



WITSA Virtual Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

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08:00 – 12:00

Tuesday, April 28, 2020

Yvonne Chiu, Chairman

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

	Country	Name	Organization
1.	Argentina	Mr. Alberto Patron	CESSI
2.	Armenia	Mr. Alex Yesayan	UATE
3.	Bangladesh	Mr. Sahid Ul Munir	BCS
4.	Belarus	Dr. Boris Komrakov	INFOPARK
5.	Bermuda	Mr. John Kyle	Bermuda Chamber of Commerce
6.	Brazil	Dr. Raul Colcher	ASSESPRO
7.	Egypt	Eng. Tarek Abd-elmonem Taha	EITESAL
8.	Greece	Mr. Yannis Sirros	SEPE
9.	Malaysia	Mr. Sean Seah	PIKOM
10.	Mexico	Mr. Santiago Gutierrez	CANIETI
11.	Nepal	Mr. Hemant Kumar Chaurasia	CAN Federation
12.	Romania	Dr. Vasile Baltac	ATIC
13.	Hong Kong	Mr. Francis Fong	HKITF
14.	Spain	Antonio Cimorra	AMETIC
15.	Nigeria	Mr. Olutayo Adeniyi	ITAN
16.	Taiwan	Ms. Yvonne Chiu	CISA
17.	United Kingdom	Mr. Julian David	techUK

IN ATTENDANCE

	Country	Name	Organization
1.	Taiwan	Mr. Brian Shen	CISA
2.	Malaysia	Mr. Chin CS	PIKOM
3.	Malaysia	Mr. Ganesh Kumar Bangah	PIKOM
4.	Malaysia	Ms. Ngai Yuen Low	PIKOM
5	Malaysia	Kian Yew Ong	PIKOM
6.	Malaysia	Mr. Danny Lee	PIKOM
7.	South Korea	Mr. Grant Son	FKII
8.	USA	Dr. James Poisant	WITSA
9.	USA	Mr. Anders Halvorsen	WITSA
10.	USA	Ms. Alicia Standridge	WITSA
11.	USA	Ms. Molly Waldron Poisant	WITSA

REGRETS

	Country	Name	Organization
1.	Korea	Mr. Woo Keon Park	FKII
2.	Japan	Mr. Toshio Iwamoto	JISA
3.	India	Mr. Shivendra Singh	NASSCOM
4.	USA	Ms. Martha Dorris	PSC

INTRODUCTIONS/CALL TO ORDER

1.	Chairman's Remarks / Introductions Ms. Yvonne Chiu welcomed everyone, wished them good health and asked them to stay home and stay safe. The Chairman introduced Mr. Brian Shen, the newly elected Chairman of CISA (Taiwan).
2.	Roll Call Dr. Jim Poisant proceeded with the Roll Call. <i>Please see Roll Call at the front of this document.</i>
3.	Call to Order / Approval of Minutes Dr. Poisant called the meeting to order at 8:09am EDT. Dr. Poisant asked for a motion to approve the Minutes from the Board Meeting in Yerevan. Dr. Vasile Baltac motioned; Mr. Tayo Adeniyi seconded the motion. The Minutes were approved unanimously.

4.	Special Guest Speakers Dr. James C.F. Huang, Chairman of TAITRA, planned to join the call but was unable to attend. Chairman Chui offered the following details about TAITRA: they have multiple offices around the world, trade data alliances and conduct training. Dr. Huang was very impressed with WITSA's work during WCIT 2019 (Armenia) and in December 2019, they signed an MOU with WITSA. There were no questions about the newly formed relationship with TAITRA. The Secretary General encouraged everyone on the Board to look at the information on the WITSA website about the TAITRA MOU. Dr. Chi Kung-Ho, Deputy Minister of Health (Taiwan) provided a video message: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DgESANi4jPAs0DQEKepXhF9jbnxibaL3/view The Chairman reiterated that Taiwan was more than willing to help any country that needs help fighting the coronavirus.
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5.	<p>COVID-19 Roundtable: Association Responses & Impact</p> <p>The Chairman spoke about Taiwan’s commitment to sharing resources to fight the coronavirus worldwide.</p> <p>Mr. Alex Yesayan said it was very interesting to learn what Taiwan???. he and the Chairman arranged for the Armenian Ministry to speak with the Taiwan Ministry to learn best health care practices. At present, Armenia has implemented many of the same strategies and he is happy to share with anyone who is interested.</p> <p>Mr. Tayo Adeniyi shared that thus far there is very low impact from the virus in Nigeria. Most of the country is on lockdown and the government there is working around the clock; they are receiving some support from China and the World Health Organization.</p> <p>Mr. Santiago Gutierrez shared that the numbers in Mexico continue to rise. A lockdown has been enforced for about three weeks. Figures from the national university put those affected at 10-12 times higher than the numbers being released by the government, i.e..150,000 infections and 10,000 deceased thus far. Half of the population can’t go into lockdown due to work requirements, so it’s more of a priviledge for 40% of the population. The government is somewhat reluctant to accept help from outside of Mexico. Right now, there are really two pandemics going on: COVID-19 and the governemnts reaction to it, he said.</p> <p>Mr. Hemant Kumar Chaurasia of Nepal shared that their country is on lockdown. There are only 55 cases thus far. CAN Federation is organizing a Go Digital - Stay Safe conference.</p> <p>The Secretary General shared that in the US there have been over 56,000 deaths. Ms. Molly Waldron Poisant shared details of WITSA’s Coronavirus Global Resource webpage. There is both a Global Resource page and a Member News page. All members are encouraged to send any updates for these pages to molly@witsa.org</p> <p>Mr. Sean Seah from PIKOM in Malaysia said that in normal circumstances, the Board would all be gathered in Penang at this time. Overall, Malaysia is on a downward turn. They are in the 6th week of the government-controlled lockdown with hope work will resume for by mid-May.</p>
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TREASURER’S REPORT

5.	<p>Treasurers Report</p> <p>Mr. Tarek Taha, WITSA Treasurer, said due to COVID-19 we have some drops in revenue, as well as expenses, as travel had been restricted. He referred to the two slides that reflected Total Assets of</p>
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\$711,664.37 as of March 31, 2020. Total Liabilities were reported: \$67,746.81 and Total Equity of \$643,917.56. Total Liabilities and Equity were \$711,664.37.

Mr. Taha said in a later slide we would hear about installment payments coming from PIKOM for the WCIT event. WCIT 2021 in Bangladesh has been paid in full already. Mr. Taha said if you look at the current liability we have no major changes from 2019.

Referring to the Budget vs. Actual slide through the end of Q1, Mr. Taha stated that we have some drop in the actual revenue. Our expenses are very limited to the basic expenses which happens monthly, such as salaries and other operational expenses, and that it is imperative that we don't have any major unexpected expenses. The first installment for the NRI report has been paid. Looking forward, he said, we need to see what stream of revenue we have – this doesn't look good – due in large part to the likelihood of postponing this year's WCIT and the installment payment that have previously been agreed to are likely to be postponed.

With regard to 2021, 2022, we need to look to have at least \$700,000 in the bank, Taha stated. We still have something like \$400,000 expected from the WCIT Malaysia. We have cash to continue for the next 12 months. Emphasis should be on selling 2022 and 2023 and try to find other revenue sources to compensate for any revenue sources.

Mr. Gutierrez asked about the perspective not looking very rosy and asked for the run rate. Mr. Taha said the annual expenses should be ~\$700,000 (which included a large travel amount). The remainder is fixed (salary, lawyers, auditors, etc). The maximum savings we can do is about \$100,000. We may need to do another meeting to examine this much more closely.

The Secretary General said that the budget would need to be revised based on the COVID-19 pandemic. There will be significant savings in 2020, related to travel restrictions. Dr. Poisant asked if we could hear all the presentations first then revisit the financials once we have the full scope of what is going on with the events.

6. The Networked Readiness Index

Dr. Poisant stated the NRI report has been widely distributed and explained that it's an analysis of different countries all across the globe and their use of ICT. The report was previously done by the World Economic Forum, Poisant said. WITSA is now a prominent player in the report, with a forward by the Secretary General and the Chairman. To date, the report has been downloaded 4,153, the mailing list has over 8,000 recipients and there have been over 300 media clips related to the NRI Report.

Taiwan was also brought into the NRI Report due to the success they have had with ICT in their country. The Chairman said the contacts at NRI were enthusiastic to share Taiwan's successes in hopes of helping

	<p>other countries with best practices. The Chairman went on to explain the partnership between Taiwan and Armenia. She spoke of the importance of agriculture, health care, education, e-learning, security and privacy.</p>
7.	<p>WCIT 2020 – Penang</p> <p>The Secretary General thanked Sean and PIKOM for all the work they had put into the Spring Meeting and shared regrets that WITSA Board Members could not be there physically for the meeting. Mr. Seah’s full presentation is available here: https://witsa.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/WCIT-Malaysia-2020-Update-WITSA-BOD.pdf</p> <p>Sean shared an update on the preparations made to date. Malaysia had been working on preparations since 2018, and has over 120 speakers confirmed, numerous sponsors, and confirmed delegations from many WITSA member countries. They had invested and developed the WCIT 2020 registration platform and applications. To date, Malaysia has invested over \$1mil USD and was 70% ready to go. About three (3) weeks ago after the government issued movement control order, the Malaysia government said no mass gatherings until the end of 2020. Malaysia was also to sponsor APAC 2020 and those events are being postponed as well. Other events, such as the Tokyo Olympics and global technology events have been postponed. WCIT Malaysia must take place – we owe that to our stakeholders, he said.</p> <p>Mr. Seah proposed the following remedies to the WITSA Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stop-Gap Measure: Road to the WCIT Malaysia: A Live Telecast Event to be held in September of 2020, to include a scaled down line-up of speakers in conjunction with the WITSA Board Meeting;• This could be used as a new asset for WITSA, an additional event for WITSA to be held in conjunction with the Spring Board Meetings. PIKOM would create the IP that could be shared with WITSA for use in future hybrid events;• The virtual platform cannot replace the value of the in-person WCIT events;• Detailed plans would be provided to all stakeholders in the next two (2) weeks;• PIKOM prefers to host the Fall 2020 Board Meeting and WITSA Board Members are still invited to come to Malaysia this September;• Sean asked the Board to approve a proposal to host the WCIT Malaysia in Q1 of 2021 or during 2022.• BCS (Bangladesh) has their 50th anniversary next year and that WCIT cannot be moved so Mr. Seah relayed that they are ok with moving their event to 2022.

The Secretary General said there are three (3)decisions that need to be made by the WITSA Board:

1. Fall 2020 Board Meeting to be held in Malaysia, to coincide with the *Road to the WCIT Malaysia*
2. Move the WCIT Malaysia event to 2022
3. Allow PIKOM to move forward with virtual platform that could be used by WITSA moving forward.

Mr. Gutierrez asked about timing. Dr. Poisant confirmed the Fall Board Meeting/*Road to the WCIT Malaysia* will take place in September 2020. Mr. Gutierrez asked about the scope of the live telecast event. Mr. Seah said he would like to use the speakers already confirmed to create some momentum for the live WCIT event.

Mr. Ganesh shared the following sentiments. Since 2,000+ can't come to Malaysia this Fall, PIKOM still needs to honor commitment to their sponsors and stakeholders. He said there was likely to be 100-200 people - not 2,000+ in attendance. PIKOM is talking to the TV stations so this can be broadcasted. The event in September would encompass three (3) things: Road to WCIT, WITSA Board Meeting & Live Broadcast. Danny, the PIKOM Chairman, also joined the call.

Mr. Tarek Taha thanked Sean and his team for the presentation and asked if Malaysia may agree to a new payment schedule. Secondly, he said, this may be the future of global events (virtually). He said from a WITSA point of view, there would need to be a separate contract signed (no charges) to protect WITSA's license. Mr. Taha fully supports moving ahead.

With regard to the payment, PIKOM will make the \$87,500 payment by mid-May, after MCO is expired, Mr. Seah stated.

Mr. Taha prefers that WCIT Malaysia move to 2021, instead of 2022, due to the financial impact, he said. The Secretary General explained that having two events in 2021, in the same region, won't work. The Bangladesh government isn't willing to have two events in 2021 or moving their event to 2022. We also have the Nigeria proposal for 20222 which may solve some of these financial concerns. The Secretary General's expressed his strong desire to have the WCIT Malaysia in 2022.

The Chairman asked that we go through all the presentations then discuss all the different options on that table.

8. **WCIT 2021 – Bangladesh**

Mr. Shahid Ul Munir wished everyone good health and said plans are well underway for WCIT 2021, to coincide with the 50th anniversary of Bangladesh's Independence Day. The WCIT 2021 will take place November 11-14, 2021. He shared details of the venue, stakeholders, core team, partners, budget, etc. They are finalizing the logo, global, regional and international marketing plan and a suite of online tools to aid in the marketing of the event. WCIT 2021 had planned to have a major delegation in Malaysia this year,

before COVID-19 forced the postponement. The full presentation is available here: <https://witsa.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/WCIT-2021-Preparatory-Work-Update-2020.pdf>

Munir shared that if that coronavirus threat lasts another one month to three months' time, that is ok, and planning can go on as planned. If, however, this remains a major issue this Fall, Munir is concerned about 2021 going forward as planned because they need a full year to be able to plan. Munir asked for the full Board's support in making WCIT 2021 a success.

The Chairman shared the reason WCIT 2019 in Armenia was so successful was because the entire country and government worked together. Munir said their ministers fully supported this event and share their thanks with the WITSA Board. The Chairman expressed her strong desire that BCS be successful – when our members are successful, WITSA is successful, she said.

9. **WCIT 2022 Proposal – Nigeria**

Mr. Olutayo Adeniyi of Nigeria thanked the WITSA Board for the golden opportunity extended to ITAN. ITAN has the intention to host the Congress in 2022, assuming the virus is well under control by that time. The ministry sent regrets for not being able to attend this presentation as he had a pressing COVID-19 issue to address in Nigeria. A full copy of Mr. Adeniyi's presentation is available here: <https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1Cb39j3UMVHjVau7nPX5WPOz8g5B40ANKuAcAqDvtwNs/eit#slide=id.p1>

While ITAN cannot commit to the licensing fee today, because there must be a firm commitment from the President of Nigeria, Mr. Adeniyi is hopeful to have that commitment within a few weeks time.

WCIT has never been hosted on the continent of Africa and this would be a great opportunity, he said. Nigeria is the largest county, by population, on the continent and Nigeria is referred to globally as the Giant of Africa. Over 60% of the Nigerian population is youth and this presents a great opportunity. The economy is growing annually.

There are key economic policies in place to encourage investment in the country, especially in the areas of technology and telecommunications. We see hosting WCIT as a huge opportunity for Nigeria. There are about 700 million mobile subscribers currently. The opportunity for ICT to grow quickly is very high in Nigeria.

ITAN is the representative of WITSA for Nigeria. There are various other stakeholders that would support the WCIT 2022 in Nigeria. My Adeniyi shared various initiatives for driving ICT growth and development in the region. A full copy of the WCIT 2022 (Nigeria) proposal is available here:

Mr. Adeniyi said he is willing to shift the date, general election coming up in January to May of 2023, so if we are going to get the government to be seriously involved we need to look at a later date: perhaps 2024 or alternatively, later in 2022.

The Secretary General thanked Tayo for his work and said WITSA has talked for many years about doing something in Africa and this is a great opportunity. The Secretary General said it was feasible to do two events in 2022. PIKOM, he stated, is willing to share its platform and information between now and 2022. Dr. Poisant asked for a contingent approval for Nigeria to host 2022. We would need to get a firm commitment from the government of Nigeria and a financial statement, he said. Dr. Poisant opened the floor for questions.

Mr. Adeniyi said the Ministry of ICT is already committed but additional commitments from other ministries and the President are still needed. He has personally attended at least five WCITs, so he has seen how it is done and believes that Nigeria can do this, he said.

The Chairman reiterated support needed from all levels of government and agreed Mr. Adeniyi should proceed with getting those financial commitments. She also said, after a discussion with PIKOM, they may need to do WCIT Malaysia in June of 2022; Nigeria could take place in last quarter of 2022. Mr. Adeniyi said he agreed with this and would collaborate closely with WITSA and PIKOM.

Mr. Sean Seah of PIKOM thanked Mr. Adeniyi for his proposal. He said the first part of 2022 would be difficult for Malaysia so the earliest they can do their event is June 2022. They are seeking approval from the Board to set up the dates. They would love to support Nigeria (with the registration platform, apps, live broadcast, etc.)

Mr. Seah asked for support, and a vote, on the following:

- Fall 2020 Board Meeting/Road to the WCIT Malaysia in September 2020;
- Moving WCIT Malaysia to June 2022.

Dr. Poisant asked for the following votes and there were no objections.

Mr. Taha asked for a commitment on the financial terms. Mr. Seah reiterated the \$87,500 payment will be made on May 12 after movement order is lifted; their bank is currently closed. According to contract the balance payment isn't due until 60 days prior to the event. Mr. Taha thanked Sean for the commitment of \$87,500 and said the current contract would allow for the \$375,000 payment to be postponed from 2020 to early April 2022.

Dr. Poisant asked for a vote on hosting the Spring Board Meeting 2021 in Dhaka, Bangladesh. No comments or suggestions and the motions passes unanimously for Q1 of 2021.

Dr. Poisant asked for a tentative approval to allow Nigeria to host 2022, pending financial support in writing.

Mr. Yannis Sirros asked about the two WCITs taking place in 2022 and asked why we don't do this instead of conducting two in 2021. Mr. Sirros expressed the concern about the financials if we wait until 2022; it makes more sense to do this in 2021 because of the virus, he said. Dr. Poisant said there are two major reasons why we are looking at two in 2022:

- 1) Malaysia and Bangladesh are in the same region, so it will be very hard to attract delegates and sponsorships;
- 2) In the case of Nigeria, its two different delegate pools of people and both parties have agreed to this.

Mr. Seah said both Malaysia and Bangladesh are contractually obligated; with Nigeria, we are just now exploring. For clarity, Malaysia is giving in because of a pandemic, to whichever slot is available to us, he stated. We still have to deliver on our contract, he said.

Mr. Sirros said he understood but the events as if would be three events in one year's time (between November 2021 and November 2022).

Mr. Taha asked if we could renegotiate with PIKOM and that payment be split, 50% in 2021 and 50% in 2022, sixty days prior. Mr. Seah said he would have to discuss this with his government, and he could try. Mr. Seah said we should take the financial planning for next two (2) years off line. *[ACTION]*

Dr. Poisant agreed this could be a follow up conversation, but said some of this may be resolved by a vote on Nigeria, as they would owe some money this year and next.

Mr. Taha wanted to let the entire Board know the financial situation. We have to be on our toes until we see the money in the bank, otherwise WITSA cannot continue more than 12 months so we need to think outside the box, he said.

Mr. Gutierrez said these decisions require short- and medium-term financial planning. The value of this discussion is to open up the conversation and require some thinking. If WITSA cannot work out its financial feasibility, this is a futile discussion. That's why he asked for a few moments at the end of this Board Meeting to make a proposal. Mr. Gutierrez said he has been very disconnected from WITSA and appreciated reconnecting during this meeting.

Dr. Poisant said this is always on his mind. There needs to be a revision of the budget and suggests holding a Finance Committee meeting as well. Mr. Gutierrez said this is not only financial, it's also strategic.

	<p>Mr. Taha echoed the calls for a financial meeting and also a second meeting: with the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Regional Chairman to discuss the best plan moving forward.</p> <p>Dr. Poisant asked to go back to the vote on ITAN Nigeria to host the WCIT 2022. Without objection this motion passes. Dr. Poisant asked Mr. Adeniyi to go back to stakeholders with the tentative approval. Mr. Adeniyi thanked the Board. Dr. Poisant said he would provide Nigeria a payment schedule. <i>[ACTION]</i></p> <p>Dr. Poisant asked for a vote on PIKOM hosting in WCIT in June of 2022. This passes unanimously.</p>
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10.	<p>Standing Committee Update /Executive Committee Updates</p> <p>Finance Committee</p> <p>Mr. Sean Seah shared that the total liquid assets for WITSA at this time are \$711,664.37 and this excludes the \$87,500 that will be coming in from Malaysia in May. Once that money is in we will have about \$800,000, he said.</p> <p>Mr. Gutierrez asked Mr. Seah for an assessment of WITSA’s financials right now. We need to make some tough decisions, Mr. Seah said, but the plan they have should take us through the next 24 months. Ideally, he said, we would receive half of money from Nigeria during 2021 (for the WCIT 2022 in Nigeria event) now that they have received conditional approval. Mr. Seah said he welcomed recommendations on how to approve WITSA’s financials.</p> <p>Mr. Taha asked how we can get \$800,000 to last 2 years if we have a burn rate for \$700,000 a year. Dr. Poisant asked if this conversation could be taken off line.</p> <p>Mr. Alex Yesayan also discussed a potential conference opportunity with Moscow City. They would like to do a Smart City event in early 2021. Mr. Yesayan would like the Board’s permission to explore this potential revenue source. <i>[ACTION]</i></p> <p>Mr. Gutierrez asked Alex what he meant by new format and Alex explained that this would be different than WCIT, but would be a Smart City event, under the WITSA umbrella. This could potentially be offered to other cities moving forward. Mr. Yesayan agreed to send the details to the Board to review. <i>[ACTION]</i></p>
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Dr. Posiant thanked Mr. Yesayan for his diligence on this opportunity. This could be a potential revenue source of \$100,000-\$150,000. The Secretary General and the Chairman have been briefed on this, but it was not prepared for the Board previously because there was a conflict with the timing and WCIT 2020.

Mr. Yesayan said that Moscow would agree to pay \$500,000 in total but \$300,000-\$350,000 in expenses and \$100,000-\$150,000 to WITSA directly. Mr. Yesayan said that Moscow was expecting a decision within the next one to two months.

Mr. Taha said this was a brilliant idea, built out of WCIT 2019, but we need to look at all aspects of the licensing, expenses, etc. Mr. Yesayan said he would be circulating the materials. *[ACTION]*

The Chairman said that a few years back in Washington, DC, members said we should branch out from just WCIT events and she thanked Alex for his efforts on this. Also, she said, the Minister of ICT from Russia was at WCIT 2019 and was very impressed.

Dr. Poisant asked whose team would be doing the work and Mr. Yesayan said this would be done by a local team in Moscow. We would have to work closely with them, he said, to secure our brand, etc.

Global Policy Action Committee

Mr. Halvorsen said that WITSA was planning a workshop with UNCTAD in Geneva, but it was cancelled.

On policy papers, we did a paper on e-commerce negotiations at WTO, but the process has temporarily stalled. We have been developing a paper with partners at the Digital Trade Network which will be distributed later this week. We will be asking Board Members to help us contact negotiators from our countries for an online forum, so we don't lose the momentum. *[ACTION]*

Secondly, he said, last month we issued a major paper on Big Tech and Techlash. We hope you found it useful and distribute it widely. *[ACTION]*

Finally, Mr. Halvorsen said, there is another paper about to go out on "Connecting the Next Billion" and then a paper on AI.

Mr. Gutierrez asked about key issues in policy, in light of the pandemic. Mr. Halvorsen said security and privacy would be key issues moving forward. Different parts of the world have very different approaches to privacy, and this will all be coming to a head. WITSA has always taken a strong stance that privacy is the foundation and we shouldn't compromise on that, or just do it temporarily.

Mr. Gutierrez asked for Mr. Halvorson priorities on which issues WITSA should focus on as well as Mr. Halvorsen's suggestions. He asked for a one-pager on priorities and recommendations and Mr. Halvorsen concurred. *[ACTION]*

The Chairman asked that we review ICT Award winners who have focused on these issues. *[ACTION]*

Committee on Education, Training & Human Resources

Dr. Komrakov shared details of his program that identified talented youth who can move from early training to early job entry. He said 25 children from Belarus and Bulgaria are working on line now following the completion of his program. Additionally, now five children twelve years old from Nigeria also working in the program. The program is typically 6-9 months. He offered one-year free access to the online program for WITSA members. We may consider this "gift" to potential WITSA members now as well. We have spent six years, \$500,000 USD and support of \$150,000 to do this but we agree to do this for one year for free.

Dr. Poisant said Mr. Komrakov's work on this program is most appreciated. All WITSA members may access the program for one year at no cost. When you read the literature, Apple, IBM and Tesla want children at a young age to start working on the coding and working with them, he said. He encouraged Board Members take Dr. Komrakov up on his offer. *[ACTION]*

The Chairman expressed how important the promotion of this is now given the current pandemic. She would also like to connect III with Dr. Komrakov. *[ACTION]*

Dr. Poisant said he would prepare the documents and provide to the Board. *[ACTION]*

11. **Status on European/Minsk, Belarus Office**

Dr. Boris Komrakov provided a report on the Status on European/ Minsk, Belarus Office has currently invested \$150,000 and they are constructing the office, which should be completed in October of 2020.

Status Taipei, Asia Pacific/Taipei, Taiwan Office

The Chairman offered anyone who wished to do work in the Taipei office to use that office.

13.	<p>WITSA's Global Outreach</p> <p>Ms. Poisant shared details on WITSA's public facing image via social media. Since January 2020, WITSA launched a new LinkedIn page, rebranded Facebook page, and the Twitter page has been rebranded as well. Ms. Poisant encouraged all Board Members to send content for social media. <i>[ACTION]</i></p> <p>WITSA's CRM (membership database) that allows for real time updates to membership, member dues invoicing, removed redundancy by using WITSA's CRM for the newsletter, surveying, etc. WITSA encourages members to use the CRM to connect with other members. Ms. Poisant explained how to access the CRM.</p> <p>Ms. Alicia Standridge provided an update on membership dues paid to date. Ms. Standridge reminded Board Members that 2020 dues must be paid, and a member to be in good standing, to vote in September's General Assembly meeting.</p>
14.	<p>MOUs</p> <p>Dr. Poisant went over the current MOU's and partnerships. He encouraged members to work with these partner and thanked Chairman Chui for III Taiwan's renewed global partnership. This is an additional revenue source for WITSA.</p>
15.	<p style="text-align: center;">General Assembly Timeline</p> <p>Dr. Poisant said based on our By-laws we are required to have a General Assembly meeting every two years. We have never done this before virtually, he said. We will begin the process of forming the Nominating Committee formed. He asked Board Members to join Mr. Gutierrez on the Nominating Committee and asked for any questions.</p> <p>Mr. Taha asked, given the current pandemic, is there a possibility to extend the current Board term for one year, if allowed for legally.</p> <p>Dr. Poisant said he had already looked into this and it would require a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote to change the Bylaws, otherwise we will continue with the General Assembly as planned in September 2020, he said.</p> <p>Mr. Gutierrez said WITSA is a leader in technology association and there is no reason whatsoever, given the example we should set and the technology we have to proceed as planned in September with the General Assembly. If there is a legal question about holding the General Assembly virtually, that should be addressed, he said.</p>

	<p>There was a lengthy discussion about the pros and cons of making an alternative plan for the General Assembly and Board Elections. Mr. Taha asked for an electronic vote on this.</p> <p>Mr. Seah stated that this is why the solution to host the Fall 2020 General Assembly & Board Meeting in Malaysia and offer a virtual option and electronic platform for those who cannot attend in person. Mr. Gutierrez agreed this is the best option and WITSA should proceed as planned.</p> <p>Dr. Poisant asked how many would like to pursue an option of extending the Board terms by one year.</p> <p>Mr. Sirros stated that there should not be a roll call right now; we should seek legal advice first, he said. Dr. Poisant reiterated that the Bylaws could be changed by a ¾ vote; that is why he wanted to get a sense from the Board which direction to go.</p> <p>Dr. Vasile Baltac said he agreed with the Secretary General and there wasn't a need to check with legal counsel on whether or not we can change the Bylaws, but we should also consider the video conferencing for the vote. Mr. Sirros explained he wanted to know if it was legal to change the term of the Board from 2 years to 3 years – not about the legality of virtually voting.</p> <p>Mr. Gutierrez said this isn't a legal question, more a question of whether there is a good reason to extend the Board terms.</p> <p>Mr. Adeniyi asked if we had asked the current officer holders, if they wish to continue in their current role. Dr. Poisant said most of the people on the phone would continue on the Board. Some members are looking forward to serving in a new capacity and we have one new member who would like to run for a Board seat, he said.</p> <p>Mr. Taha suggested we pool the entire General Assembly for their feelings on this matter, via an electronic vote.</p> <p>Mr. Gutierrez said we need to start with the Board. Mr. Taha made his case, he said, and Mr. Gutierrez made his case. Dr. Poisant asked how many wish to explore the option. Mr. Taha said we should collect the votes via email since so many Board members have already dropped off today's call. <i>[ACTION]</i></p> <p>Mr. Halvorsen said Bylaws are two (2) years OR until the new Chairman is elected.</p> <p>Dr. Poisant will check with legal counsel and send out the email for a vote. <i>[ACTION]</i></p>
16.	<p>Overview of WITSA BOD Meeting Schedule</p> <p>Dr. Poisant said the Fall 2020 Board Meeting will be held in Malaysia with a virtual option. Spring of 2021 will be held in Dhaka, Bangladesh.</p>

17. **Slides by Mr. Santiago Gutierrez**

Mr. Gutierrez prepared a 3-slide presentation to share. WITSA has a net liquidity of \$700K and there is a budget deficit for 2020, he said. This is fortunately not a real deficit - just a budget deficit, he said. The next slide examined percentages of sales, and the slides speak for themselves, he said.

The second challenge is that the world after COVID-19 will not be the same. WITSA will continue to be impacted, i.e. the future of large events, travel, impact of technology and how it will work with future events as well as how we conduct the General Assembly and Board elections.

WITSA needs to re-evaluate a number of items and the proposal is to have Chairman name committees on Operational Challenges, Financial Impact, and finally Strategic Level, he said. He recommends a series of meetings leading up to a virtual BOD meeting in August.

Dr. Poisant suggested, due to time constraints, we should take this proposal and move ahead. Mr. Alberto Patron of Argentina said he was interested in moving ahead with this proposal. The Chairman agrees we should set up a series of conference calls bi-monthly to address of these topics.

The Secretariat's Office will set up four (4) meetings over the next 2 months. *[ACTION]*

1. Finance
2. Vice Chairman Meeting
3. Santiago's Proposals
4. Moscow Smart City Meeting

Mr. Gutierrez asked for Dr. Poisant and Mr. Taha to set up the Finance Meeting. Secondly, get a sense if the Board wants to proceed with an operational and strategic assessment of WITSA and our future. *[ACTION]*

Mr. Taha said in closing, he appreciated the *Smart Cities* event proposed by Alex and the Virtual Platform proposed by Sean Seah and felt we should explore both of these very quickly.

Dr. Posiant said he agreed these were both golden opportunities.

The meeting adjourned at 12:04PM EDT.

ADJOURNMENT