

MINUTES
McLEAN COUNTY GIS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
Friday, November 19th, 2010, 10:30 a.m.
Government Center Room 404

Members Present

Paul Russell, Executive Director - McLean County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC); Jim Karch, Director of Public Works - City of Bloomington (COB); Josh Thompson, GIS Specialist - McLean County (MC) Supervisor of Assessments, proxy for Phil Dick, Director - MC Building & Zoning (B&Z); Mike Ireland, Assessor - City of Bloomington Township (COBT); Robin Weaver, Director of Public Works - Town of Normal (TON).

Members Absent

Tony Cannon, Executive Director - Emergency Telephone System Board (ETSB/911)

Others Present

Justin Nettleton, GIS Technician - MC IT; John Hendershott, Environmental Health Programs Supervisor - MC Health; Troy Olson, Engineering Technician, COB; Khalid Hasan, GIS Director; Bill Jackson, GIS Coordinator - MCRPC.

1. Call to Order

Mr. Russell called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m. after noting a quorum.

2. Attendance

Attendance was recorded by Mr. Jackson.

3. Consent Agenda

Ms. Weaver motioned to approve the consent agenda as presented, Mr. Karch seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Items of Business

2011 Agency GIS Work Plans

Mr. Russell asked if everyone has made progress on their respective agency work plans? Ms. Weaver reported that the TON draft was in the outline stage and may require more work because of shifting priorities. Mr. Karch reported that COB work plan was still in draft form. Mr. Thompson explained that he had not yet discussed the MC work plan with Mr. Dick. Mr. Russell asked if the plans would be done in time for incorporation in our respective budgets? Mr. Karch responded yes, though the City was a little further behind because of changes in the way budgeting is done. Ms. Weaver responded that the budget proposal is being finished up by the City Manager's office this week with money budgeted to cover their consortium contribution. Mr. Hasan explained that it was important to have all the work plans completed and submitted to allow for different member agency budget cycles. Mr. Russell asked Mr. Ireland for his feedback. Mr. Ireland replied that his approach has been agnostic to this process and has voted present but not against this project. Mr. Hasan emphasized that the plan was valuable even if only for the collective institutional knowledge documented. Mr. Hasan continued that January

3rd 2011 is the deadline for several key tasks to be accomplished including the executive update, organizational structure, IT Committee formation, appointment of departmental liaisons, the formation of peer groups, and a coordinated work plan.

Mr. Russell added that the annual work plan and budgets are integral to getting the plan implemented because we are identifying in detail the work that needs to be done for the coming year and longer term planning and budgeting for it. Obviously, the resources are not available to satisfy all needs right away. These annual work plans are the reason the overall plan is being done; to provide some overall direction for what, when and how we want to do, in specifics.

Mr. Hasan provided the example of 300 plus data needs identified with only 150 (approx.) currently available. There may not be enough resources to develop even all the data needs in the near future, but these may be a part of our three, five, and even longer vision. Mr. Russell added that coordinating efforts, not duplicating work, and increasing efficiencies is another important goal.

Mr. Ireland expressed concerns about safeguards in place to address situations when an agency decides on actions that have detrimental effects to other members in the consortium. As a consortium we need to keep in mind that problems are created when we don't recognize that when unilateral uncoordinated changes are made it has an effect on everybody else's work.

Mr. Russell replied that the annual work plans address that issue in the sense that it's all about coordinating our needs and resources. Mr. Ireland responded that "Isn't that what the consortium has been about from day one"? Mr. Russell replied that we haven't had the detailed plan in place to really provide the type of direction we want and that's why we are going through this process.

Mr. Hasan referred to defined roles and responsibilities in the plan and "if this does get violated in the future I think we have a document to go back on to address the situation collectively".

Mr. Karch asked Mr. Ireland if he could offer any suggestions or solutions to improve the existing document? Mr. Ireland responded that in this document accountability is more through city managers to keep them informed about the GIS. However, without penalties the broader solution is to have a discussion recognizing that the plan does not address this issue.

Mr. Olson provided the street centerline and 911 system as an example of a dataset that could create significant problems should a single agency make changes without consideration of the impacts on other members. Mr. Ireland recommended that such future communication issues should appear on a technical or management group meeting agenda as an item for discussion.

Mr. Russell asked if the intergovernmental agreement could be amended to provide for some sort of arbitration process to address issues when somebody does not abide by the agreement? Mr. Karch suggested arbitration or mediation mechanism could bring the players to the table. Mr. Russell added that if the chief executives got together and discussed the issues, they are likely to come up with a solution that everyone could live with and Mr. Karch agreed.

Mr. Karch requested that we continue this discussion as an agenda item under conflict resolution.

5. Information / Discussion Items

A. Hardware Upgrades - Lease ending shortly

Mr. Hasan explained that the McGIS storage and backup hardware acquired three years ago is nearing its end of lease period and the price quote to purchase it was unreasonably high. When investigating replacement options, expectations for availability of services must be taken into consideration. A lower level support option such as next business day, which essentially means at least one to two days of down time for the production systems, may be cheaper than the better level of support i.e. 24x7x365 with a 4 hour response time. However, the latter is recommended for public/government serving hardware. Even with this level of support sometimes replacement equipment may arrive next business day because of shipping logistics. After a short discussion there were no objections to purchasing the better level of support.

B. Aerial Imagery Acquisition

Mr. Olson reported that the City of Bloomington and the Town of Normal are expecting a revised not to exceed cost estimate from Shelley Silch at USGS within a few weeks.

C. GIS Day 2010

Mr. Hasan reported that the collaboration with ISU GEOMAP, Department of Geography-Geology and Center for Mathematics, Science, and Technology (CeMAST) for GIS Week 2010 went well. The first event was on Wednesday November 17th at the Government Center with exhibits, proclamation, cake cutting and afternoon presentations. The next day's events were held at ISU with keynote address, workshop and presentations. Mr. Hasan reported that the numbers in attendance at Government Center were half from previous years and suggested it was not too early to begin discussing about format and location for next year. Mr. Ireland suggested using webinars as a way to share the event with more government employees. Mr. Nettleton had received suggestions that the event be held every other year or only at the ISU location. Mr. Hasan added that many government employees will not be able to participate if we held the event only at ISU.

D. Other Discussion Items

Mr. Thompson announced his new position as GIS Specialist in the McLean County IT department.

Mr. Hasan brought up ISU's CeMAST invitation for consortium participation in an event for children to be held at the Children's Discovery Museum on April 17th from 1:00-5:00 pm.

There were no other items for discussion.

6. Adjournment

The regular meeting adjourned at 11:55. The next scheduled meeting of this committee, pending items of business, is December 17th, 10:30 a.m. in Room 404 at the Government Center.

7. Executive Session

No executive session was required.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bill Jackson,
GIS Coordinator, MCRPC