

**Meeting Notes**  
**MetroGIS Producer Work Group**  
**Wednesday, September 25, 2002**

Present: Dave Drealan - Chair (Carver County), Jim Hentges (Scott County), Gary Swenson (Anoka County), Jane Harper (Washington County), Randy Knippel (Dakota County), Bill Brown (Hennepin County), Bob Mulder (Hennepin County), Randy Johnson (MetroGIS) and Kathie Doty (Richardson, Richter).

**1. Approval of Meeting Notes From the September 9, 2002 Meeting**

Meeting notes were approved with minor changes.

**2. Draft Policy Summary**

Randy Johnson reviewed the draft Policy Summary with the work group members. The draft Policy Summary has three main elements:

- Counties would be distributing the same data sets, i.e. parcel data with 24 attributes.
- Roles and responsibilities would be the same as those for the public sector distribution of parcel data.
- A common license would be used by all counties.

Randy Knippel emphasized the importance of engaging county staff and board members in further discussion of data distribution, and the need for resolution of internal issues may exist within counties. In an example of issues to be resolved, Gary Swenson pointed out that Anoka County does not presently require a license.

Randy Knippel reemphasized the importance of stepping through a process that includes all affected departments in each county, and gives everyone sufficient time to gain internal support for any suggested changes. In addition, Randy pointed out that a collaborative effort generates some momentum that can be used to move this issue forward within each county.

The group talked about where to go with the draft policy. Randy Johnson suggested that the policy be taken to the Coordinating Committee and then to the Policy Board in October. Dave suggested that we take Items # 1 and # 2 as written and remove the last sentence from # 3. The group agreed that this would be a useful change. Randy Knippel suggested that each county board be asked to approve the Policy Summary after the MetroGIS Policy Board endorses it. If such approvals proceed in a timely fashion, the MetroGIS Policy Board could act on a Policy Summary that all the counties had reviewed and approved at the January 2003 MetroGIS Policy Board meeting.

**3. County Policies on Fees**

Carver County - Dave Drealan outlined policies used in Carver County. He indicated that they sell almost no data at this time. The cost of GIS data is too high and it is not reasonable to subset the data. He indicated that real estate professionals are interested in getting information rather than data. Carver County receives 1,000 phone calls per month for lot size information. Dave indicated that, in the near future, the Surveyor Dept is planning to put half sections, PDFs, etc. on a web site. Fees could be charged on a subscription basis.

In summary, Dave indicated that Carver's interest is not so much in increasing revenues from sale of data as in reducing counter time, and therefore staff time, related to responding to requests for maps, etc.

Scott County - Jim Hentges said that his situation was similar to Carver County's. They receive approximately \$12,000 per year in revenue from sale of digital data. Approximately 5% of the data sold is parcel data. Some of their data is presently available on the internet, including lot sizes and plats. This access allows real estate professionals, appraisers and others to get lot size information, etc. on the web site, and results in reduced counter time. Dave Drealan asked Jim if Carver makes money on maps, and Jim responded that they receive approximately \$48,000 per year on sale of maps, but the County would be interested in eliminating this service in order to reduce staff time.

Dakota County - Randy Knippel indicated that Dakota County sells parcel data as well as planametric and topographic data. They receive approximately \$30,000 per year in data and map sales. The most expensive elements are contours and planametrics. Ten (10) % of sales are parcels without attributes. At this time property half-sections are available on the internet at no charge. This has significantly diminished counter time for Dakota County staff. Randy also indicated that attributes are sold through their Information Technology department, generating revenues of less than \$10,000 per year. Dakota County sells all attributes for the entire county for \$40,000, which represents roughly one-cent per parcel.

Hennepin County - Bill Brown said that taxpayer services generates \$150,000 per year in sales of attribute data. This includes many more attributes than the 24 attributes that are presently a part of the regional parcel data set. Bill indicated that customers are interested in customization and have very specific needs. Hennepin charges for time and materials to respond to these needs. Bill raised a concern about privacy issues related to the sale of taxpayer data; he suspects that the public may not be aware that such data is sold.

He spoke to the Hennepin County Auditor (Pat O'Connor) about revenue and the possible impact of distributing parcel data. Pat indicated that the main objective is to get data out to the public, and that revenue generation is a less important consideration. Bill related that Hennepin had one sale of parcel data last year for \$2,000 to Great River Energy.

Washington County - Jane Harper distributed the county fee schedule (attached). She indicated that the Information Services Department generated \$6,600 this year for custom mailing list labels, etc. In her conversations with the Surveyor, it was indicated that total revenue generated to date is approximately \$229,000. Jane estimates this to compute to approximately \$30,000 per year. Revenues are expected to decline since the market is presently saturated and additional sales are not anticipated. Approximately \$25,000 per year is generated from hard copy parcel maps. Jane also indicated that she plans to speak to the County Auditor/Treasurer, but does not have information from them yet.

As Jane described her county policies, Randy Knippel wondered what impact the agreement to charge 5 cents per parcel had had on Washington County. Jane indicated that issues regarding distribution of revenue did not arise, since there were no sales of data. However, Jane acknowledged that there could have been some internal concerns if data had been sold.

Anoka County - Gary Swenson reported that Anoka County has several issues with regard to their fee schedules. Sales of data and mailing lists have not been consistently managed, which creates problems when people wish to purchase data at a price below what the fee policy indicates. The county policy is to charge \$400 per megabyte; custom maps are \$10 per original, plus \$50 per hour for time. Mailing labels are 2.5 cents per label. Total revenue generated per year is approximately \$20,000 for mailing labels, reports, data, mapping etc. Approximately 50% of the revenue is from mailing labels and reports. Gary also indicated that Surveyor revenue is less than revenue generated by GIS and Property Taxation generates greater levels of revenue than GIS.

Dave Drealan thanked the counties for sharing information about their fee policies and directed Kathie to summarize information from the discussion.

4. **Business Plan Item Regarding Data Maintenance Payments**

Randy Johnson indicated that the draft Business Plan that is to be discussed at the subsequent coordinating committee meeting contains a proposal to shift data maintenance payments into a project funding pool. He provided a history of the origin of the data maintenance payments, and discussed the rationale for shifting to a project funding pool.

Randy Knippel indicated that while the revenue may not be terribly significant, that his County Board looks favorably upon the Council's policy to support GIS development within the producer community.

Randy Johnson talked about the origin of the data maintenance payments as they related to the need to create a level playing field. Now that this has been achieved the need for the data maintenance payments has declined. He also pointed out key benefits to producers, such as DataFinder and DataFinder Café. Jane indicated that there is still some distance to go before producers are persuaded that DataFinder and other tools are of sufficient benefit to them to relinquish data maintenance payments.

Given time constraints for this meeting, it was determined that additional discussion should take place at the Coordinating Committee meeting that was to be held subsequent to the Producer Work Group meeting. The meeting was adjourned.