

**Meeting Summary**  
**MetroGIS Policy Advisory Team**  
**December 4, 1997**

**1. Call to Order**

Chairperson LaBau called the meeting to order at 8:45 a.m. The meeting was held at the Roseville City Hall.

**Members Present:**

David Arbeit, Virginia Erdahl, Margo LaBau, Brad Henry, and Dennis Welsch

**Members Absent:**

Richard Johnson and Patrick O'Connor

**Visitor:**

Will Craig, Data Content Advisory Team Liaison

**Staff Present:**

Randall Johnson

**2. Accept Agenda**

Member Henry moved and Member Arbeit seconded to accept the agenda as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

**3. Accept Meeting Summary**

Staff clarified for Member Arbeit the meaning of the phrase "roll out" in the summary of Will Craig's comments under "Content Team" on page two. The term "roll out" referred to the Team's request (which was acted on by the Coordinating Committee on October 24th) for direction on the deliverables the Committee expects from the Content Team for the Information Needs Workgroup Process and how the Committee wishes the Content Team to interact with the other Teams, in particular, the Policy and Standards Teams. The group asked staff to revise the October 9th Policy Team minutes to reflect this clarification. Member Henry moved and Member Arbeit seconded to accept the October 9, 1997, with the stated revision. Motion carried unanimously.

**4. Summary of November 19th Policy Board Meeting**

Chairperson LaBau asked for comments or questions about the meeting summary provided in the agenda packet. Member Arbeit noted that the Policy Board does not appear to be opposed to the notion of imposing mandatory standards as opposed to voluntary guidelines when standards would be in the interest of achieving MetroGIS objectives. He suggested that this message should be conveyed to all Teams and that they keep this in mind as they develop recommendations.

Chairperson LaBau explained that Policy Board Chair Victoria Reinhardt wants to begin discussion on January 28, 1998 of organizations other than the Metropolitan Council participating in the financial

support of MetroGIS. Staff reported on a meeting held on December 3rd which was attended by Victoria Reinhardt, Policy Board Member Randy Johnson (Hennepin County Board Chair and President of the National Association of Counties [NACO]), David Arbeit, Brad Henry, Patrick O'Connor, Gary Caswell, and MetroGIS staff. The purpose of the meeting was to begin to prepare for the January 28th discussion of financial resources and to brief Commissioner Johnson about pending MetroGIS financial needs beginning in 1999 before he attends a FGDC meeting mid-January as the representative of NACO.

Member Welsch left the meeting.

## **5. Action/Discussion Items:**

### **a) MetroGIS Support Resources**

Staff summarized the points presented in the staff report; on December 31, 1998, a temporary support position assigned to MetroGIS by the Council will expire, loss of the position would significantly impair progress of the MetroGIS initiative, Chairperson Reinhardt has for discussion of options to address this resource gap to begin at the Policy Board's January 1998 meeting. Staff also clarified that the subject resource gap relates specifically to the short term need to define the form and function of MetroGIS which is expected to be substantially complete in 2-3 years. Staff emphasized that resolution of this short term resource gap is not intended to include resolution of how MetroGIS will be financed in the long term.

Member Arbeit referred to the matter as a need for "bridge financing" to get MetroGIS to a point where decisions can be made about long term needs of MetroGIS. Staff noted the short term nature of this support gap and the defining nature of the work make seeking grant funds a viable option to address this pending gap. Chairperson Reinhardt will be asking the Policy Board at the January Board meeting to direct staff to begin immediately to seek grant funding assistance.

The members concurred that the presentation to the Policy Board must be from the perspective of the broader picture and that the individual position in question should not be specifically talked about. The group decided that staff support (FTE's) and resources (data and funds) from all organizations that have been contributed to the MetroGIS initiative should be documented along with the FTE's and funds needed over the next 2-3+ years to define the form and function of what MetroGIS is to become. Staff was asked to prepare a matrix that includes funds and people needed by year, explanation of resource gaps, and explanation of benefits to be received if the resource gap is resolved (i.e., what is the added value of a multi-participant GIS initiative to each member organization). Members Arbeit and LaBau offered to assist staff prepare these materials.

The group also agreed that this information should be presented to the Board by several persons, including a general overview of the broad benefits to the Metro Area from a Coordinating Committee member (e.g., Chair of the Coordinating Committee), the perspective of the counties (e.g., county member of the Policy Team), the Metropolitan Council's perspective (Richard Johnson), and others as appropriate. It was agreed that an outline of the strategy for the Board presentation should be

presented to the Coordinating Committee at the December 18th meeting and that Committee meeting discussion should be used to refine the message to be presented to the Policy Board.

Member Erdahl commented that Washington County's GIS budget and commitment to GIS are increasing as understanding of the benefits increases among decision makers, managers and constituents. She suspects the same is true of the other counties or will be in the not too distant future. She challenged all MetroGIS participants to continue to look for economies of scale by working together and challenged organizations, in particular the Council, to continue to be a leader in the support of MetroGIS.

Member Arbeit commented the Metropolitan Council has a business need for parcel-based data and regular updates of the data following initial acquisition and that the Council considered two options to meet this need: 1) ongoing purchase of parcel data from the counties or 2) seek a collaborative data sharing arrangement with the counties. The latter was found to be in the public interest and consistent with the Council's goal to facilitate collaboration among government organizations. Member Arbeit also reasoned that if the counties agree to share their parcel data with other government units, including the Council, beyond the term of the current data sharing agreements, that substantial and tangible data update expenses could be avoided. And, if so, he further reasoned that an argument could be made to seek commitment of a substantive portion of these avoided expenses for continued support of MetroGIS. He also believes that the same reasoning applies to all other MetroGIS participant organizations to greater or lesser degrees and, as such, should be communicated as a MetroGIS financing option to the Policy Board at the January 28th meeting and to the Metropolitan Council.

It was agreed that since Chairperson Reinhardt has requested this matter to be discussed by the Policy Board at the January 28th meeting that it need only be a discussion item at the Coordinating Committee's December 18th meeting.

#### **b) Evaluation and Satisfaction/Effectiveness -- MetroGIS Initiative**

Staff asked if the Policy Advisory Team wants to discuss process matters, such as this, or whether staff should direct these matters to the meetings with Team liaisons. The consensus was to continue to bring them to the Policy Advisory Team.

A proposal to survey the persons who have been involved with the MetroGIS initiative was summarized. Each respondent would be asked to answer a series of questions to measure their satisfaction with various components of the initiative. A purpose of the survey is to gather feedback from participants concerning the pace and effectiveness of the initiative to share with the Policy Board for consideration as it discusses financial resource issues.

Staff explained that the concept of the proposed survey had been discussed with Policy Board Chairperson Reinhardt and that she had asked that the Policy Board members be included in the survey population. Team members concurred that all persons who have served on the Policy Board, Coordinating Committee, Advisory Teams, or ad hoc workgroups should be invited to participate.

It was agreed that: 1) each respondent will be asked to identify the group(s) [Board, Committee, Team, Workgroup] that they have been members of and to answer the questions from the perspective of their participation in that group(s); 2) the surveys will be mailed by the Metropolitan Council and the completed surveys will be sent to Chairperson LaBau (Anoka County) to be tabulated and analyzed; 3) the data base of names should be numbered and the forms numbered accordingly to permit follow-up by telephone but that the individual responses must remain confidential; 4) Team Chairperson LaBau will sign the cover letter to accompany the survey; 5) listings of the 1996 and 1997 accomplishments should accompany the survey; 6) the initial mailing should be mailed January 2, 1998 and request respondents to return their completed survey ASAP, a postcard reminder sent January 9th, and in an attempt to attain a 75 percent response, Chairperson LaBau will coordinate follow-up phone calls beginning Jan 23rd; and 7) the preliminary results will be shared with the Policy Board on January 28th and the final results will be shared with the Board at the March Board meeting -- prior to the Policy Board deciding on an action plan to address the pending the resource gap.

It was agreed that there is no need to seek Coordinating Committee approval of the survey since Chairperson Reinhardt has asked for information about participant satisfaction to be presented to the Policy Board at the January 28th Board meeting to set the stage for discussion of MetroGIS financial resources. The group did, however, agree that the survey strategy and draft questionnaire should be shared with the Committee for information and comment on December 18th. Staff handed out a draft listing of the 1997 milestones/accomplishments and asked for comments.

Will Craig arrived.

#### **c) MCD/County Jurisdictional Boundary Dataset.**

A recent request from Alan Srock of NSP was shared with the group for direction. Mr. Srock has informed the Metropolitan Council that NSP has a business need for the city, township, and county jurisdictional boundary dataset that the Metropolitan Council is in process of compiling. Rather than build a redundant dataset, he has asked if NSP can partner with the Council to compile the regional dataset in exchange for free access with the understanding this data would be used only to support NSP's internal business needs.

Staff explained there appear to be two options to accommodate Mr. Srock's proposal: 1) accept NSP's assistance either with this dataset or with other data important to MetroGIS participants, obtain permission to share the resultant dataset from the organizations that will be providing the source jurisdictional boundary data, partner on the compilation and share the resultant regional coverage with NSP to support its internal operations. 2) Declare this regional dataset to be "framework" or "public domain", permit free access by all public, non-profit, and private interests that want access, and promote widespread use of the dataset. This declaration would be from the Policy Board and subject to formal endorsement by each organization with an ownership interest.

The Team concurred that the Data Content Advisory Team should begin to evaluate the concept of a "framework" dataset as soon as possible. Mr. Craig concurred and noted that he would inform the Content Team of this matter at the Team's meeting that afternoon. The group discussed the first option

described by staff to accommodate NSP's proposal and recognized its similarity to the multiple source data issues that the Soils Distribution Policy Advisory Team will begin to debate early 1998. Staff noted that the Council's jurisdictional boundary dataset will likely not be completed until mid-winter 1998 so a window of time exists to respond to Mr. Srock's proposal. Member Arbeit asked staff to speak with Mr. Srock about his timeline. Chairperson LaBau asked staff to invite Mr. Srock to the Policy Advisory Team's February meeting, if not too late for NSP, to discuss the specifics of his proposal.

**d) Utility Company Representation on the Coordinating Committee**

Staff explained that Alan Srock, NSP representative to the Coordinating Committee, is investigating, at staff's request, options to broadly represent utility industry interests on the Coordinating Committee. This investigation is in response to the Policy Board's directive that no private sector interest may have or may be perceived to have an unfair competitive advantage due to its involvement in MetroGIS. The consensus was to defer discussion of this matter to the February meeting and to invite Mr. Srock to attend to discuss his suggestions. The Team also concurred that there is no immediate need to address this matter since January 28th is the earliest that the pending revisions to the Coordinating Committee's operating guidelines could go into effect. The revised guidelines address the "no competitive advantage" directive.

**6) Other Business**

None

**7) Information Items:**

**a) Work Program Update**

No discussion

**b) Washington County Alternate to Coordinating Committee**

Member Erdahl reported that the Washington County Board had designated Jane Harper as he alternate to the Coordinating Committee.

**8. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Policy Advisory Team was scheduled for February 5, 1998, at the Roseville City Hall.

**9. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:08 a.m.

Prepared by Randall L. Johnson, AICP, Team Staff