Minnesota Geospatial Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

December 20, 2023

Online via Teams - 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Members Present: Heather Albrecht, Hennepin County; Jill Amundson, Mitch Bergeson, USGS; West Central Initiative; Jeff Bloomquist, USDA Risk Management Agency; David Brandt, Washington County; Ryan Bonney, Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community; Christy Christensen, McLeod County; Shana Crosson, University of Minnesota; Jessica Fendos, LOGIS; Kari Geurts, MNIT Department of Natural Resources; Leanne Knott, City of Red Wing; Len Kne, University of Minnesota; Britta Maddox, Anoka County; Tanya Mayer, Metropolitan Council; Victoria Reinhardt, Ramsey County; Cory Richter, Ramsey County; Kendis Scharenbroich, Pro-West & Associates Inc.; Gerry Sjerven, Minnesota Power; Alison Slaats, MnGeo; Stacey Stark, University of Minnesota; Benjamin Timerson, Department of Transportation; Dennis Tumberg, City of Chanhassen; Patrick Veraguth, Douglas County

Members Absent: No members were absent

1. Call to Order

[Meeting presentation slides](#)

Chair Albrecht called the meeting to order and Informed participants that the meeting will be recorded for transcription purposes only. She also thanked the group for their patience as the GAC transitions to both new leadership and support staff at MnGeo. Albrecht welcomed members and guests, and invited members to introduce themselves.

Albrecht then reviewed the meeting agenda, calling attention to the second half of the meeting where priority projects will be discussed.

- **Motion**: Approve today's agenda (Richter/Brandt) – Motion passed
- **Motion**: Approve meeting minutes from 9/20/2023 (Maddox/Veraguth) – Motion passed

2. Review and Accept Committee Reports and GAC 2023 Workplan (All)

Albrecht called for approval of the committee reports as reflected in the meeting packet.

Motion: Accept the submitted committee and workgroup quarterly reports (Mayer/Crosson) – Motion passed

2a. Outreach Committee Update (Bontrager)

Andra Bontrager, Wildlife GIS Data Steward at DNR, spoke to recent efforts to revive the Outreach Committee. She shared that this is a long-standing committee that has undergone leadership change. She recently assumed the committee Chair role. She pointed member to the proposed committee workplan and charter updates. Recently, much of the work of the committee has been done through two subgroups, the Success Stories workgroup (lead by Len Kne) and the Open Data Subcommittee (led by Heather Albrecht and Norm Anderson).

She stated that her work as chair will be to serve as a liaison between the two subgroups and to continue work of a previous workgroup that was focused on GAC outreach and hub site development.

Stark asked if there would also be workgroup to focus on the web updates. Andra shared that her primary intent is to review and update existing standards and guidance documents and to work to facilitate migration of content to the new hub site. She added that a workgroup may be necessary.

Fendos asked if this group is recruiting members. Andra said YES! Albrecht added that the Open Data Subcommittee is also always looking for help to reach out to counties about Opting-In to share their data in statewide aggregates.

Kne added that he expects the Success Stories workgroup to sunset later this year and would expect there would be enough work for a follow-up workgroup to act on this groups recommendations. Outreach is a big topic and there is always room to help.

Albrecht invited anyone who would like to help to contact her or either of the subgroup chairs.

Action Item: Seek approval for the updated Outreach Committee Charter at the next meeting

3. 3D Geomatics Update

Sjerven introduced himself and shared that he and Committee Chair Sean Vaughn (DNR) will be providing updates on the work of the Committee and workgroups. He reminded that this group came about from a 2017/2018 GAC Priority to collect new LIDAR data guided by committee standards, adding that this committee will continue past acquisition and onto other LIDAR related efforts.

Today's focus in on committee developed standards. Sjerven ran the group through a series of slides describing committee and workgroup structure adding that there is a huge group contributing to these efforts.

Now is the time to focus on next steps, not that acquisition is nearly complete. Next steps to develop derived products based on committee developed standards. Two subgroups will advance this effort.

1. Lidar Derivatives Subgroup
2. Lidar-derived Hydrography Subgroup

As a committee the current focus is to develop workplans for the coming year for the committee and related subgroups, including updating meeting frequency and membership rosters. Sjerven then shared a lidar

acquisition status map noting that the State of Minnesota is expected to be completed in the next year – 18 months.

Vaughn then spoke to the progression of consistent, standardized data acquisition nationwide over the past few years. He also highlighted the versions of (1stGEN and 2ndGEN) data available for Minnesota, illustrating the distinction between them. He want on to provide details on new subgroups - Lidar Derivatives and Lidar-derived Hydrography Subgroups.

The Lidar-derived Hydrography initiative will need a state agency sponsor with multiple state agencies supporting the effort. The group will be conducting outreach and education with agency managers and hope to make this effort a 2025 GAC Priority.

Sjerven closed the presentation by sharing a slide that illustrates the range of experts needed in this work and encouraging members and guests to support this work.

4. PLSS Update (Veraguth/Thurnau)

Veraguth opened the update sharing that this is an exciting time for surveyors! This is the first-time funding has been available for remonumentation at this scale. He reported that this is a group working on a legislative proposal for the coming session and that Kory Thurnau has been hired by MnGeo to run the current effort to guide work on the Preservation Grant Project.

Thurnau reported that he started at MnGeo on October 25th and has been meeting with agency contacts to help guide development of how the grant will be structured and supported. The Preservation Committee has been meeting weekly to help develop RFP language. He has been able to present to the MSPS and is planning additional outreach and discussions with counties and surveyors. At least 40 counties are anticipated to apply for grant funds. General Counsel is currently reviewing the RFP. Grant management software is under review.

Anticipated next steps include acquiring and developing the grant management solution (software), continuing to refine the financial procurement processes, and conducting pre award risk assessments with applicants. The goal is to open the application period by early February and award the first contracts in March/April 2024. Funding demand will help demonstrate the value of this program to legislators.

5. Open/Opt-In Data Update (Anderson)

Norman Anderson, Open Data Committee Co-chair provided an update on progress in 4 distinct areas. He started by thanking all data producers for their work – we tend to list counties, but that group also includes tribal and regional government and public safety answering point (PSAP) personnel. It is really a community effort to create these datasets.

- **Open Data Counties:** 55 counties declare themselves as sharing their data openly, either formally or informally. 2 new additions to this list include Winona and Morrison.

- **Parcel Opt-in Counties:** the most parcel dataset was published by MnGeo on November 6th and included 5 new counties (Cass, Lac Qi Parle, McLeod, Morrison and Pipestone) for a total of 49 participants.
- **Road Centerline, Address Point and Emergency Service Zone Opt-In Counties:** with the outreach conducted by the Open Data Subcommittee, 21 counties have opted in to share these datasets. Not all counties/data producers have been contacted yet. We need volunteers to help with this outreach.
- **Recently published – 1st Generation Road Centerline**s: the first cut of aggregated road centerline data was published on the Geospatial Commons on November 30th, 2023. This dataset includes 18 counties. No public announcement has been made yet as a courtesy to data producers to allow for time to review. Next steps include a broadcast announcement about the availability of Road Centerlines and a first cut of aggregated address points data is underway and will include the same 18 counties.

Anderson clarified that Parcel data is sourced directly from the counties while Road Centerline and Address Point data is being sourced from data already being collected for the NG911 project, which makes it easier for data producers to participate. Fendos shared that LOGIS will be using the address point and centerline data for their 20-county area.

Victoria Reinhardt offered to reach out via AMC to request counties to participate in data sharing. She suggested we forward her an email that can be further forwarded to her contact at AMC to distribute to counties.

6. Updates from MnGeo (Slaats)

Slaats opened her update by thanking Veraguth, Thurnau and the PLSS Preservation Committee members for their work to get the remonumentation grant project up and running!

She went on to report that she had the opportunity to present about the value of GIS in state government alongside Governor Walz and Esri CEO Jack Dangermond on October 31st. It is very exciting that the Governor is promoting GIS as a tool to apply data driven decision making to goals in the One Minnesota Plan and Budget.

She also provided an update on Technology Modernization Funding available through MNIT and reported that MnGeo has applied for funding to update the Geospatial Commons to take it from a file-based system to a web enabled service-based architecture. She noted that in the Priority Projects survey 50% of respondents indicated they would like to see feature based web services on the Commons and approximately 1/3 indicated support for a GAC Advisory group for the Commons.

Slaats requested a letter of support from the GAC to support MnGeo's funding request.

Motion: Provide letter from the GAC in support of the TMF funding request to update the Minnesota Geospatial Commons. (Knott/Reinhardt) – Motion passed

7. GAC NSGIC Accounts (Wakefield)

Wakefield provided an update on a topic introduced at the last meeting about GAC members each having access to membership with the National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC). NSGIC is a national group that

facilitates commination and initiatives between state GIS groups to help work together and learn from one another. She reported that each member now has an account created. She provided an overview of the types of groups that NSGIC facilitates. There is also a Knowledge Base/Learning link on the NSGIC website that can be searched for previous webinars, etc. More information will be forthcoming.

She encouraged members to log-in and explore the NSGIC website to familiarize themselves with the NSGIC platform.

8. Break & Networking

9. Annual Priority Project Survey Results (Maddox)

Maddox opened this section of the meeting by thanking members for their patience and understanding due to the previously mentioned transition leadership; this is the first time leading this discussion. She referred members to page 6 of the meeting agenda packet.

She shared her screen to show a spreadsheet listing the priority projects titles as listed in the agenda packet. These titles align with the projects as listed in the survey conducted this past fall and includes new suggestions as vetted by the Leadership Team.

She informed the group that when discussing existing projects, details will be updated as needed, including owners/champions and committees. For new initiatives, those details will be determined today, if possible.

She defined the following terms –

Owner: Person who maintains the work day-to-day
Champion: Executive level person who can help navigate barriers, provide resources, etc
Survey Score: unweighted average of the survey responses collected earlier in the year

All of the numbers combine into the success core, which informs the priority score. Once those scores are finalized, the list can be reordered, or a higher rank may be determined if other circumstances occur.

Maddox then walked through the priority initiatives list, inviting participants to speak to the status of efforts underway and adjusting scores and other columns that will affect the final priorities rankings.

There was additional discussion about potential confusion of initiative names as work has evolved over the past year. Names may be updated in the future to represent changes.

Albrecht reminded the group that potential volunteers were recruited as part of the survey effort; those names should be added to this spreadsheet at some point.

GAC Leadership will meet to refine the scores/results and report the final priority rankings at the next meeting.

10. Announcements or Other Business (All

This item was tabled as the time was needed to complete the previous discussion. Albrecht invited members to send her any announcements to be shared after the meeting.

11. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 12:05

Motion: Motion to adjourn (Reinhardt/Brandt) – Motion passed

Next Quarterly GAC Meeting: March 20, 2024: 10:00 am – Noon