

# Minnesota Geospatial Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

March 11, 2020

Blazing Star Room, Centennial Office Building

658 Cedar St., St. Paul, MN 55155

11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Timothy Baker, University of Minnesota, Crookston; Jeff Bloomquist, USDA Risk Management Agency; David Brandt, Washington County; Kari Geurts, MNIT Natural Resources; Renee Huset, City of St. Paul; Len Kne, University of Minnesota; Mark Kotz, Metropolitan Council; Chris Mavis, Hennepin County; Victoria Reinhardt, Ramsey County; Cory Richter, City of Blaine; Dan Ross, MnGeo; Gerry Sjerven, Minnesota Power; Alex Steele, Minnehaha Watershed District; Ryan Stovern, St. Louis County; Harvey Thorleifson, University of Minnesota; Benjamin Timerson, Minnesota Department of Transportation; Patrick Veraguth, Douglas County.

**Members Absent:** Leanne Knott, City of Red Wing; Soren Rundquist, Environmental Working Group; Kory Thurnau, USDA Forest Service; Brandon Tourtelotte, Pro-West and Associates

**Non-Members Present:** Will Craig, retired; Dan Craigie, Minnesota Department of Public Safety; Brad Henry, Minnesota 2050; Randy Knippel, Dakota County; Mike Koutnik, retired; Nancy Rader, MnGeo; Mike Robinson, Minnesota Department of Transportation; Catherine Rowley, City of Minneapolis; Chris Sanocki, USGS; Alison Slaats, MnGeo; Steve Swazee, SharedGeo; Sean Vaughn, MNIT Natural Resources; Sally Wakefield, Minnesota Department of Revenue

## References

This meeting included references to the following resources:

- [Slides](#)
- [Agenda Packet](#)

## Call to Order

Kotz opened the meeting. The members and attendees introduced themselves. The agenda was approved (Mavis/Stovern). The [December 11, 2019 meeting minutes](#) were approved (Geurts/Sjerven).

## Review and Accept Committee Summaries

**Motion:** Accept the committee accomplishments and work plans included in the meeting packet (Richter/Huset). Passed unanimously.

**Action Item:** Kotz will ask the Archiving Implementation Workgroup to clarify bullets 1, 2 and 4 in their workplan under “planned activities” (responding to a question from Richter).

## GAC 2019 Accomplishments and 2020 Work Plan

Kotz presented the GAC's accomplishments from last year and its work plan for this year (see agenda packet and slides). Craig suggested adding the accomplishment that the GAC had reviewed and successfully recommended two nominated projects for a Governor's Geospatial Commendation: National Wetlands Inventory and Mapping Prejudice. The group agreed.

**Motion:** Approve the GAC 2019 accomplishments (with the added commendation accomplishment) and 2020 work plan (Thorleifson/Steele). Passed unanimously.

## GAC Chair and Vice Chair Duties

Kotz said that the duties of GAC chair and vice chair are flexible and are worked out between the two people holding those positions. Richter presented the duties she will take on as vice chair this term (see slide), including increased communication with GAC committees and workgroups and broader promotion of the GAC's annual priorities survey. She is working with Rader to make GAC meeting dates and committee/workgroup expectations more visible on the council website.

## GIS/LIS Salary Survey

Stovern reported that the Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium Board just approved the questions for an update of their salary survey of GIS professionals within the state. The survey will be sent out soon, with results likely available in May. Survey 123 was used to create the survey, and publicity will go out via the Consortium's e-announcements and a GovDelivery email.

## GIS-T Conference

Timerson reviewed slides showing sessions and presentations planned for the GIS-T conference, April 14-17. 320 people have registered so far.

## Initiative for Climate Action Transparency

Sjerven noted that the 3DGeo Committee Steering Team had recently learned of the existence of the [Interagency Climate Adaptation Team](#) (ICAT), formed in 2009, which includes representatives from a number of state agencies. The group uses five statewide indicators to help track climate change impacts and Minnesota's progress in climate adaptation; it has published survey results from 2016 and 2019 and other reports. How aware is ICAT of spatial data that is critical for meeting their goals?

Sjerven asked:

- What is current role of GAC members with ICAT membership? Is there communication between leadership of the involved state agencies and geospatial staff?
- How do we communicate with ICAT?
- What are the next steps?

He encouraged the GAC to make sure that messages and communication channels are coordinated. Reinhardt noted parallels with ensuring that the [Clean Water Council](#) is informed that the underlying geospatial data is critical to attaining water quality goals; contacts for the Clean Water Council are Paul Gardner, council administrator, and Jason Moeckel, DNR representative. Kne mentioned Stacey Stark and Brenda Hoppe's work with climate issues (see their [presentation](#) on "Hazard mitigation and climate adaptation initiatives" to the GAC March 6, 2019). Koutnik cited similar experience with [Gathering Waters](#) (Wisconsin's alliance for land trusts) and offered to help.

**Action Items:**

- Provide a list of names of people involved with ICAT to GAC members (Sjerven)
- Ask to be on the agenda for a future ICAT meeting (Ross)
- Contact the new [Governor's Climate Change Subcabinet](#) (Ross)

## One Minnesota Plan Response Working Group

Reinhardt reported this group's progress in creating a response to the question, "What can this advisory body in its work with the geospatial community do to bring together data to improve the outcomes of Minnesotans in the priority areas identified in Governor Walz's One Minnesota Plan?" A draft of their report was distributed to members as a printed handout.

The document needs to be concise and written for a general audience, telling the story of how important geospatial data is to all of the One Minnesota goals – an effective metaphor is that geospatial is an "unseen utility that runs beneath the surface of government operations and provides fundamental support to many aspects of the One Minnesota initiative."

Discussion points:

- Measurable goals are being developed for 2022 (Ross)
- The GAC reports to the geospatial community, not to the governor, although there is lots of overlap in what's needed (Kotz)
- Look for stories that show how data affects the individual citizen (Vaughn)
- GAC priorities are the "what"; the One Minnesota goals are the "why" (Reinhardt)
- The Outreach Committee also needs to know the success stories (Geurts)

**Action Items:**

- Follow up with GAC priority owners who have not yet responded to the request for stories (Reinhardt, Huset)
- Email all GAC members requesting more stories for this document (Reinhardt, Huset)
- Reach out to your sector for stories and send them to Reinhardt, Huset and Geurts (All GAC members)

## Sector Report: Watershed Districts

Steele provided an overview of Minnesota's watershed districts (see slides for three maps of district boundaries: statewide, Twin Cities metro, and Minnehaha Creek Watershed District). Watershed districts and watershed management organizations rely on an organizational body like the GAC and data sources like the Minnesota Geospatial Commons for standards, data, imagery and lidar (this is a possible story for the One Minnesota Plan

response document). Steele is engaging with the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD), regional GIS user and collaboration groups, including MetroGIS, and with local and county governments within the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District.

Vaughn noted that watershed district boundaries are for taxation purposes and are not the same as hydrologic watershed boundaries.

## Updates on MN GAC Priority Projects and Initiatives

Richter clarified the roles of “Champion” and “Owner” for GAC priorities. Champions are from upper management or policymakers; they focus on the big picture, remove barriers and procure resources. Owners define scope and dependencies, are responsible for success, oversee day-to-day work, communicate with the champion and report to the GAC. Both roles help to promote the priorities.

She then asked for updates on the GAC’s 2020 priorities, including ones not currently marked as “Active”. (Names in parentheses are the person who gave the update, not the priority owner.)

- **Free and Open Data** (Geurts): The Outreach Committee is collecting stories of the benefits of free and open data. They need a repository for their materials, especially for raw survey results since those have been lost in the past when using free survey tools.
- **Updated and Aligned Boundary Data** (Stovern): This group has not met since the October GIS/LIS conference. Preston Dowell will convene the GAC’s Parcels and Land Records Committee soon to align their goals with those of the Minnesota Society of Professional Surveyors and the Minnesota Association of County Surveyors. Dowell will lead the committee’s efforts on surveying; Stovern will lead the efforts on parcel data.

In the Arrowhead region, the Bureau of Land Management has created control point datasets. These federal datasets need to be compared with local datasets in order to develop a control point standard for Minnesota with required and optional elements. The goal is to have one set of control points and one schema.

- **Geodata Archive Implementation**: This new workgroup has begun meeting.
- **Parcel Data** (Slaats): More information will be available at the next GAC meeting.
- **Image Service Improvements** (Slaats): New imagery from Carlton and Dakota counties has been added to the [Geospatial Image Service](#). FSA’s 2019 NAIP imagery will be added when the uncompressed quarter-quad files become available. Acquiring the stereo imagery from the 2019 NAIP imagery would cost approximately \$40-45K.
- **Hydro-DEMs** (Vaughn): Work continues to increase awareness of the importance of hydro-DEMs and to identify funding sources.
- **Road Centerline Data** (Ross): A statewide dataset has been created using the GAC standard. It is not yet public, but that is a goal. Knippel: Still looking at a few differences between the GAC and NENA standards.
- **Lidar Data** (Sjerven): See the 3DGeo Committee report in the agenda packet. The data acquisition subgroup has been very active, pursuing funding from a number of sources. The group has partnered with Goodhue County and MnDOT for a proof-of-concept project to collect and assess very high density (QL0) data. They are also involved with meeting with Minnesota tribal governments. Veraguth: Will new lidar use the 2022 datum? Ross: Asked USGS and reply was “when the time comes.”
- **Emergency Management Damage Assessment Data Standard** (Richter): The proposed standard has been submitted to the GAC Standards Committee which will assess its readiness for wider public review.
- **Address Point Data** (Ross): Data has been received from public safety answering points (PSAPs) and counties, and the NG911 team is compiling it.

- **US National Grid Materials** (Knippel): Updated USNG maps are now available for Minnesota. Using ArcGIS Pro has enabled a much better representation of multiple grid zones. Backdrops show air photos and other basemaps, with some critical infrastructure locations taken from HIFLD and National Map sources. Interactive maps were created with ArcGIS Online web app builder.
- **Parks and Trails Data Standard** (Not Active): No report.
- **NG911 Geospatial Forum** (Not Active): No report.
- **Underground Utilities Mapping** (Active) (Swazee): Increasing interest in this area, especially getting more geospatial data used with Gopher One State 811 call responses. This priority should become “Active” with Swazee as Owner, and Champion to be determined.
- **Basemap Services**: Should not be listed as “Active” until there is a defined business need, owner and champion.
- **Unmanned Systems Metadata Guide** (Not Active): No report.
- **Inventory of Minnesota Geodata Assets** (Not Active): More detail is needed.
- **Critical Infrastructure Data Custodian** (Not Active): Emergency Preparedness Committee’s Tiger Team is reviewing previous work of the [Minnesota Structures Collaborative](#).
- **Culvert Data Standard** (Active) (Vaughn): Rick Moore is now the Owner and Rick Lorenzen is the Champion. DNR has developed a culvert inventory app.

## Legislative Updates

Ross reported on several topics:

- **LiDAR budget request**: Pursuing \$35-40 million for new lidar acquisition, plus more to create derived products. Possible sources are the [Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage fund](#) and the Governor’s budget.
- **Survey Coordinator Position at MnGeo**: Will be asking for a legislative change to support the position in terms of ongoing funding; this would be for July 1, 2021.
- **Senate File 3696**: Minnesota Statutes 2018, section 394.25, subdivision 7, is amended to read “o) Counties are prohibited from imposing a fee on an applicant for geographic information systems data on dwellings or homes.” This relates to plats and county zoning.

## Announcements or Other Business

- **Mavis**: Has begun attending MN GIS/LIS Board meetings as the new representative of the surveyor sector.
- **Stovern**: The GIS/LIS Board held its annual retreat. The education fund, established in 1996, has grown substantially. The question now is how to grow and use the fund more widely.
- **Veraguth**: He is now the president of the Minnesota Society of Professional Surveyors. [National Surveyors Week](#) is next week (March 15-21).
- **Baker**: Involved with unmanned aerial systems (UAS) activities at [Northland Community & Technical College](#).
- **Reinhardt**: Data is critical for making decisions about the COVID-19 response.
- **Knippel**: Referenced the [Minnesota Department of Health](#) and [Johns Hopkins](#) websites for COVID-19 information and maps.
- **Geurts**: The State Agency GIS Collaborative’s main initiative this year will be to hold a GIS Training Day for state agency staff on November 19.

- **Thorleifson:** National Geospatial Advisory Committee ([NGAC](#)) members are not yet announced. The [Minnesota Geological Survey](#) continues to discuss the need for 3D maps and databases of aquifers. MGS has had to cancel the [Geological Mapping Forum](#) April 7-9, due to COVID-19.
- **Richter:** Geo-mentors still needed to help 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes develop story maps to submit to national competition.  
The proposed draft of the Metro Stormwater Data Transfer Standard is being readied for review; go to the [MetroGIS project page](#).
- **Kotz:** The position of MetroGIS coordinator is in the process of hiring.
- **Koutnik:** Esri is providing materials for COVID response.
- **Sanocki:** Working on the National Water Model and flood inundation maps.
- **Brandt:** Washington County surveyors are looking at remonumenting effort in light of the 2022 datum.