American Library Association
Government Documents Round Table

Government Information Technology Committee (GITCO)

Minutes
GITCO Meeting
ALA, San Francisco
June 29, 1997

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m. by Cynthia Jahns, Chair.

1. Introductions were made. The Chair reminded those present that the GODORT 25th Anniversary Reception would follow the GITCO meeting, at another location.

Old Business

2. The CD-ROM Documentation Project, part of a charge given to GITCO at the January 1996 GODORT Second Steering Committee meeting, has involved many committee members, and "Friends of GITCO", who formed four workgroups.  
   * Work group I presented a list of guidelines for good documentation.
   * Work group II reported on CD-ROM documentation efforts at depository libraries. William Spivey and Larry Schankman have created a Web page that is a working draft of their report, at http://www.clark.net/publ/lschank/web/cdromdoc.html
   * Work group III (Megan Dreger) presented a report on issues related to the projects use of copyrighted or licensed documentation for depository and commercial products.
   * Work group IV evaluated options for the type of database system to use for the project, which could be queried interactively on the WWW. Annette Curtis, Barbara Levergood, and Carrie Ottow prepared this report. After ALA, a new timeline will be developed for the next phase of the project. (No actual deadline was given to GITCO.) CIC (Chicago area) libraries are investigating providing technical documentation; we would welcome their collaboration. The next phase will be to decide on a host, a process that will require preparing specs, advertising and selection by a review board.

Advantages of hosting the site would include: it's a technical challenge; public service to the profession, and prestige for the staff that supports it. Maintenance would include handling updates to the database after the initial setup, and keeping the technology up to date. This would require a host with a capable technical staff.

GPO will look into linking to the project from the FDLP page. The Chair thanked Barbara Levergood, Chair of the Working Group, and all volunteers for their terrific work on this project.

2. Ad Hoc Committee on the Continuing Education Fund

Jocelyn Tipton, Chair, reported on the committee’s progress. They have prepared a report on the options for spending the money donated by Jack Sulzer, which formed the Continuing Education Fund. The committee recommends that an Implementation Team be formed to follow through on the recommendations. They also recommend that the new team be part of the Education Committee, rather than a joint subcommittee of GITCO and Education. Further information is available at this web site: http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~govhelp/godortcef.html
Discussion of these issues ensued. It was agreed that teleconferencing is a very expensive option, even when partnering with a university or with GPO. The next update on this project will be at 1998 Midwinter. There's no specific deadline, but the work group would like to have its recommendations implemented as soon as possible. The Chair thanked the work group, especially Chair Jocelyn Tipton, for their hard work on this project.

GODORT Chair Andrea Sevetson asked GITCO to review this federal document, to let her know if there were aspects of the report that should be addressed by GODORT.

Brief comments were received from the members. Jennifer Arns synthesized these into a paragraph endorsing the report. Depository libraries are not specifically mentioned in the report, but this may not be surprising since it is written as a very general discussion of information issues. However, the committee would suggest recommending that the GPO and depository libraries should be mentioned as important information providers for citizens.

A copy of the committee's report will be added to GITCO's web site after it has been reviewed by committee members via email.

4. Web template project
Larry Schankman and Cathy Hartman (a "Friend of GITCO", from Univ. of North Texas) have been working on a basic web page for government information that could serve as a template for small and medium sized libraries that might not have the technical expertise to create a government publications web page for their clientele. Their current draft version of the site was discussed, and admired by the committee. A few suggestions for additional web sites were given.

Publicizing the availability of this template was discussed. Library Journal, available in nearly any library, might be a good place for a notice or short article. The state libraries of each state might be able to help publicize it also, as well as SLAS.

The html files will be available along with readme files, graphics files, and instructions on how to add local information to individualize the page. Adding information on contacting someone in each state for help, possibly including a phone number, was suggested.

Maintenance of the project hasn't been discussed thoroughly yet, but it's hoped that GITCO could manage this fairly easily.

New business
5. ASCLA merger
Those present discussed the proposed merger with ASCLA. Barbara Levergood, as incoming GITCO Chair, was asked by Dan Barkley, the incoming GODORT Chair, to review GITCO's future in a merged organization. Barbara presented a handout detailing information she has gathered from various sources, including discussions with ASCLA committee chairs.

GITCO need not be dissolved by the merger; there is not a comparable group within ASCLA. GODORT's publications might be affected, and the "layers of administration" might increase. There is a concern that GODORT might lose members because of the increase in dues, and concern about the loss of name recognition. The merger will be discussed at a hearing on Monday afternoon, as well as at the GODORT Business Meeting Monday night.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Minutes taken by Elizabeth Baur.