draft engagement reports for Board institutions to refine this report before it is produced for each member. Overall the reports were positively received, with Board members providing feedback to refine the reports. Board members were encouraged to coordinate with L. Platt to provide feedback.

CUAHSI Current & Future Status

1. Read presented on the state-of-the-consortium, highlighting critical issues for the organization including (a) compliance with federal fiscal requirements, which has been a central focus for the past three years; and (b) cashflow, which is limiting organizational ability to withstand unexpected spending or delays in reimbursements. Read identified critical needs from the Board in raising unrestricted funds, identifying alternative revenue streams, and communication with the community.
2. Read highlighted successes in 2024, paralleling his presentation at the annual membership meeting. Specifics included HydroShare use, learning & teaching experiences, community growth, organizational development and growth,
3. Read highlighted organizational priorities for 2025, including:
 - a. Finishing audits for 2021-2024
 - b. Beginning work on a 3-yr Geoinformatics facility award (pending final award from NSF)
 - c. Continuing to build on summer institute success
 - d. Earning 'Core Trust Seal' designation for HydroShare
 - e. Finalizing an MOU with AGU for a WatSciCon 2027 meeting, if one will occur
 - f. Recruitment of new member institutions and affiliates
 - g. Measuring community engagement and setting goals, particularly serving the graduate student community
4. Read identified the need for Board and Officer knowledge management, which can be a risk for the organization as individuals rotate through various roles.
5. Read introduced a discussion of creating 'specialization tracks' within the Board, which might include (a) community engagement, (b) fundraising and development, (c) finance and compliance, and (d) workforce and business niche. The overarching goal is to ensure continuity, engagement, and clear responsibility for each Board member in areas that are essential for the organization. Read reviewed his vision for each track and their alignment with strategic goals and current priorities.

6. The group discussed cashflow for the organization, investigating a host of income streams and expenditures to clarify operational processes.

Meeting with Auditor team from Marcum LLP

1. The Board was joined by Brandon Lopez and Adam Firestein from Marcum LLP, CUAHSI's contracted auditor, to discuss the status of ongoing audits. Amanda Drivas and Dave Genereux (both of whom are members of audit committee) also joined for this portion of the meeting.
2. The qualified opinion for 2020 reflects only one area of concern from the auditors (accounts payable and accrued revenue), which is a substantial improvement over the findings from the 2019 audit.
 - a. Findings of material weakness for the financial statements included Bank and Credit Card Reconciliations Timeliness and Review Process, Accuracy and Completeness of Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards, Insufficient Attention and Accountability over Accounting and Internal Controls, and Reporting. These were anticipated as they are repeated from prior audits. CUAHSI should anticipate these being repeated in the next two years of audits, which pre-date implementation of improved fiscal management. In all cases, the origin of the findings is that the best practice was not performed in a timely fashion, rather than indicating something was not performed or that anything unallowable was identified.
 - b. Findings of material weakness for the federal awards included subrecipient monitoring, cash management, procurement, suspicion & debarment, Federal drawdowns in advance of expenditures, and program income. These were anticipated as they are repeated from prior audits. CUAHSI should anticipate these being repeated in the next two years of audits, which pre-date implementation of improved fiscal management. In all cases, the origin of the findings is that the best practice was not performed in a timely fashion, rather than indicated something was not performed or that anything unallowable was identified.

Audit Committee Report

1. Guswa led a report from the audit committee. Amanda Drivas and Dave Genereux (both of whom are members of the audit committee) also joined for this portion of the meeting.
2. The group discussed examples of internal controls that have been implemented as a result of the audit. Archizel reported that he is pleased with the finding that was received and feels that the organization is on the right track.
3. The Board entered executive session to discuss the recommendations from the Audit Committee.

Board Priorities for 2025

1. Ledford initiated a discussion of board structure and function for the coming year, starting with a review of the four ‘tracks’ outlined by Read this morning. The group brainstormed potential roles, skills, and tasks in an interactively edited document. The Board broke into working groups to refine the role of and charge to each subset of Board activities to narrow the highest priority goals and scope for each group of Board members.
2. Breakout groups briefly reviewed their work, sharing feedback with the Board. Specifics for each group are captured in the brainstorming document.

Elections

1. Chair of the Board.
 - a. Ledford opened the floor for nominations to the chair elect. Nominations were made for and accepted by JP Gannon and Jay Zarnetske.
 - b. Votes were cast by secret ballot, tallied by Ward, and confirmed by Duncan. JP Gannon is the Chair Elect for CUAHSL.
2. Executive committee.
 - a. ExCom is composed of two at-large members plus the past chair, chair, and chair elect. S. Khan has stepped down from his role on ExCom. Ajami will remain in her role as an at-large member.
 - b. Ledford opened the floor for nominations to the role of ExCom member-at-large. Nominations were made for and accepted by Darren Ficklin.
 - c. Ficklin was elected to ExCom by acclamation.

Ledford opened the floor for other business. Hearing none, Ledford adjourned the meeting for the day.

Friday, 10-Jan-2025

08:30 US Eastern Call to Order

NSF Updates

1. The Board welcomed Laura Lautz & Raleigh Martin from the NSF for this portion of the meeting.
2. Martin reviewed the reorganization within the Division of Earth Sciences, highlighting that the changes should enable interdisciplinary proposals to more readily move through the review process. He briefly reviewed several GEO programs, including GEO-RISE, geoinformatics, and the Findable Accessible Interoperable Reusable Open Science (FAIROS).
3. Martin reviewed the forthcoming requirements that data and publications supported by federal funding are publicly available at the time of funding. This has led to proposed revisions to the NSF PAPG (presently open for review), which is a draft of how this will guide future policies and procedures. The group discussed the timelines and access requirements for NSF-supported data. One likely future is that NSF would require

explicitly linking to an external data repository rather than taking on the hosting of data within the NSF.

4. Lautz reviewed the evolution of the past Hydrologic Science program to the newly-released WaLCZ program. She also highlighted several open positions within NSF, encouraging the Board to identify potential candidates and share the open position.
5. The group discussed the reorganization within EAR and the details of the newly released calls, and reflected on potential intersections between GEO and TIP at the NSF. The group reflected on opportunities for CUAHSI and community members within the portfolio of programs at the NSF.

Voting Items

1. Executive Director travel
 - a. Read reviewed anticipated travel for February 10-13 in-person CUAHSI Program Ops / Finance meeting at Golden, CO (CO School of Mines) funded by 50% CCA, 50% Admin
 - b. Approve Read's travel to Golden, CO as presented above.**
 - i. Motion: Jefferson**
 - ii. Second: Duncan**
 - iii. Discussion: (none)**
 - iv. Vote: Approved (unanimous)**
2. CUAHSI retirement contribution 9% continuation
 - a. Ledford introduced the requirement that retirement contributions be approved annually. The group clarified that annually revisiting benefits is an operational norm, and it needs to be certified by the Board because it benefits all staff. Read also noted that the need to recertify annually was identified in a recent audit, so transparency is important.
 - b. Approve continuation of CUAHSI's 9% contribution to retirement programs for staff 2025**
 - i. Motion: Duncan**
 - ii. Second: Kenney**
 - iii. Discussion: (none)**
 - iv. Vote: Approved (unanimous)**
3. Audit Committee Appointments
 - a. Ficklin rotated off of the audit committee with his election to the ExCom. Guswa has volunteered to continue chairing, and Riveros-Iregui as an at-large member.
 - b. Appoint Guswa as audit committee chair and Riveros-Iregui as audit committee member**
 - i. Motion: Zarnetske**
 - ii. Second: Jefferson**
 - iii. Discussion: (none)**
 - iv. Vote: Approved (unanimous)**
4. BoD Meeting Minutes

a. Approve Dec. 2024 Board meeting minutes

- i. Motion: Zarnetske**
- ii. Second: Ajami**
- iii. Discussion: (none)**
- iv. Vote: Approved (unanimous)**

Scheduling of Meetings

1. Board and ExCom meetings in Spring 2025 will be scheduled for Tuesday, 4-5pm US Eastern. Ledford will work with CUAHSI staff to schedule monthly meetings for the ExCom and Board.
2. The ExCom will meet on the first Tuesday of each month, starting in February and extending through August 2025.
3. The Board will meet on the third Tuesday of each month., starting in February and extending through August 2025. The third Tuesday in January should be held for Board work.

Board Specialization & Responsibilities

1. Ledford briefed the group on organizing the board 'tracks', and the expectations for their work this year. The Board divided into working groups to further refine the plans that were started yesterday.
2. Each group reported back to the Board, summarizing their progress and the initial action items they anticipate taking on in 2025.
3. Ledford charged each group with meeting during the scheduled time for the January 2025 Board meeting, and reporting back to the Board in February 2025.

Ledford opened the floor for other business. Hearing none, Ledford adjourned the meeting for the day.