

**Meeting Summary  
MetroGIS Policy Board  
Metropolitan Counties Government Center  
2099 University Avenue, St. Paul  
January 28, 2009**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Reinhardt called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and asked each of the members and visitors to introduced themselves.

Members Present: Victoria Reinhardt (Ramsey County), Molly O'Rourke for Dennis Hegberg (Washington County), Gary Swenson for Randy Johnson (Hennepin County), Jim Kordiak (Anoka County), Tom Egan (Dakota County), and Randy Maluchnik (Carver County), Tony Pistilli (Metropolitan Council), Steve Elkins (Metro Cities – City of Bloomington), Terry Schneider (Metro Cities - City of Minnetonka), Dan Cook (School Districts - TIES), and Roger Lake (Metro Watershed Districts).

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Members Absent: Jim Joseph Wagner (Scott County)

Coordinating Committee Members Present: Rick Gelbmann, Randy Knippel, Nancy Read, Mark Vander Schaaf, Gordy Chinander, David Claypool, Sally Wakefield, William Brown.

Support Staff: Randall Johnson and Mark Kotz (MetroGIS Staff Support Team)

Visitors: Dave Hinrichs (Metropolitan Council), Janna King and Todd Klingel (Regional Chamber of Commerce)

**2. ACCEPT AGENDA**

Member Schneider moved and Member Egan seconded to approve the proposed agenda with one modification, hear Item 4c before 4a. Motion carried, ayes all.

**3. MEETING SUMMARY**

Member Kordiak moved and Member Lake seconded to approve the October 22, 2008 meeting summary, as submitted. Motion carried, ayes all.

**4. ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**c) Streamlining Data Access for Emergency Responders**

Gordon Chinander, GIS Coordinator for the Metropolitan Emergence Service Board and member of the Coordinating Committee, summarized the project status information presented in the agenda report. He emphasized the effort is not limited to parcel data produced by the counties, noting that consideration will also be given to data produced by the private sector and other government entities.

He concluded his remarks by stating that he is nearly finished drafting a white paper that will be used to facilitate agreement on the problem statement and that once the workgroup members have concurred on the problem statement and hopefully in the next few weeks that work will begin on developing recommendations for the Board's consideration.

**a) 2008 Accomplishments**

The Staff Coordinator summarized major accomplishments made through MetroGIS's efforts in 2008, including executing the 4<sup>th</sup> generation parcel data sharing agreement, implementing a regional geocoder service, and developing a data synchronization mechanism that is a prerequisite to achieving the vision for a Regional Address Points Dataset. He thanked the representatives from the seven counties for their willingness to experiment with the concept of "view –only" access to parcel data by non-licensees, Nancy Read for her leadership on the geocoder project, Peter Henschel for his leadership on the synchronizer project, and the members of the Technical Leadership Workgroup for agreeing to serve in the role of a surrogate Technical Coordinator.

**Motion:** Member Elkins moved and Member Egan seconded to accept the suggested listing of major accomplishments in 2008, as presented in the agenda report. Motion carried, ayes all.

**b) Regional Solutions to Shared Application Needs**

Mark Kotz, Chairperson of the MetroGIS's Technical Leadership Workgroup (TLW), began by explaining the process that the TLW used to identify priority shared application and web service needs/opportunities and then summarized recommended next steps endorsed by the Coordinating Committee at its December 10 meeting. Coordinating Committee Read, speaking as the project manager for the Regional Geocoder Project, helped Board members better understand the concept of a web service using the geocoder as an example. Read also explained how MetroGIS's investment had catalyzed significantly more investment from others which together were needed to accomplish the project.

Kotz continued his presentation noting that he was pleased to report that 25 individuals had volunteered to participate on five workgroups created by the Coordinating Committee on Dec 10<sup>th</sup> and tasked with developing specific courses of action for the 5 highest priority shared application/web service needs. More importantly, he emphasized that the volunteers expressed a willingness to participate even though no staff support would be provided. Member Kordiak asked for clarification about the organizations represented by the 25 volunteers and was pleased to learn that the volunteers represent all three sectors and all forms of government that serve the metro area. Kotz's presentation slides can be viewed at

[http://www.metrogis.org/teams/pb/meetings/09\\_0128/4b\\_Shared\\_Apps\\_Presentation.ppt](http://www.metrogis.org/teams/pb/meetings/09_0128/4b_Shared_Apps_Presentation.ppt).

Member Schneider commented that the lack of staff support for these work groups might have a positive outcome, assuming the participants will also be willing to serve as champions for the recommended courses of action. It was agreed that it is a risk worth taking, in particular, given there is no other option for the near term to move forward on these important projects. The Staff Coordinator also commented that there is little likelihood that a Technical Coordinator can be added to the MetroGIS support team, if the only funding source is the Council. Finally, there was general concurrence of the value gained from the TLW stepping up and filling the roll of a Technical Coordinator and that without them doing so substantive progress could not be made to move forward on proposed projects.

Coordinating Committee Chairperson Wakefield continued the presentation by summarizing four recommendations of the Committee that require action from the Board, noting that two of them had been dealt with earlier in the month via a letter from Chairperson Reinhardt to the Governors Council on Geographic Information, as described in the agenda packet. She then explained the remaining two items: 1) call for broader free access parcel data and 2) need for identify support resources for workgroups.

Member Pistilli commented that he believes Recommendation A would not be needed if a policy change were to be implemented acknowledging that data developed with public funding should be made available, without fee, to anyone who wishes access. Chairperson Reinhardt noted that the recommendation before the Board (Recommendation A) acknowledges that state law permits counties to impose a cost recovery fee, and that Recommendation A is an appropriate course of action under current law.

Member Egan commented that to get to a solution acceptable to both sides of this data access issue, the true value received from participation by both the producers and those asking for free access must be established. Vice Chairman Kordiak concurred and encouraged that as part of the evaluation including reporting of the revenue received by the counties from cost recovery policies for parcel data.

Member Schneider spoke in favor of Recommendation A, in principle, as a means to create a test environment through which to define mutual benefit and generally explore the viability of partnering across sectors to address shared application needs. If the test environment works, which he termed a "defined waiver of license", he believes that additional value will be recognized. He concurred with

others that language of Recommendation A, as proposed in the agenda report, was needed clarification.

Member Pistilli urged the members to be mindful of the value of data as an economic engine for access. Alternate Member Swenson concurred, adding that he believes opening up access to parcel data would provide great value to the state. He also believes a carrot is needed to encourage the producers to participate in the proposed “Cross Sector Partnering” initiative approved by the Board at its October meeting. He closed by stating that research is needed to document the tangible benefits that would accrue to the producer if they were to offer access, without fee, to parcel data.

Chairperson Reinhardt accepted a proposal from Randy Knippel, Chairperson of the County Data Producers Workgroup, to clarify the intent Recommendation A. The following language was accepted by the Board for Recommendation A (page 10 of the agenda packet):

“A: That the Policy Board concur that:

1. Modifications to the policy related to non-government access to parcel data should be defined through the “Cross Sector Partnering” initiative (Attachment B) that the Policy Board authorized at its October 2008 meeting ~~in cooperation with the County Data Producers Workgroup.~~
2. Desired modifications to parcel data access policies must comply with the equity principles adopted by the Board at its January 2006 meeting (Attachment C).
3. To direct the County Data Producers Workgroup to consider the implications of the recommendations of the Cross-Sector Partnering initiative relative to the Parcel Data Sharing Agreement and report its findings to the Board.”

**Motion:**

Member Schneider moved and Member Egan seconded to approve Recommendation A, as modified. Motion carried, ayes all.

The members also concurred that action called for in Recommendation B is premature (investigate the potential of staff support funding model that seeks partners in addition to the Metropolitan Council) until more is known about how the actions called for in Recommendation A will play out. Member Schneider added that if non-government interests are willing to coordinate among themselves and share project costs, the objectives sought in Recommendation B should take care of themselves.

**d) 2009 “Foster Collaboration” Major Work Objectives and Budget**

Chairperson Reinhardt commented that the proposed modifications represent refinements to the preliminary work program and budget approved in April 2008 and involved reallocating \$15,000 to activities that had been previously included in the budget.

**Motion:** Member Pistilli moved and Member O’Rourke seconded to approve the:

- 1) Major program objectives for MetroGIS’s 2009 “Fostering Collaboration” function, as presented on page 29 (Attachment A to report 4c) of the agenda packet.
- 2) Budget for MetroGIS’s 2009 “Fostering Collaboration” function, as presented on page 35 (Attachment D to report 4c) of the agenda packet.

Motion carried, ayes all.

**e) Modify July Meeting Date and Explore Interest in Afternoon Meetings**

Chairperson Reinhardt suggested that the Board consider rescheduling the July 29 meeting to July 22 to avoid a conflict that was not known when the scheduled was adopted in October 2008.

She also asked the members if they would be interested in meeting in the afternoon. After some discussion it was agreed to move the start time to 6 p.m.

**Motion:** Member Egan moved and Member Pistilli seconded to change the July 2009 meeting date from the 29<sup>th</sup> to the 22<sup>nd</sup> and, effective with the April 2009 meeting, change the meeting start time for all meetings to 6 p.m. Motion carried ayes all.

**5. GIS TECHNOLOGY DEMONSTRATION**

Todd Klingel, President of the Regional Chamber of Commerce, the Janna King, project manager for the subject Twin Cities Economic Development Website, explained the purpose of the website is to grow jobs in the Twin Cities Market. The then provided an overview of how the site is financed and overview of the sponsors/funders, download activity, general functionality, data sources (Claritos and Applied Geographic Solutions) used, and the host/developer (GIS Planning). A copy of their slide presentation can be viewed at [http://www.metrogis.org/teams/pb/meetings/09\\_0128/5\\_MetroMSP\\_forMetroGIS.ppt](http://www.metrogis.org/teams/pb/meetings/09_0128/5_MetroMSP_forMetroGIS.ppt).

Chairperson Reinhardt thanked the presenters and commented the Policy Board was interested in learning more about Twin Cities Economic Development Website and is willing to assist with improvement of the data utilized by the site.

Member Pistilli asked if the private sector partners are as satisfied with the site as the public sector users that were mentioned in the presentation. Ms. King noted that real estate and utility interests have acknowledged the most benefit but the private sector community, as a whole, understands their role is to grow jobs and that this site is a valuable tool to do so.

Chairperson Reinhardt reiterated that MetroGIS is prepared to help with data to support the site, noting that with MetroGIS's assistance she believes accuracy can be improved and expenses can be reduced. Ms. King responded that they are aware of data resources available through MetroGIS but thus far the currently use data is working well to support user preferences for apples-to-apples comparisons with other metro areas and for areas that adjoin the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. She closed by noting that MnCAR may be interested in working with the MetroGIS community and, if so, that they will follow MnCAR's lead.

**6. MAJOR ACTIVITY UPDATES**

There was no discussion of the items in this section of the agenda

**7. INFORMATION SHARING**

Chairperson Reinhardt encouraged the members to review the letter in Item 7a about the Mn Drive to Excellence initiative recommendations and the document entitled "The Changing Geospatial Landscape" published by the National Geospatial Advisory Committee in December 2008 which is included in Item 7f.

Member Cook announced that this would likely be his last meeting as he is no longer a member of the Anoka Hennepin School District.

**8. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Policy Board is scheduled for April 29, 2009. Chairperson Reinhardt reminded the members that beginning with the April meeting, the start time will be 6:00 p.m. and that election of new officers is scheduled to occur at the April meeting.

**9. ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Prepared by:  
Randall Johnson, MetroGIS Staff Coordinator