

**GAMEO Management Board Minutes**  
**6 November 2008**  
**Krehbiel Science Center 218**  
**Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, USA**

**Present:** Ken Sensenig (MCC), Rich Preheim (MCUSA), Pakisa Tshimika (MWC), Don Isaac (MBHC), Bert Friesen (MHSC, chair), Sam Steiner (managing editor), Richard Thiessen (Associate Managing editor, treasurer, recording secretary).

**Absent:** Ken Reddig (MBHC), (Don Isaac sat in for him).

**1. Opening and Introductions – Bert Friesen**

Bert opened with prayer and read a passage from Acts 15 which tells the stories of people brought together. We want to tell our stories to our next generation, and to the world. Each member was then introduced.

**2. Review of Agenda – Bert Friesen**

**3. Review of Minutes of 17 January 2008 (Winnipeg) – Richard Thiessen**

The minutes were accepted as presented.

**4. Orientation of New Members – Sam Steiner**

Sam reviewed the structure of the GAMEO web site for board members. During the review, it was suggested that we should add the Mennonite Church USA historical committee's bibliography to the website, or adapt it for our purposes. Another idea was to identify ten key books that all Mennonite church libraries should have. There was also a discussion about which church denominations were included in the *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, and which ones will continue to be included in GAMEO, given the fact that several Mennonite or Anabaptist denominations that were included in *ME* no longer self-identify as Mennonite or Anabaptist today. It was agreed by the board that the denomination's self-identification as being Mennonite or Anabaptist is the key criteria for us.

**5 Reports**

**a. Managing Editor – Sam Steiner.** Sam distributed an updated statistics section to supplement the report distributed to board members earlier. Sam will compile a report on visits from .edu sites to gauge the activity on the site coming from educational institutions. There was a discussion regarding the current level of activity in the USA, and it was concluded that without a national Mennonite historical society in the country, we will need to approach the regional Mennonite historical societies and committees in order to form regional editorial committees.

**b. Canadian editorial committee – Bert Friesen:** Bert reported on the activities of the Canadian group, which will be meeting in Montreal in January in conjunction with the annual MHSC meetings.

**c. United States editorial committee** – Rich Preheim: Rich reported that there has been very little activity in 2008, and that the committee will be meeting later this evening. There is a lack of structure at the national level to make the mandate of this committee manageable. It was reported that there has been a good level of participation from US members in the work of digitizing volumes 1 and 2 of *ME*.

## **6. GAMEO Structure Review – Policy Documents, Draft No. 4**

**a. Review of Structure and Job Descriptions** – Sam Steiner: The board reviewed Draft 4 of the policy document, dated 7 June 2008. On p. 5 under Member (Editor), the first point should begin with the “Create” instead of “Write.” This step assumes that an article has either been newly written or revised, submitted to an editorial committee, and is ready to be created on the site by an editor. A separate section will address the actual writing of articles or updating of an article. At the bottom of p. 5 in footnote #8, the last word, “Association,” should be changed to “Commission.” We should also include a section on finances that deals with donations.

**b. Institutional Base for GAMEO:** The MWC Global History Project group will meet in 2010 to decide what to do with the content collected for the print volumes but not published. John Lapp is the contact person for this group, and Pakisa will follow up with him in terms of the group’s progress. Sam is also awaiting a response from John via email.

In terms of our potential status with MWC, we could have commission status, membership status, or project status. We want to be under the umbrella of a global body that gives us credibility and more open lines of communication with the wider Mennonite/Anabaptist community. The intent of relating more directly with MWC is not to acquire funding.

There is a possible connection with John Roth and the Mennonite Historical Society (Goshen/Elkhart), which has a more global focus in mind.

**c. Regional Editorial Committees:** Sam and Richard will make contact with the following regional societies: Lancaster, Mennonite Historians of Eastern Pennsylvania, Mennonite and Brethren Historical Society of Virginia, and California.

## **7. New Initiatives**

**a. GAMEO DVD** – Sam Steiner: PeaceWorks has installed software to allow us to download the entire site and store it offline on a DVD. Sam demonstrated a DVD version of GAMEO. The primary audience at this time for this type of format would be in North America among conservative groups that do not permit access to the Internet, although the DVD would also be useful in areas of the world where access to the Internet is limited. North American conservative groups would be charged a cost-recovery fee for the DVD, while historical societies or churches in North America could assist financially in distributing the DVD outside of North America. A press release could be sent out to conservative Mennonite papers to promote the product.

**b. Multiple language GAMEO** – Sam Steiner: We have received a quote from PeaceWorks that allows contributions to, and display of information in, GAMEO in a number of languages. This quote does not include the translation of existing content into other languages. Two current sources that could be translated include the *Mennonitisches Lexikon* and the new Paraguayan Mennonite encyclopedia. New articles in French as well as already translated texts from Quebec would be another source of foreign language articles.

We need to determine which languages Plone can support; are other than Western languages possible?.

In terms of soliciting articles from outside of North America, we need to keep in mind that those who have the information and the stories to tell will not necessarily be the ones able to write the GAMEO articles. In terms of translation, we need to be sensitive as to who is doing the translating. We need to talk to people at the MWC offices in Strasbourg to get their feedback on this proposal.

Once we have our questions answered we will solicit final approval for this project electronically.

## **8. Status of Discussions:**

**a. Conservative/Plain People:** Sam didn't have much to report other than the DVD will be helpful for this group. Several people from this group have been asked to write articles but they have refused because of the connection to the Internet.

**b. Hutterites:** Bert attended the Education Committees of the Schmiedeleut group, both the liberal and the conservative. It has taken around five years of interaction with this group, but content is expected in the next year.

**c. Non-English / Non-North American:** There has been a plan for the German Mennonite historical society to publish a supplemental volume, but nothing definitive has been announced, although some writers have invited to write articles. Mark Jantzen of Bethel College is on the editorial committee for the project. A Paraguayan Mennonite encyclopedia will be ready in the summer of 2009.

## **9. Staffing issues**

**a. Managing editor:** Sam was reappointed for another three-year term as manager. This will most likely be his final term. The board approved the purchase of a computer for Sam, with GAMEO contributing up to \$1300.00..

**b. Other:** Richard's position will now be called Associate Managing Editor.

## **10. Technical Issues**

**a. Current Hardware/Software (Plone):** Plone will be upgraded soon, and this will hopefully take care of the slow response and error messages that users are experiencing at times.

**b. Current hosting by PeaceWorks:** PeaceWorks will continue to host our site.

**c. Virtual Meetings – Bert Friesen:** Bert reported that it is currently too costly for us to invest in this type of software, so we hope to use this type of software by renting it from another party.

## **11. Content**

**a. Content priorities for 2009:** The Canadian editorial committee will try to complete its list of institutional articles drawn up near the beginning of its work. Canadian sub-groups will work with biography lists and congregations. US groups will be encouraged to focus on

congregational entries and biographies. Managers will solicit updates to some institutional articles, like colleges and conferences.

**b. Anabaptist Ethereal Library:** Hutterites would like to see their primary sources on the Internet. Bert and Ken will meet with Helmut Huebert to discuss including his biographical and bibliographical material in GAMEO, and ask permission to use maps from his historical atlas in GAMEO. Other primary resources that could be included in GAMEO are the Martyr's Mirror and maps from other publications.

**c. Mennonite History Overview:** The board discussed the possible format for this type of information. It could be an essay or a FAQ. At this point in time we will continue looking for a solution.

**d. Photographs:** Archival centers are encouraged to continue scanning pictures in their collections and making them available to GAMEO at no cost. Ideally a photograph of all congregations and significant church leaders could be scanned.

## 12. GAMEO Promotion – Bert Friesen

**a. News releases:** we will issue a news release regarding the upcoming DVD and the completion of the digitization of volumes 1-5.

**b. Promotional DVD:** regional historical groups would be the target for this product.

**c. One page handout:** Rich Preheim has been assigned this task.

## 13. Finances – Richard Thiessen

**a. The financial reports** were approved.

**b. Fundraising:** we will need to fundraise for the multilingual project; possible supporters include the Showalter Foundation and the World Council of Churches.

We will look for more sponsors in 2009, including historical societies, high schools and Anabaptist centers.

**c. 2009 Budget:** Anticipated expenses include:

PeaceWorks: \$3,000

Travel: \$2,500

Computer: \$1,300

Software: \$500

Contingency: \$750

Promotional DVD: get amount from Ken (offset with donations)

Multilingual Project: \$20,000 (offset with donations)

## 14. Recommendations: none

**15. Reports to Editorial Committees:** a verbal report will be given to the US Editorial Committee later today, and a written report will be prepared in time for the Canadian Editorial Committee meetings in Montreal in January 2009.

## 16. Elections

- a. Terms of service:** the chair will serve for three years
- b. Election of chair:** Bert Friesen was elected.
- c. Other: Recording secretary** – Richard Thiessen was elected.

- 17. Other Business:** Pakisa's autobiography will be published by Good Books.
- 18. Date of Next Meeting:** Our next meeting will be in Winnipeg in January 2010. We should plan meeting dates for the next 3-4 years.
- 19. Meeting adjourned** at 5:20 p.m.