MnGeo Statewide Geospatial Advisory Council
June 24, 2015 Meeting Minutes
Blazing Star Room, Centennial Office Building, 658 Cedar St., St. Paul, MN 55155

Attendees

Members: Brad Anderson, City of Moorhead; David Brandt, Washington County; Scott Freburg, Dept. of Education; Kari Geurts, Dept. of Natural Resources; Blaine Hackett, Flat Rock Geographics; Andrew King-Scribbins, Hennepin County; Len Kne, University of Minnesota; Mark Kotz, Metropolitan Council; Victoria Reinhardt, Ramsey County; Ben Richason, St. Cloud State University; Cory Richter, City of St. Paul; Dan Ross, MnGeo; Kody Thurnau, Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy; Michelle Trager, Rice County; Danielle Walchuk, Region Nine Development Commission; Tim Wotzka, Itasca County.

Non-Members: Heather Bergen-Albrecht, City of Maple Grove; Chris Buse, MN.IT; Chris Cialek, MnGeo; Will Craig; Mike Dolbow, MnGeo; John Hoshal, MnGeo; Adam Iten, MnGeo; Mike Koutenik, Esri; Susanne Maeder, MnGeo; Geoff Maas, MetroGIS; Nancy Rader, MnGeo; Chad Unamaker, Houston Engineering; Ron Wencl, U.S. Geological Survey

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Welcome

Ross called the meeting to order. Participants introduced themselves.

Minutes of April 1, 2015 Meeting

The April 1, 2015 council meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

Update on Legislative Session (slides 5-19)

Three major items were reported on:

1. Buffer strips along waterways: Ross and Geurts explained that the Department of Natural Resources is evaluating the final legislation concerning vegetative buffer strips along Minnesota's watercourses which allocated $650,000 to DNR to provide mapping. It is too soon to discuss this topic further, so it will be deferred until the next council meeting. (Note: the language from the bill was added to the slides after the meeting.)

ACTION ITEM: Include an update on the buffer legislation in the September council meeting agenda.

2. Parks and Trails: Legislation supported three related parks and trails efforts, which are described in more detail in the April 1, 2015 council meeting minutes (p. 1-2):

   a. **Website: Parks and Trails of Regional Significance: Data Integration and Website Project**: Part of this effort (DNR) is to help citizens look for recreation opportunities of "regional significance" in Minnesota, and part (MnGeo) is to track Legacy-funded projects.
   b. **Survey:** The University of Minnesota is conducting user surveys to assess use of recreation facilities, user needs and perceptions.
   c. **Data integration:** DNR and MnGeo, in partnership with MetroGIS and others, aims to develop a recreation data standard, building on much previous work.

Member discussion:
- Crowd-sourced data should be part of data maintenance. Keep aware of related efforts such as Code for America's OpenTrails data project and the Cyclopath project at the University of Minnesota. Cyclopath is no longer being maintained, but may have good data or project experience to contribute.

3. Next Generation 9-1-1: Ross reported that the legislation to increase fees to support the build-out of NG9-1-1 was included in the Department of Public Safety omnibus bill. Geospatial is a part of this data build-out effort. The budget is for three years. DPS is the lead agency, MnGeo will coordinate the geospatial work, and partners will include local government entities as well as vendors. See next section for more details.

Next Generation 9-1-1 (slides 20-28)
Iten provided an update on the NG9-1-1 project coordinated by MnGeo and the Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS). He reminded members of the project's main goals: to improve 911 call routing so that calls go to the right dispatch center the first time, and to provide the dispatch center with the valid address of where the calls are coming from, ideally even as accurate as a location within a building. For each call, a list of potential responders (fire, medical, law enforcement…) should be generated for the dispatcher to use.

It's important to have accurate data statewide. For example, if one dispatch center goes down, the calls roll over to a neighboring dispatch center which then needs immediate access to data covering the first center's service area. Currently, when this happens, the neighboring center often has to rely on Google Maps! In addition, the data needed to support NG9-1-1 is of great use in other projects.

To meet the project's goals, it is critical that local GIS staff and PSAP (Public Safety Answering Points) staff are engaged and participate fully.
- **Project scope and work plan**: Complete
- **Regional kickoff meetings**: Complete (see slides for a map of the 7 PSAP regions). Project staff will follow-up with each region quarterly. Outreach has begun to tribal governments.
- **PSAP GIS survey** to assess the status of GIS data and software at every PSAP has an 84% return so far; 100% is needed. A summary report of results will be distributed in July.
- **Initial GIS data assessment** is beginning. Pilot areas will be in the Metro and Northeast regions. A goal is to create statewide boundary layers for public safety answering point (PSAP) service areas and for fire, police and EMS response areas.
- **Minnesota NG9-1-1 GIS standards** are to be complete October 2015.
- **Communication plan** is being developed which will include updates at future meetings of this council.

Member discussion
- How do we deal with "address holes" in a county created when cities and townships do their own addressing?
  - In Ramsey County, the county user group was used to resolve these issues
  - MetroGIS also helped communication among various levels of government involved in addressing

- The PSAP community has been working together for years and has open data between members. Last year's data sharing legislation laid the groundwork for open data sharing more widely between all levels of government.
- Standards are needed so that data producers have something to aim for.
  - Need to decide what layers and attributes are critical.
  - NG9-1-1 Standards workgroup needs to include at least 1 GIS person from each region as well as 2 or 3 PSAP representatives.
  - Focus needs to be on what is absolutely needed.
  - The word "standard" can be anything from a data exchange specification to a required internal system design. Which will these be?
  - Need to document procedures so that new staff can learn how to continue maintaining the data.
- Communications Plan suggestions:
  - Include the Minnesota GIS/LIS Conference. Could hold a "birds of a feather" session for anyone interested in NG9-1-1.
  - The Association of Minnesota Counties, the National Association of Counties, the Minnesota Association of Townships, and other municipal organizations have newsletters that could publicize NG9-1-1 efforts.
  - Success stories and best practices are very helpful, especially if they can show what's working in different situations (e.g., different sectors, different knowledge levels).
- Data can now be collected accurately enough for many purposes using just a smartphone.

Moving toward Standards for Parcels, Centerlines and Address Points (slides 29-48)
Ross reviewed the current governance structure for approving standards. MnGeo is a facilitator and the council approves and advocates for proposed standards. The State CIO gives final approval.

Three standards are critical for the NG9-1-1 Project: Centerlines, Address Points and Parcels. The project's timeframe is short. There are, however, many other constituency groups for these layers. How do we standardize data to meet multiple organization needs?

Centerlines
Several collaborative initiatives are ongoing (see slides for details):
- MnDOT Linear Referencing Project
- Shared Centerlines Initiative
- Metro Regional Centerline Collaborative (MRCC)
- NG9-1-1

The MRCC proposed standard is being publicly reviewed. MRCC plus a few more elements may work for NG9-1-1. MnDOT plans to purchase and host the Esri Roads and Highways tool and the Roadway Characteristics Editor for internal use and for others to use.

Address Points
The MetroGIS Address Point Editor tool is free for use by any government entity. Also see the related Address Point Aggregation Project.

Parcels

The effort to create a parcel standard has been in progress for a long time, as documented in the 2012 business plan. The Parcels and Land Records Committee met recently to discuss how to move the discussion forward. They compared two possible standards:

- Digital Cadastral Data Attribute Transfer Standard (DCDATS): developed by the Digital Cadastral Data Committee (now the Parcels and Land Records Committee)
- Property Record Information System of Minnesota (PRISM): developed by the Minnesota Department of Revenue

Many of the elements are common between the two standards; however, owner/address information is missing from the PRISM standard and that is a critical element for state agencies. Therefore, the committee is proposing to:

- Use DCDATS in the short term and then PRISM in the long-term if PRISM can more closely meet agency needs.
- Add a "Generalized Ownership" attribute to DCDATS to meet the need for an overview of general ownership types. The following domain is proposed:
  - 1 = County Fee
  - 2 = Tax Forfeit
  - 3 = State of Minnesota
  - 4 = United States of America
  - 5 = Municipal
  - 6 = Unknown
  - 7 = No Value
  - 8 = Tribal
  - 9 = Private

MnGeo continues its pilot effort to request data from willing local governments and to compare the attributes used by each organization (see status map on slide 33 and comparison chart on slide 45).

Next steps will be to bring the proposed DCDATS with the new Generalized Ownership attribute back to the Standards Committee and to vet the proposed direction to multiple groups.

Member Discussion:

- Proposed "Generalized Ownership" attribute
  - What does "No Value" mean? Primarily topological problems with the parcel boundaries (slivers, gaps and overlaps) that need to be cleaned up. Could also include unmeandered lakes and road right-of-way easements.
    Suggestion: Could change the name to "No Data Value" so that it isn't confused with property value.
  - The attributes for property values (estimated, total, land, improvements) are very useful, but since they are optional, most of Minnesota's parcel data doesn't have this information.
  - Would "State of Minnesota" be subdivided to show which state agency owned the property? No.
- Review and approval process
  - DCDATS has been out for public review for quite awhile.
  - MRCC has been out for public review. MetroGIS will summarize the feedback they received.

Discussion: Role of committees and workgroups ([slides](#) 49-52)
Discussion was postponed due to time considerations.

ACTION ITEMS:
Ross and members: Address the questions raised on the slides:
- Should a small group work over the summer to identify how to move forward?
- Should council members participate in committees and workgroups?

Minnesota GIS/LIS Conference ([slides](#) 54-57)
Bergen-Albrecht, current chair of the Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium, reminded members of the Consortium's mission: To develop and support the GIS professional in Minnesota for the benefit of our state and its citizens. She reviewed highlights of the upcoming conference, October 7-9, 2015, and future Consortium events (see slides). Additional networking events are planned throughout the year.

The K-12 workshop is a new addition to the conference; it will include a full-day workshop and evening networking. A database is being created of volunteers willing to work with teachers, and the possibility of expanding scholarships to help teachers attend the conference is being discussed. Two new universities are now eligible for student scholarships: MSU-Moorhead and South Central Community College have new GIS certification programs. Volunteers are needed for a panel session on helping students prepare for job interviews. A group rate for college students to attend is being considered.

Minnesota Geospatial Commons ([slides](#) 58-63)
Metadata Recommendation: Rader reported that the Metadata Workgroup had convened to recommend specific [metadata requirements and guidance for the Commons](#). The current guiding principle in the [Commons governance document](#) states that "Resources published on the Commons must have sufficient documentation to allow a potential user to determine if they are fit for a particular use."

MOTION: Council members support the adoption of the metadata requirements recommendation for data published to the Minnesota Geospatial Commons (Reinhardt/Geurts). Motion passed without dissent.

Members suggested the following training options:
- Conduct webinars (live and recorded)
- Participate at the GIS/LIS Conference (Note: an abstract has been submitted for a 90-minute technical session titled, "The Next Generation of Metadata in Minnesota: Curating Content for the Geospatial Commons")
- Use communication avenues such as the county GIS contact list to let people know when training is available.

Cialek reported that the Commons development phase will be done June 30, 2015, at which point Dolbow will take over from Cialek as Commons manager. Attention will turn primarily to operations; however, improvements will still be developed as staff time and priorities allow. Currently, there are 237 resources published to the Commons from 13 publishing organizations. The Metropolitan Council will start migrating resources from DataFinder within the next few weeks, and the USpatial community at the University of Minnesota will soon become a publisher.

Freburg and Richason both cited the value the Commons now provides for students and teachers at all levels to find data in one place.

ACTION ITEM: Rader and others from MnGeo and the Metadata Workgroup will create a plan to develop and provide further metadata training.

Discussion: Year-end Evaluation (slides 64-66)
Ross summarized aspects of the council that went well this past year and provided some suggestions on what could be changed (see slides).

Discussion:
- The council could vote formally on more actions, provided that all materials needed to inform these decisions be sent in advance with sufficient time for review. Formal votes add credibility to ideas and help others promote the message.
- The previous Governor's Council on Geographic Information had an executive committee that met between council meetings in order to plan agendas, direction and actions. Perhaps a similar approach would be useful for this council.
- A timeline of the upcoming year's events and ideas would help everyone plan and anticipate issues.
- A rolling task list could help keep council business on-track and prevent ideas from being lost.

MnGeo Priority Projects and Initiatives
See handout for descriptions and status of each of MnGeo's main priority projects (all projects are done in partnership with other organizations): Addresses; Air Photos; Drainage Records Modernization; Geospatial Commons; NG9-1-1 (including Parcels, Street Centerlines and Address Points).

Announcements
Hackett announced that the 2015 FOSS4G (Free and Open Source Software for Geospatial) international conference will be held in Seoul, South Korea, September 14-19. He and Paul Wickman will attend. Presentations may be available via live feed.

Next Meetings
The council's next meetings will be:
> September 23, 2015
> December 2, 2015
> March 2, 2016
> June 1, 2016

All meetings will be in the Blazing Star Room, Ground Floor, Centennial Office Building, 658 Cedar St., St. Paul, MN 55155

Meeting adjourned. Minutes by Nancy Rader.