

Meeting Summary
MetroGIS Policy Board
Metropolitan Counties Government Center
2099 University Avenue, St. Paul
July 20, 2011

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Schneider called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

Members Present: Terry Schneider (Metro Cities - City of Minnetonka), Molly O'Rourke for Dennis Hegberg (Washington County), Victoria Reinhardt (Ramsey County), Randy Knippel for Joseph Harris (Dakota County), Roger Lake (Metro Watershed Districts), Dick Carlstrom for Dan Cook (School Districts - TIES), Dave Steve Elkins (Metropolitan Council).

Members Absent: Jim Kordiak (Anoka County), Randy Maluchnik (Carver County), Joseph Wagner (Scott County), and Gary Swenson for Randy Johnson (Hennepin County).

Coordinating Committee Members Present: Sally Wakefield, Nancy Read, Rick Gelbmann, and Matt Koukol.

Support Team: Randall Johnson

Visitors: Dave Hinrichs (Metropolitan Council) and Brian Fisher (Houston Engineering)

2. ACCEPT AGENDA

Member Reinhardt moved and Alternate Member Knippel seconded to approve the meeting agenda was accepted as proposed. Motion carried, ayes all.

3. MEETING SUMMARY

Member Reinhardt moved and Alternate Member O'Rourke seconded to approve the Policy Board's April 20, 2011 meeting summary as submitted. Motion carried, ayes all.

4. GIS TECHNOLOGY DEMONSTRATION

Matt Koukol GIS Manager for Ramsey County and Brian Fischer, Houston Engineering which provided the technical support, [explained and demonstrated](#) a public-facing, Internet-based application (aka GIS Web Viewer) that helps citizens discover recreational opportunities in their area. The application was collaboratively developed with Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) grant funds by Anoka, Carver, Ramsey, Scott Counties and 11 Southeast MN Counties.

The purpose of the application is to assist citizens "Explore and Discover" Recreation opportunities within a specific geographic area and promote Active Living and Healthy eating. Each county supports its own "*Recreational Opportunities*" application but each application also has a similar look and feel and all use a common data model.

Recognizing that participation of local government is essential to the on-going success of this application, Ramsey County, has also implemented an on-line editor for the creation, update, and deletion of recreational features by approved local partners. The southeast MN counties have also developed an iPhone, iPad, and Android application to explore recreation opportunities.

Following the presentation, Member Reinhardt asked why the three other metro area counties had not participated. Alternate Member Knippel mentioned that Dakota County used their SHIP grant funds for other purposes. The presenters were not aware why the other two counties did not participate.

Member Reinhardt asked, from the user's perspective, if there are any plans to make it easy for those near county boundaries to quickly obtain the same recreation information for an adjoining county(ies). The presenters noted that this capability is currently a function of the Carver/Scott County application. The two other metro counties (Anoka and Ramsey) currently only provide the user with a link to access

similar information provide the adjoin counties. They noted that this topic has been discussed by the counties but that the project funding available was not sufficient to take on the standard setting required to accomplish seamless across each of the applications. The counties are, however, interested in a next-phase project to accomplish better coordination between their applications.

Chairperson Schneider asked if lessons learned had been documented. His comment led to a short discussion about the potential for MetroGIS to fund a project to accomplish this documentation. Other questions asked included:

- Who maintains the data (*to the maximum extent possible the organization responsible for the various recreation facilitates searchable via the application*),
- What type of expenses are involved in replicating the application in another county (*if same technology platform, fully transferable with some programming modifications*),
- Are the web services that the consumed by the applications accessible for other uses (*yes, all services are open access but some are of little value as stand-alone services, due to the programming used to incorporate into this particular application*).
- Who owns the source code. *The counties*

5. ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

a) **Next Generation MetroGIS Needs Assessment-Action Recommendations**

b) **2011 MetroGIS Work Plan and Budget Refinements / Direction 2012 Work Plan**

Randall Johnson, MetroGIS Staff Coordinator, and Sally Wakefield, Coordinating Committee Chairperson, presented agenda items 5a and 5b as a single [presentation](#).

Johnson began the presentation with an overview of MetroGIS's current policy foundation, review of the current 2011 work plan, and the major milestones in the Needs Assessment process to provide context for the second part of the presentation –summary of each new project and the Coordinating Committee for work programming for the next 18 months. Chairperson Wakefield presented the second half of the presentation. At the completion of the presentation, Board approval was requested for the Committee's recommended revisions to the 2011 work plan and for comment on the preliminary 2012 work plan.

Rick Gelbmann, GIS Manager for the Metropolitan Council, announced that the Council recently hired an individual (Janie Norton) to fill a new GIS Project Manager position and that this position was created to provide technical support for MetroGIS. Gelbmann noted that Janie will start on July 25 and will be supporting several of the projects described in this presentation. Chairperson Schneider encouraged Council management to permit Janie to be exposed to relevant conversations of the Policy Board and Coordinating Committee and others in addition to working with technical personnel so that she is better able to make connections been needs and resources.

Motion: Member Reinhardt moved and Member Elkins seconded to revise the 2011 work plan and budget as recommended by the Coordinating Committee and presented in the agenda report. Motion carried, ayes all.

Member Reinhardt asked the Member Elkins if the Council expects any issues with funding the 2012 budget as anticipated in the agenda report. Member Elkins did not anticipate any changes. No changes were offered to the list of preliminary 2012 projects presented.

c) **Amend Operational Guidelines – Create Strategic Steering Committee and Modify Rules for Executive Committee of the Policy Board.**

Randall Johnson, MetroGIS Staff Coordinator, commented that this agenda item is in response to two organizational issues identified during the recent Needs Assessment. He noted that the purpose of this evening's discussion is to share concept solutions with the Board for direction. Refined proposals would then be presented for Board consideration at the October meeting.

Johnson explained that the first issue is a concern that the MetroGIS organization lacks flexibility to react quickly to opportunities. The second is that the Board has struggled with how to best

provide strategic direction when the members are not experts in the use of the technology. A separate concept solution was offered for each shortcoming. A summary of the subsequent discussion and action for each follows:

A) Create new Strategy Steering Committee:

Member Reinhardt commented that she is uncomfortable with delegating this important activity to small group of people. Her concern was echoed by others. After a wide-ranging conversation, the group concluded that creating a new committee is not appropriate, rather emphasis should be put on implementing an on-line collaboration environment to build upon the Coordinating Committee, whereby through an open process individuals can self-organize into communities of interest, share values and needs, and in so doing MetroGIS leadership is able to continuously monitor emerging stakeholder needs and modify strategic direction, accordingly.

All also agreed that the proposed Outreach Plan project component that relates to the Website redesign/on-line forum creation initiative is the place to start and that organizational changes are at best premature. The key is define the type of mechanism that will be most effective to bring new strategic ideas to light –integrating the committee with the electronic forum, or expanding a Coordinating Committee, or some combination of both. There was also some discussion about exploring recruiting committee members as representatives of disciplines (e.g., land planners, economic development, public safety) as opposed to organizations (e.g., cities, counties, agencies). In the end, all concurred that the emphasis should be on creating a good tool capable of attracting interested people and fostering dialogue among communities of interest that have potential to bring resources to the projects of shared need.

B) Amend Rules for Executive Committee of Policy Board

Member Reinhardt agreed that the suggested modifications to the existing rules addressed the operational deficiency. Other concurred and agreed with Member Reinhardt's suggestion to refining the membership section (Section a) to remove mention of the "Chairperson, Strategic Steering Committee" and stipulate that the Chair of the Coordinating Committee is an Ex Officio (no-voting) member.

Motion: Member Reinhardt moved and Member Elkins seconded to direct the Coordinating Committee to refine the language as agreed to by the Board and bring the revised amendment back to the Policy Board at the October meeting for second reading and final approval.
Motion carried, ayes all

Chairperson Schneider commented that these changes, while important, will not change the fundamental way that we do business. He encouraged the Coordinating Committee to continue to explore opportunities to bring non-government interests to the table to ensure MetroGIS is able to continually incorporate new ideas that keep the organization relevant and increase the potential of capturing additional resources through ambitious collaborative ventures. For instance, he noted that several organizations are making good progress at marketing the Twin Cities region. He challenged the Committee to reach out to these organizations and offer the significant expertise possessed by the geospatial community to supplement their resources.

Chairperson Schneider also offered a thought that if the proposed new on-line collaboration tool could encourage individuals to gel as communities of interest; those communities could be offered a seat at the MetroGIS table to influence policy and activities.

d) Statewide Geographic Advisory Council (MGAC): June 30 Meeting and Appointments

Member Reinhardt and Chairperson Schneider summarized the topics discussed at this meeting. The meeting was held the day before the state government shutdown so anticipated impacts on geospatial community were a large focus. A brief explaining was offered by staff for how the MetroGIS website and two MetroGIS web services, all hosted on state servers, were moved to the

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Council's and SharedGeo's servers to keep them available. Another focus was the process for the next round of appointments to serve on the MGAC).

e) State Government Shutdown – Impacts and Opportunities

All agreed that from this point on, custodial roles and responsibilities for regional solutions must include a plan to ensure access is lost to the primary dataset, service, or application. It was agreed that redundancy (Continuation of Operation) planning should not be limited to services/data classified as “critical”, but rather if there is any connectivity, there needs to be a plan to ensure the asset can be accessed 24/7. If this surety is not provided, trust will be compromised and organizations will revert to inward looking solutions at the expense of collaborative solutions.

6. MAJOR PROJECT UPDATES

No questions were asked.

7. INFORMATION SHARING

No questions were asked.

8. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Policy Board is scheduled for Wednesday, October 19, 2011.

9. ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Prepared by:
Randall Johnson, MetroGIS Staff Coordinator