

**Meeting Summary**  
**MetroGIS Coordinating Committee**  
**MN Counties Insurance Trust Bldg. – Room 313**  
**March 31, 2004**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Harper called the meeting to order at 1:33 PM, introduced the newest member, Ned Phillips, with the Rice Creek Watershed District, and asked all present to state their name and the organization they represent. Ned replaces Cliff Aichinger, who resigned from the Committee in December. Harper then presented Aichinger, who had been an active participant in MetroGIS from its beginnings in 1995, with a Certificate of Recognition for his contributions to the Committee.

Members Present: *Academics:* Will Craig (U of M); *Business Geographics:* Chet Harrison (CB Richard Ellis); *Cities:* Bob Cockriel (AMM: suburban cities - City of Bloomington); *Counties:* Gary Swenson (Anoka), Bill Brown (Hennepin); David Claypool (Ramsey), Dave Drealan (Carver), Jane Harper (Washington), and Randy Knippel (Dakota); *Federal:* Ron Wencl (USGS); *Metropolitan:* David Bitner (Metropolitan Airports Commission), Rick Gelbmann (Metropolitan Council), Nancy Read (Metropolitan Mosquito Control District), and Nancy Pollock, Metropolitan 911 Board; *Non-Profits:* Sandra Paddock (Wilder Research Center); *State:* David Arbeit (LMIC), Joella Givens (Mn/DOT), and Robert Maki (DNR); *Watershed/Water Management Organizations:* Ned Phillips (Rice Creek Watershed District).

Members Absent: *Cities:* Karen Johnson (AMM: core cities - City of St. Paul), *Counties:* Jim Hentges (Scott); *GIS Consultants:* Larry Charboneau (The Lawrence Group); *Schools:* Lee Whitcraft (TIES); *Special Expertise:* Brad Henry (URS Corp.); *Utilities:* Al Laumeyer (CenterPoint Energy Minnegasco).

Support Staff: Mark Kotz, Steve Fester, Randall Johnson, and Kathie Doty (Richardson, Richter & Associates, Inc.)

Visitors: Pete Eggimann (Metropolitan 911 Board) and Scott Simmer (Hennepin County GIS Coordinator).

**2. ACCEPT AGENDA**

Gelbmann moved and Givens seconded to approve the agenda as submitted. Motion carried ayes, all.

**3. ACCEPT MEETING SUMMARY**

Craig moved and Bitner seconded to approve the summary for the Committee's December 17th meeting, as submitted. Motion carried, ayes all.

**4. SUMMARY OF JANUARY 28 POLICY BOARD MEETING**

Staff Coordinator Johnson and Chairperson Harper summarized the major topics considered by the Policy Board at its January 28<sup>th</sup> meeting. The main item of discussion surrounded comments from Board members that indicated a lack of understanding of the breadth of common information needs that have been previously acknowledged as priorities for MetroGIS. It was noted that only 4 of the 12 members have any substantive longevity on the Board and, as such, Chairperson Reinhardt has encouraged a presentation at the next meeting to expand their understanding of established priorities, regional solutions in place and benefits attributable to those solutions.

**5. ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**a) Update on the Metropolitan 911 Board's GIS Project**

Nancy Pollock, Director of the Metropolitan 911 Board, provided a context for the Board's GIS Project with its Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) and introduced Pete Eggimann, Technical Operations Director for the Board summarized the Board's ambitious project to integrate use of GIS technology into the daily operations of the 27 PSAPs that serve the seven county area. The presentation slides can be

viewed at [www.metrogis.org/teams/cc/meetings/033104/911.pdf](http://www.metrogis.org/teams/cc/meetings/033104/911.pdf). In early March the 911 Board concluded that GIS technology is crucial to its ability to effectively dispatch emergency services in a wireless world. Components of the Board's strategy include:

- a) Hiring a GIS Coordinator who will work for the Board and be responsible for coordinating standards, data management, etc. among the 27 PSAPs, and
- b) Avoiding duplication of effort by leveraging MetroGIS's regional data solutions and standards and best practice development processes, as well as, the investments in GIS technology and related data management that have been made by the seven counties.

Eggimann closed by stating that if MetroGIS had not existed, a more expensive strategy would be under consideration.

Knippel encouraged the 911 Board to coordinate its data needs with the efforts of MetroGIS's Emergency Preparedness Workgroup. Staff commented that they are watching for such opportunities and making sure all possible affected parties are aware of what the others are doing. The Address Workgroup was offered as a case in point, which includes representatives from several workgroups and key interests.

Craig and Arbeit encouraged Pollock and Eggimann to be clear in their presentation to the Policy Board why MetroGIS's efforts are important to their project by citing specific examples of the datasets developed via MetroGIS's efforts that are valuable, how the workgroups in progress will be leveraged (i.e., Address Workgroup), and how they will be leveraging GIS technology investments that have been made by the counties. Pollock thanked the group for feedback.

#### **b) Operating Guidelines – Modifications - THIRD READING**

Chairperson Harper summarized the changes that had been accepted at the December 17<sup>th</sup> meeting and the changes proposed to provide rules for addressing member removal in cases when a member is not engaged in the affairs of the Committee. Staff noted that Chairperson Reinhardt is not in favor of a strict policy stated in the rules for fear that such a policy will result in more harm than good.

Read and Givens commented that, in deference to Chairperson Reinhardt, a clear policy of expectations and consequences is preferred, but agreed that softer language than that proposed would be acceptable.

#### **Motions:**

1. Cockriel moved and Read seconded to direct the Committee Chair and Staff to soften the language proposed in Section III (10) - Member Removal - of the modifications to MetroGIS's Operating Guidelines, dated February 11, 2004 and forward them to the Policy Board for approval. Motion carried, ayes all.
2. Arbeit moved and Cockriel seconded to approve the proposed modifications to MetroGIS's Operating Guidelines, dated February 11, 2004, with the exception of Section III (10) -Member Removal, and forward them to the Policy Board for approval. Motion carried, ayes all

#### **c) Preliminary 2005 Budget**

Staff commented that budget requests for 2005 programs need to be submitted to Council management no later than this May. As such, a preliminary 2005 budget for MetroGIS and associated listing of core services was shared with the Committee by staff. Staff noted that no changes are proposed from the 2004 budget (\$86,000 in non-staff expenses and 3 FTE in staff support) and that this level of support should be sufficient to support all core services. No comments were received regarding the budget or the functions/services proposed to be supported in 2005.

#### **Motion:**

Claypool moved and Read seconded to direct staff to forward to the Policy Board for its review and comment the 2005 preliminary MetroGIS budget and accompanying listing of functions that were included in the Committee's agenda materials. Motion carried, ayes all.

**d) Enhancements to Regional Parcel Dataset – 2004 Funding Priorities**

Swenson, a member of the Parcel Data Enhancement Workgroup, summarized the recommendation and introduced Mark Kotz, staff lead for the Workgroup, to explain the recommendations in more detail. Kotz summarized the process by which the proposed enhancements had been identified and design specifications agreed upon, noting that all seven counties are comfortable with the recommendation and requested Committee comment and direction. Once the proposal is acceptable to the Committee, the Workgroup will formalize its proposal in the form of a modified Regional Policy Statement for the Committee's approval at the June meeting and consideration by the Policy Board in July.

The target for distributing the modified version of the regional parcel dataset is January 2005. There are four general modifications proposed: clarification of existing attribute meaning (completed), modification of existing attributes, adding new attributes (mostly housing characteristics that were the top ranked enhancement preferences) and officially adding parcel points as a component of the regionally endorsed solution. He noted that two counties currently provide parcel points on their own. Kotz summarized each of the proposed changes.

No comments were offered regarding the specifics of the proposed changes, other than Knippel stating that he agrees that MetroGIS can not mandate compliance but would prefer a stronger statement of intent to encourage the counties to strive to do as much as possible to achieve and maintain the desired regional parcel data to agreed-upon specifications. Staff noted that they would look into possible modifications to the preamble language and share any proposed changes with the counties prior to the June Coordinating Committee meeting.

The consensus was to direct the Parcel Workgroup to propose modifications to the adopted regional parcel dataset roles, responsibilities and specifications document (Regional Policy Statement), as necessary, to implement the recommended enhancements for approval at the next Coordinating Committee meeting and Policy Board consideration in July.

**e) Business Plan Update Preparations – (Fall Workshop)**

Kathie Doty, MetroGIS Strategic Planning Consultant, summarized the preparations that staff have made to date for the fall workshop, including six draft issue statements.

Arbeit suggested that before the specific issue statements are addressed that a more general dialogue related to the broad vision might be in order. The group concurred.

Gelbmann noted that one of the reasons that the workshop was proposed in the first place is because the "low hanging fruit" in terms of regional data solutions have in most part been accomplished. His hope is that the group will be able to identify ideas for how to best go about defining regional solutions that will likely require multiple leaders in a collaborative setting.

Harper commented that a topic that has been raised in the past and that should be incorporated into the discussion is whether MetroGIS continue to seek out collaborative solutions to additional needs or focus on maintaining what is already in place.

Maki noted that MetroGIS has achieved a good deal of maturity in terms of regional data solutions, best practices and policies and that a good deal of trust has been established. He believes a next step worth serious consideration is looking into how the constituent organizations might move closer to integrated business processes. He cited MetroGIS's regional mailing label application as an example, and speculated on how many more such applications might be out there.

Read suggested that outreach and increasing understanding of access opportunities among stakeholders should be added to the list of discussion points at the workshop.

At Chairperson Harper's invitation, the following members volunteered to assist her and staff with further preparations for the fall workshop: Bitner, Gelbmann, Harrison, and Maki.

**f) GIS Demonstration for April Policy Board meeting**

The Staff Coordinator summarized Chairperson Reinhardt's intent for the April Policy Board GIS Demonstration to clearly illustrate the breadth of data themes that comprise solutions to priority common information needs and how organizations represented by the Policy Board are benefiting from MetroGIS's efforts. Staff noted that following this statement by Chairperson Reinhardt, a invitation was made to Bob Diedrich, with SRF Consulting, to share some of the material included in the testimonial he participated in last fall for MetroGIS; material that speaks directly to Chairperson Reinhardt's intent for the April presentation.

Staff asked if the proposal to utilize a 3<sup>rd</sup> party to communicate benefits to government entities caused anyone any pause. No one objected and several believed that it was a good idea to bring a non-government entity before the Board to clearly communicate the breadth of benefit attributable to MetroGIS's efforts.

The consensus was to direct staff to invite Bob Diedrich with SRF to share with the Board several examples of how their government clients are benefiting from MetroGIS's efforts.

**g) DataFinder – Review Outreach Presentation**

Postponed to the June meeting due to lack of time.

**h) Performance Measures Reporting Update**

Kathie Doty, MetroGIS Strategic Planning Consultant, asked if the group had any thoughts that might explain the 15 percent increase in DataFinder activity from January to February. No theories were offered.

Doty also recommended that the Committee postpone to the fall workshop action on two changes to the actual Performance Measures that have been proposed by Committee members: tracking use of applications and tracking volunteer time. The group concurred that it is appropriate to defer discussion of these topics to the fall workshop when a detailed discussion of benefit versus investment is anticipated.

**i) TOP Grant – Grant Writer Funding Request and Letter of Support**

Craig and Paddock explained the intent of the grant proposal and the request of MetroGIS to donate \$500 to the grant writing as well as to submit a letter of support. They conceded that the current reference in the letter of support to providing access to data by the non-profit community needs some work and that they will rely upon Chairperson Harper's advice to refine this statement. Staff Coordinator Johnson commented that the application deadline is before the next Policy Board meeting but that Chairperson Reinhardt was okay with deferring to the Coordinating Committee to act on this request.

Gelbmann commented that core functions of MetroGIS are to foster broad-based sharing of geospatial data and knowledge, as necessary, to fully address priority information needs of the community and that this proposal is consistent with these functions. Craig acknowledged that MetroGIS's principles are embedded in the application and noted that non-profits might also be in the position to provide data needed by others on an ongoing basis if the grant is awarded.

**Motions:**

Gelbmann moved and Givens seconded to:

- 1) Authorize staff to draft a check from MetroGIS funds in the amount of \$500 to be used toward the development of the proposed Technology Opportunities Program grant application, upon receipt of an invoice along with evidence that the grant application was submitted to the US Department of

Commerce according to all requirements and is a candidate for consideration by the funding authority; and

- 2) Authorize the Coordinating Committee Chair to sign a letter of support for this initiative. This letter will state general support for the concept of community GIS and commit to up to \$100,000 in matching value derived from activities and investments that are part of the MetroGIS's ongoing activities (the only out-of-pocket expense related to the grant on MetroGIS's part will be the \$500 donation to the grant writing fee).

Motion carried, ayes all.

#### **6. PROJECT UPDATES**

No presentations or discussion due to lack of time. Chairperson Harper encouraged the members to review the information provided in the agenda packet.

#### **7. INFORMATION SHARING**

Chairperson Harper encouraged the members to review the information provided in the agenda packet.

#### **8. NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING**

June 30, 2004 – 1:00 p.m. start. (*Editor's note: Following the meeting, the date was changed to June 22 to accommodate vacation schedules.*)

#### **9. ADJOURN**

Givens moved and Maki seconded to adjourn at 3:45 p.m. Motion carried, ayes all.

*It was agreed that future meetings should begin at 1:00 p.m., as opposed to 1:30 p.m., and that with advance notice to the membership it is okay to plan on meetings of 2-1/2 to 3 hours as opposed to 2 hours if the Chair believes the additional time is warranted.*

Prepared by,

Randall Johnson and Steve Fester  
MetroGIS Staff