

Unapproved minutes of the December 7th, 2000 Board of Directors Meeting.

HOUSTON AREA LEAGUE OF PC USERS
MINUTES OF December 7th, 2000
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
4543 Post Oak Place
Houston, Texas

Any corrections, changes, additions to these minutes will be noted in the next month's minutes when the minutes are approved by the Board.

ATTENDEES:

Officers

President Robert Gunn
First Vice President - SIGs Mike Mashburn
Vice President - Programs Matthew Castillo
Vice President - Communications Jay Thomas
Recording Secretary Anne Sipes
Membership Secretary Jeff Boggan
Treasurer Wes Leggett

Directors:

Michelle S Annis
Mel Babb
Norman Blaylock
Jeff Boggan
James Coon

Stephen Cravey

William A Goetschius

Robert P Grefe
Moe Jones Absent
J Kolenovsky Absent
Tiffany Kong Absent
Donald B McGowan Absent
Ray Morris Absent
Joseph E Morris Jr
Mike Novominsky Absent
David R. Pausky

Brian Sadler

Parliamentarian: Marilyn Gore

Guests:

29427 Jeff Hupp

1 I. CALL TO ORDER AT 7:00 PM

2 Michelle Annis made a motion (**Motion 120001, Agenda Attachment 1**) that the Minutes of
3 the November Board of Directors Meeting be approved.
4 The Motion passed.

5 The President asked Tim Burgess of the Legal Committee to address the Board regarding hal-
6 pc.com. Tim Burgess stated that the site does suggest association with HAL-PC. He said
7 that goodwill that applies to hal-pc.org is being usurped by hal-pc.com. He also said that the
8 hal-pc.com site implies sponsorship by hal-pc.org. He said that the disclaimer displayed on
9 the home page of hal-pc.com does not specify hal-pc.org. He said that the hal-pc.com site
10 confuses the community as to endorsement of hal-pc.com by hal-pc.org. He said that while
11 he is not a tax attorney it is possible that sponsorship as is implied by this site might
12 jeopardize our tax status. He stated that since hal-pc.org has not granted any right or license
13 to hal-pc.com that it was his recommendation that we authorize the President to approach the
14 owners of hal-pc.com and seek modification of the site and the removal of content that
15 implies an association with hal-pc.org. He said that should that fail there are legal steps that
16 should be taken.

17 Tim Burgess asked if there were any questions.

18 Brian Sadler asked about the cost of any legal action.

19 Tim Burgess stated that while there were levels of legal action, litigation would not be cheap.

20 Stephen Cravey asked if we could expect to be able to recover attorney's fees in the event of
21 legal action.

22 Tim Burgess said that there would be a fair chance that we would be entitled to recover
23 reasonable attorneys fees.

24 Robert Grefe made a motion ((**Motion 120002**) that the President be authorized to initiate
25 negotiations with hal-pc.com.

26 The Motion passed.

27 Joe Morris Jr asked for and we observed a moment of silence for fallen soldiers.

28 The President asked for questions regarding the VP SIG's Report(**Agenda Attachment 2**).
29 The Membership Secretary asked the VP SIGs if he was seeing a marked difference in SIG
30 Attendance at certain times. He wondered how seriously we were being affected by the
31 building management keeping the elevator locked after 7 pm and the broken call box at the
32 front door. The VP Communications said that he had spoken with building management on
33 these issues. He has been told that the front door device will be fixed. He was also told that
34 the closing time on the doors is suppose to be 7:30 pm. The President said that the stairwell
35 door is staying open until 7:45 pm.

36 The President asked for questions about the Education Directors Report (**Attachment 1**).

37 The Education Director read his report.

38 The VP Communications expressed regret that the class schedule had not been included in
39 the Magazine. He explained that the publisher was looking for repetitive items to remove to
40 make space and she had made the decision to pull the class schedule. He said that education
41 is HAL-PC's primary mission and that removing the class schedule from the magazine was
42 not a good idea. Michelle Annis said that the class schedule was in the December issue.

43 The VP Communications also stated that he had a solution for the telephone problems. He
44 has not had time to wire it in.

45 Robert Grefe said that for the time in being he will be at headquarters Monday and
46 Wednesday from 1 pm to 3 pm to handle registration.

47 Michelle Annis asked that we give Bob Grefe a round of applause for all of his hard work.
48 There was a resounding round of applause.

49 The President asked for questions regarding the Membership Secretary's Report
50 (**Attachment1.pdf**).

51 The Membership Secretary abstracted his report verbally.

52 Michelle Annis said that these were worst case figures. There was discussion about going to
53 different billing schemes. The Treasurer stated that Telescan has a recurring billing program.
54 He suggested three months free and then go to monthly billing. He said that a lot of the free
55 Internet access providers are going out of business. He said that this is not a good business
56 model. He said that most people understand and accept monthly billing. Michelle Annis
57 said that most of our Members would prefer monthly billing.

58 The Membership Secretary stated that he had collected a contact list of more than 200
59 companies and that he had brought back a copy of the complete Comdex book which
60 contains contact information for all the business involved. He said that this contact
61 information would be made available to the Board.

62 Michelle Annis said that we had budgeted to send three people to Comdex. She made a
63 motion (**Motion 120003**) that we reimburse Pat Thomsen her \$587.95 in Comdex expenses in
64 recognition of the contribution she made to HAL-PC on that trip.
65 The motion passed by acclamation.

66 Robert Grefe said that HAL-PC is Houston's best kept secret. He said that we need to be
67 getting the word about. Flyers to place on windshields, Magazine distribution, a HAL9000
68 promotion, generic business cards for distribution, Channel 13 Share your Christmas, Channel
69 8 telephone lines and Jerry's kids were all suggested as venues.

70 The President asked for questions regarding the VP Communications Report (**Attachment 3**).

71 The VP Communications abstracted his report verbally.

72 The VP Communications stated that we are currently headed toward more participation with
73 institutions of higher learning. He named Rice, Texas A&M, Stephen F. Austin and The
74 Institute for Microbiology. He also mentioned teleclass presentations. He said that we
75 currently have 10 Megabits available. Jeff Hupp said that if that gets used we will crank it
76 up. He said that would open up higher learning. He also said that Universities don't like to

77 play ISP. Brian Sadler asked what people get out of using our donation page or gift page out
78 of the magazine. He was told they get a thank you note, a tax receipt and they get to feel
79 good about where they put their money. David Pausky asked about a student rate. Jeff
80 Hupp said that would require a bylaws change. Carla Cawlfild asked if we had authorized
81 the magazine to sell ads to competitors. She was told that we had. Norman Blaylock asked
82 if we were still running unpaid ads. The VP Communications said that we probably were.

83 The President asked for questions regarding the VP Programs Report(**Attachment 4**).

84 The VP Programs abstracted his report verbally.

85 William A Goetschius asked about the price per person at the Barbecue planned for January
86 20th, 2001. He was told the charge was tentatively set at \$3.00 per person. Mel Babb stated
87 that she had not been aware that there was to be a charge for the food. Michelle Annis
88 stated that we needed to make the charge apparent on the HAL-PC Home Page. The
89 President stated that if we were going to charge the members money then we should spell it
90 out.

91 Michelle Annis said that reinstating the large presenters fees would limit us to the same big
92 companies we always have. She suggested considering a reduced fee. Jeff Hupp stated that
93 people who are willing to pay large presentation fees already have an established market. He
94 said that part of HAL-PC's mission is to show new things. The innovators will not have
95 established markets. He suggested that we take donations from presenters. The President
96 stated that if we reinstate the presenters fees then the VP Programs is going to be fully
97 responsible for all collections.

98 The President asked for questions about the Treasurers Report (**Attachment 2**).

99 The Treasurer abstracted his report verbally.

100 The Treasurer stated that the Greater Houston Community Foundation funds remained
101 untouched. He also stated that without an established Guideline for giving those funds would
102 not be available to us.

103 The Treasurer made a motion (**Motion 120004**) to approve the Greater Houston Community
104 Foundation - Guidelines for Giving Proposal included in his report.
105 The motion passed.

106 The Treasurer stated that the auditor was inclined to consider the Greater Houston
107 Community Foundation account as another bank account. He stated that we may not want to
108 keep the funds there if that is the case. He said that we might do better with some other
109 option. He recommended that the Board approve an emergency withdrawal of funds from
110 the Greater Houston Community Foundation.

111 It was pointed out that the Board had previously approved a \$75,000 withdrawal and that
112 those funds had never been touched. There was general agreement that without the
113 Guidelines for Giving that motion was invalid.

114 Michelle Annis stated that we may need funds to establish the new bank accounts.

115 The Treasurer made a motion (**Motion 120005**) to approve an emergency withdrawal from

116 the Greater Houston Community Foundation of \$100,000 at such time as it becomes
117 necessary.
118 The motion passed.

119 Mel Babb requested that the Recording Secretary record her opposition to the motion.

120 The Treasurer made a motion (**Motion 120006**) to approve the Magazine Advertiser
121 Collection Proposal included in his report. Clarification to the wording was requested and
122 was made. (The motion is worded as it was passed in this document)
123 The motion passed by acclamation.

124 The VP Communications stated that there was a problem with timely communication with
125 Magazine personnel. The President stated that we need to be sending the Magazine a stop
126 publishing on these unpaid ads. Michelle Annis was asked to start sending the stop
127 publishing notices. It was generally agreed that we should start sending the Magazine inserts
128 so that there will not be white space.

129 The Treasurer made a motion (**Motion 120007**) to approve the Network Security Proposal
130 included in his report.

131 The President stated that this was an implied authority and that this motion was not
132 necessary. Mel Babb requested a couple of grammatical changes. (The motion is worded as
133 it was passed in this document). Discussion revealed that the Board had not previously
134 granted this authority to the Network Administrator.
135 The motion passed.

136 **IV. NEW BUSINESS**

137 **Fund Raising.:**

138 The VP SIGs introduced our fund raiser, Bob Dowdell. Bob Dowdell gave a short
139 presentation. The VP SIGs agreed to temporarily chair the Fund Raising Committee.

140 Somebody made a motion to adjourn.

141 The December 7th, 2000 Board of Directors Meeting adjourned at 9:54 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Sipes
Recording Secretary

Attachment 1

Education Committee Report

Our current financial position is as follows:

Income: \$8,095.00

Disbursements \$1,712.36

Net Income \$6,382.64

REPORT TO THE BOD
DECEMBER 8, 2000

INCOME AND DISBURSEMENTS
By Robert Grefe

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The web page registration is working quite well. Mike Mashburn has set up hot links from the web page class schedule. A potential student not only can register via the web, but he/she can pay by credit card over a secure link. When a student registers, the system automatically sends the necessary student/class information to our Registrar, Ann Herbage.

Hooray! We found a teacher for our Saturday Win98 class. Susan Ostlund will start our first paid Windows98 class on Jan 6, 2001.

We have had good success in growing full-scale teachers out of assistant volunteers. At this time, we have more teachers than classes. (Registration problems.. see below) The schedule for the first six months of year 2001 has been posted to the bulletin boards at Hal and to the HAL-PC Web Page.

We have a splendid cadre of competent teachers. Tom Tyner does a good job of maintaining course manuals. No student starts a class without a manual. Our class retention is good. A student finishes 1st Step and goes on to Win98. From Word97 or Excel97 Book 1, over 80% of our students want to sign up and take Book 2.

Course pricing is correct. It is affordable and generates enough revenue to cover the cost of manuals and lab maintenance.

In response to frequent calls to the front desk, we conducted a seminar on buying and selling on eBay. The seminar was conducted by Dick Huddleston, Ambassador to eBay. Approximately 50 HAL members attended. This was at no charge. Mr. Huddleston gave everyone an eBay T Shirt. We have a second session scheduled for 7:00 pm Tuesday December 5.

NOT SO GOOD NEWS

We have abandoned use of the Delphi information system. The system works fine in delivering a course inquiry to our registrar. Unfortunately, people don't stay at home much, so as often as not, its use engenders a round of telephone tag wherein we leave word with the student and he/she leaves word with the registrar.

The telephone extension 187 that transfers calls from HAL to our Registrar is terrible. Quality is so bad that we cannot understand what the caller is saying. Worse, if the Registrar is not home, the student leaves a message that we cannot understand or return. This system should be discontinued.

For reasons, still unknown, the class descriptions have been removed from the Magazine and I have been unable to find out (a) WHY they were removed and (b) WHEN they will be restored. This omission is bad bad bad.

REALLY BAD NEWS

Registration just isn't working. We get a number of complaints from potential students that it is just too hard to register at HAL. As mentioned above, Phone 187 is hard to hear and generates a game of phone tag. Many of our 1st Step students aren't computer literate enough to sign up via the web page. Students are becoming frustrated and are seeking other sources of help. It is recommended that we abandon Phone 187 entirely. For those students that can use the Internet, web registration is fine. For those that can't, we must have a scheduled person at HAL headquarters available on a scheduled basis. Potential students must know that they can visit HAL at xxx time on yyy day and find a registrar on duty. Similarly, they must know that they can call in by phone at nnn time of mmm day confident that they will reach a knowledgeable volunteer ON THE FIRST CALL.

The BOD should consider authorizing a paid registrar to work a nominal 4 to 6 hours per week. If necessary, the price of each class should be increased to cover this new and added expense.

ROBERT GREFE RESIGNS

It is with considerable sorrow that I have decided to resign from my position as Chairman of the Education Committee. My reasons are personal, but in general, I do not have enough time available to give this job the effort it requires. I have an excellent staff and excellent teachers, but with all this, still I feel that I must step aside so that others may lead. I will continue my duties as front desk volunteer, course teacher, and member of the Board of Directors. My resignation is effective January 1, 2001.

Respectively Submitted

Robert Grefe

Attachment 2

HAL-PC Treasurer's Report December 2000

During November, Michelle found time to work on tracking of the departmental spending for comparison with the budget. Unfortunately, she was not entirely successful in arriving at completed report but made good progress. This work involved translating and mapping the new, more functionally-aligned categories of the budget passed in July into the accounting system categories. The final block to obtaining tracking numbers was the Business Works requirement of completely closing the prior year's books before generating such a report. We have been hesitant to do this until we receive the adjusting entries for last years records from our accountant performing the audit. I am advised that the audit of HAL-PC for last year is nearing completion.

Initially, we felt that we must continue with Business Works for a variety of reasons, but at some point it will be appropriate to review all our office tools and compare them with has become available. Informed suggestions will be welcomed.

The only cash account which had meaningful activity last month was HAL-PC's checking account at the Bank of America. The balance in this account is about the same or reflects slow growth compared to the previous months. As of the close of business December 6th the balance was \$97,373.01.

As custodian of HAL-PC's financial health, I am happy to report we have seen improvements in collections but the time has come to support these efforts, so this month I have made some proposals for the board's consideration.

Greater Houston Community Foundation - Guidelines for Giving Proposal:

In the course of last month's business, a matter concerning the HAL-PC Endowment Fund held by The Greater Houston Community Foundation came to my attention. Apparently, we have not provided them with our "guidelines for giving", the procedure by which HAL-PC may direct grants to be made from the fund. In seeking to provide the above, in a manner that mirrors action taken by the resolution that the board passed previously, I move the adoption of the following resolution:

Be it resolved by the HAL-PC Board of Directors that grants requested from the HAL-PC Endowment Fund of the Greater Houston Community Foundation shall take the form of a resolution brought by the Treasurer and approved by the Board of Directors.

Magazine Advertiser Collection Proposal:

HAL-PC's financial health and its ability to continue to publish the quality magazine to which we have become accustomed, is dependant on defraying some of the cost of publication by publishing advertisements for a fee. For this approach to be effective, it is necessary for HAL-PC to be compensated in a timely manner for the advertisements published. In the past, HAL-PC has had a problem collecting for advertisements following publication. In the hope that the adoption of a policy of payment prior to publication for those advertisers who have a history of non-payment, I move that the board adopt the following resolution.

If an advertiser is indebted to HAL-PC for two or more months publication of an advertisement, subsequent publication of that advertiser's advertisement shall be contingent upon payment in full being received prior to publication.

Network Security Proposal:

As it is a duty of The Treasurer to see to it that value of HAL-PC's assets is preserved, I make the following motion.

Whereas HAL-PC's network administrator is in the best position to be informed as to the day-to-day security needs of HAL-PC's network infrastructure,

Whereas "the network" is understood to include valuable physical assets including computers and other equipment the primary function of which requires a connection to The Internet; as well as any passwords necessary to obtain access; and information bearing connections to these computers and other equipment,

Whereas, HAL-PC's network administrator is charged with the security of the network it is appropriate that the network administrator have the authority to deny access to the network, or any portion thereof, in the interest of security, to any individual, organization or other entities that he or she believes to present a threat to this interest.

Be it resolved that the Network Administrator shall have "right of refusal" of physical as well as electronic access to HAL-PC's network assets by any person, organization or other entity.

This authority is to extend to whomever the board or the outgoing network administrator acknowledges to be the network administrator.

It is acknowledged that at the present time, the Network Administrator position for HAL-PC is held by Samuel Jeffery Hupp.

Respectfully submitted,

Wesley L. Leggett

Attachment 3

Houston Area League of PC Users
Board of Directors Meeting - 7 December 2000
Vice-President Communications Report

MAGAZINE:

I am pleased to report that HAL-PC's Magazine Publisher, Meredith Foster, has obtained a more favorable arrangement for the printing of the HAL-PC Magazine from Western Lithograph. Due to the recent acquisition of several smaller firms by Western Lithograph they are now able to perform all of the necessary printing and binding operations in-house. Printing cost reductions of approximately \$1,000/month are anticipated. No reduction in quality or additional publication delay is anticipated by this arrangement.

Durhmon Jennings, ad salesperson for the HAL-PC magazine attended Fall COMDEX on behalf of The HAL-PC Magazine. He reports that,

"The entire Comdex week was very worthwhile. The interaction with the other user groups at the APCUG functions concerning the User Group National Ad Program will result in us signing up more new members to the program. This should bring our total to close to 100 publications that are participating, thus bringing more revenue to HAL-PC.

I did want to make you aware of some of the "gossip" concerning HAL-PC and the change over in leadership. I had several APCUG members and User Group members question me as to what had happened. They were anxious to fill me in on what they had heard. Most of these revelations were a result of the person that is emailing our minutes of the board meetings to the APCUG members as well as stories getting passed along out of context. There seemed to be no real problem with these issues, but I did get tired of putting out the fires that are not really burning. I assured everyone that confronted me that we had gone through a changeover for the better and that our organization was still strong and we were doing our best to make a smooth transition. I reminded them of how their own politics within their groups can be skewed and they all smiled and agreed that can and has happened to their groups before.

The companies I talked to who were part of the APCUG presentations were delighted to hear we would not be charging for them to address our group at our meetings. There has been past resentment from these companies concerning these charges in the past. With some good PR we can erase a lot of the negatives that companies attach to HAL-PC, as well as phase out some of the resentment that other User Groups have towards us because we are the big boy on the block. I believe the National Ad Program has helped our image with other groups as well as advertisers from the responses and "thank you's" I received. It made me feel great to get the huge round of applause for the merits of the program when I was introduced!

In conclusion, I feel that the trip was exceptional, and the attitude and enthusiasm associated with the APCUG portion of the week was surprising and very uplifting in presentation and content.

I look forward to next years Comdex week!"

INTERNET:

In order to better serve our member/users, especially those making use of 640x480 display screens, the main HAL-PC webpage has been modified to make the numerous helpful links more prominent and accessible.

Recently, we have begun gaining ADSL users at an increased pace. I am aware of at least 14 users either already connected or pending in the month of December.

HALNet's Internet connectivity has been further enhanced by the establishment of a direct peering connection with the University of Houston. This arrangement was accomplished at no cost to HAL-PC and will make our ADSL offering considerably more attractive to those students, faculty and staff involved in projects at The University of Houston, especially Distance Learning which involves streaming video presentations.

This will become especially significant as the University of Houston intends to phase out their own dialup Internet Access services. The current plan is to direct students, faculty and staff to area Internet Service Providers who are directly connected with The University of Houston as HALNet now is.

I would also like to call attention to the new HAL-PC Gift Membership webpage, <https://secure.hal-pc.org/gift.html>, which provides a convenient means to give a gift to someone you care about as well as benefit HAL-PC.

Respectfully submitted,

Jay Thomas
Vice-President Communications

Attachment 4

Programs Report
As of December 7, 2000

Future Events
January Barbecue: January 20th, 1-5pm

June General Meeting: June 2nd, (time to be determined)

The June meeting will be the next meeting after January due to budgetary and logistical problems with having a event earlier. Despite the length of time between these meetings, we believe that the June meeting will be a great success and the Programs Committee will be planning quarterly meetings thereafter. Scheduling for these meetings will begin immediately, and should be ready for presentation by our next board meeting.

Committee Structure

The Programs Committee has been restructured, and now includes 10 separate positions:

Emcee

Publicity

Vender Setup

Vendor Contact

Presenter Contact

Production Manager

Vendor Hospitality

Programs Planning

Facility Contracting

Committee Chair

Presenter Fee Policy

The Programs committee has reexamined our policy change to 'free' presenters at HAL-PC's events. While the idea was well intended, and would allow HAL-PC to become more selective in it's presenter decisions, the committee has decided that the reduction of events to just four a year has more than sufficiently reduced the hassled that is caused when trying to pursue presenters.

This said, the committee has decided to reinstate our \$100 a minute presenter policy. There are SEVERAL companies that are more than willing to go to this expense to speak to our members, and it is of great benefit to HAL-PC to charge for this service.

Sincerely and respectfully,
Matthew Castillo