

OFFICIAL  
MINUTES OF THE  
MISSISSIPPI COORDINATING COUNCIL FOR  
REMOTE SENSING AND GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS

SEPTEMBER 2, 2004

PRESENT

Charles Chisolm, Chair, Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality  
David Litchlitter, Vice Chair, Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services  
Jeanie Smith, Mississippi Municipal League  
Joel Yelverton, Mississippi Association of Supervisors  
Chuck Carr, Central Mississippi Planning and Development District  
Clay Lewis (for Leland Speed), Mississippi Development Authority  
Jim Crout (for Robert Latham), Mississippi Emergency Management Agency  
John Simpson (for Larry L. "Butch" Brown), Mississippi Department of Transportation  
Barbara Collier, Tax Assessors/Collectors Association  
James Sledge, Mississippi Forestry Commission  
Rick Ericksen, Mississippi State Board of Registered Professional Geologists  
David Shaw, Mississippi State University  
Jim Steil, Technical Users Group Chairman

ABSENT

Andy Taggart, Madison County Board of Supervisors  
Dannie Reed, Representative, Mississippi House of Representatives  
Tommy Moffatt, Senator, Mississippi State Senate  
Eric Clark, Secretary of State  
Shirley Hall, Mayor, City of Richland  
Alice Gorman, Mississippi State Tax Commission  
Phil Sullivan, Policy Advisory Committee Chairman

Chairman Charles Chisolm called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. A quorum was present. The Chairman asked for approval of the June 3, 2004, Council meeting minutes. The motion was made by James Sledge and was seconded by Chuck Carr. The minutes were approved.

Vice Chairman David Litchlitter stated the Express Products List (EPL) will be a living document with additions, deletions, and changes being made based on what people need. Claude Johnson of Information Technology Services (ITS) said the initial EPL had been formed from the results of a recent email survey. Jane Woosley, EPL team leader at ITS, said the vendors indicated by the survey were: ESRI, Intergraph, MapInfo, and AutoDesk. She met with Jim Steil and the Technical Users Group (TUG) sub-committee who presented the following motion to the Council:

"The Technical User Group Standards Sub-Committee of the Mississippi Coordinating Council for Remote Sensing and Geographic Information Systems recommends that Information Technology

Services (ITS) develop and publish an Express Products List (EPL) for GIS Software. We recommend that the scope of the GIS software be limited to products that serve the current requirements of existing users. Based upon the sub-committee's objectives in setting GIS Software standards, we recommend that the following manufacturer's products be included in the initial EPL, subject to the ability of ITS to negotiate successful agreements and cost discounts with each manufacturer and/or their resellers: ESRI, Intergraph, MapInfo, and AutoDesk. We further recommend that ITS continue to work with the Technical User Group or an ITS Steering Committee of GIS users and vendors to continue to solicit feedback and needed changes after the initial publication of the pilot GIS EPL."

A discussion on the motion followed. Convergence rather than divergence is encouraged. Jim Steil commented that we want to make sure we will be getting technical support and training as well as good pricing. David Shaw asked if other states were doing this, and Jane Woolsey responded, "Yes." David Litchlitter asked if someone were already using one of the vendors, could they get a discount. The response was they would need to ask for it. The counties and cities have the option of not going with this list. Jeanie Smith said this would give those cities who want to get involved a list to work from. Mr. Litchlitter emphasized the importance of educating the people. We need to get the word out to cities, counties, and other state agencies. There will be a state municipal meeting in October and everyone is invited to attend. Mississippi's tax assessors and collectors will have their state meeting on November 8-10. Chairman Chisolm asked for a motion to approve the suggested EPL. David Shaw made the motion, it was seconded by Rick Ericksen, and it passed.

Cragin Knox discussed data standards development. House Bill No. 861 establishes the Council's responsibility for "Oversight of the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality's development and maintenance of the Mississippi Digital Earth Model, including establishing policies and standards for the procurement of remote sensing and geographic information system data by state and local governmental entities and establishing the order in which the seven (7) core data layers shall be developed." This applies to MDEM standards only. There will be separate standards for each of the seven core layers. The seven layers are: (1) precise geodetic control, (2) property ownership, (3) digital aerial orthophotography, (4) elevation models and contours, (5) water features, (6) transportation, and (7) governmental boundaries.

Reasons for standards development include uniform development of layers that can overlay each other and allow for easy exchange of data. General standards requirements include state-wide coverage, accuracy, public availability via internet, and seamless. Key components are digital, high resolution, and needs based. Needs would be based on the State Tax Commission standards, National Map Accuracy Standards, and the National Geodetic Survey standards. Our standards will be short and readable, not a thick handbook. The staff requested approval from the Council to have the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) and TUG review, modify, and approve draft standards developed by the staff. These recommendations would be presented to the Council for adoption at the next meeting on December 2. The next PAC meeting is scheduled for next week on September 9, and the next TUG meeting will be on October 5.

Cragin Knox presented the staff's recommendations on establishing a system for coordinating GIS/RS data collection by state and local government entities. The data would be web-based, publicly accessible, user-friendly, up-to-date, interactive, staff-monitored, and needs driven. The following recommendations were made:

- Develop an inventory of best available data from state and local government entities
- Develop a web-based, interactive system for data acquisition, notification, and cooperation

- Deploy this collaborative system on Council's website
- Develop detailed technical guidance specifications for both MDEM and non-MDEM digital data acquisition.
- Maintain records on all cooperative efforts generated by the system

A discussion followed. Jeanie Smith said they had shortened their survey on best available data and had forty responses the next day. Jim Steil suggested we need a group from PAC and TUG to implement this. Rick Ericksen asked how long it would take to develop the inventory. The response was Steve Champlin has a grant to work on this part-time for a year. Chairman Chisolm stated that if there were no objections, we would do this. There were no objections.

Jack Moody reported on the National Aerial Imaging Program (NAIP). This is a current effort by the United States Department of Agriculture/Farm Service Agency (USDA/FSA) to fly the whole state at one meter, color, digital orthophotography. He stated the FSA made a flyover of the entire state during the leaf-on season and that the results should be distributed in November and December. Steve Melton with the FSA stated the project is behind schedule due to rain and that the resolution is not as high as we need.

John Michael Simpson of the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) told the Council there are steps which need to be taken to gather data. The first step is getting a statewide flyover, which would involve getting a Request for Proposals (RFP), then the flyovers, followed by processing the information. We need a process where each county can use the data and where it can be made cost-effective for the counties. The data needs to be available on the web. MDOT wants digital orthoimagery, needs the data, and wants to collaborate. They are committed to MDEM. He believes we could get enough money together and wants to get started on the RFP. He suggested we get the counties and cities involved at working group meetings. Vice Chairman Litchliter wanted to know the cost of the flyover. Mr. Knox responded that four years ago it was \$7.5 million, but yesterday Digital Globe said it would cost \$1.5 - 1.8 million. Joel Yelverton questioned the ownership of the data and stated the Open Records Act is something this Council needs to address. Barbara Collier told him we just want the data and are not concerned about ownership. Charles Chisolm asked if the Tax Commission is involved with this working group. Mr. Knox responded that they will be invited. Chairman Chisolm asked for a motion to authorize this working group that Mr. Simpson is leading to develop an RFP for a flyover. Chuck Carr made the motion, it was seconded by David Litchliter, and the motion passed.

Chairman Chisolm introduced Robert Sheely. He did work with Bud Douglas at IBM, but he is now working for Mississippi State University at the Center for Advanced Vehicular Systems (CAVS) in Canton. It is an outgrowth of Nissan. They interface and provide support for Nissan and other manufacturers by doing long-range research and providing workforce development and training and engineering support. His role is information technology. CAVS is now working on a collaborative project with the American Trucking Association entitled "Highway Watch Program." In this project the truckers report hazards; it may expand into homeland security. They are considering a geospatial information system and want to host a meeting of the Council in Canton.

Claude Johnson of ITS reported on the warehouse/clearinghouse development. ITS, MDEQ, and MARIS have formed a project team to start working on a clearinghouse design. They will want the approval of TUG and PAC for the final design. A copy of the Project Summary for the State of Mississippi GIS Clearinghouse/Portal Project was given to each person present. The project team will have the following components: project management, advisory, infrastructure, database design, metadata content, database content, portal development, and procurement. The project management group will consist of Claude Johnson and Craig Orgeron, both of ITS, who will be responsible of managing the creation of the plan and implementation of the Clearinghouse

and Portal. The advisory group will consist of Jim Steil and Wally Belokon, both of MARIS, Terry Bergin of ITS, Bud Douglas of MDHS, and Cragin Knox of MDEQ. They will be responsible for Quality Reviews and bringing any needed external resources into the project. Dennis Bledsoe of ITS and Craig Johnson of MARIS will head the infrastructure team, which will be responsible for establishing the infrastructure configurations. Bruce Lightsey of ITS, a representative of MARIS, and Gary Hennington of MDEQ will lead the database design group, which will be responsible for establishing the database configurations for the Clearinghouse. Bruce Lightsey of ITS and Barbara Yassin of MDEQ will lead the metadata content group. Jack Moody of MDEQ, Craig Orgeron of ITS, and Steve Walker of MARIS will lead the group responsible for establishing the content of the Clearinghouse. The portal development group will be led by ITS developers, Renee Murray of ITS and Peter Hutchins of MDEQ. The procurement group will be lead by Wally Derosette and Jay White of ITS and will be responsible for procurement and contractual advice and for actually handling procurements of any hardware, software, and services. TUG members will be on call for approval, research, advice and testing. Anyone is welcomed to work on the Project Team, but any team member will have to spend a considerable amount of time on this project. The new Council website is [www.giscouncil.ms.gov](http://www.giscouncil.ms.gov).

Steve Champlin reported on the Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRM) project. He works with Bill McDonald of Mississippi Geographic Information (MGI) and Al Goodman of the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA). The FY2003 work has now been completed and work is progressing for FY2004. We came in under budget for FY2003 and asked FEMA to move surplus to FY2004, but this may have to be done purely by paperwork. Counties which were scheduled to be mapped in FY2009 have now been moved to FY2006-2008.

Bill McDonald of MGI gave a status report of the MGI work done to date through a Mississippi Flood Map Modernization Initiative (FMMI) powerpoint presentation. He reviewed the FY03 and FY04 grant budgets. The schedule of activities versus work done was shown. The post-scoping county maps for DeSoto and Harrison Counties, done for FY2003, were shown. A zoomed-in portion of Harrison County was shown, followed by a review of maps for unmapped counties. There are three counties for FY2004 that are not in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP): Benton, Kemper, and Choctaw. Chairman Chisolm requested he keep the Council informed on what the contractor is doing.

Cragin Knox reported on the outline for the FY2005 legislative report, which was provided as a handout.

Mr. Knox then gave a brief report for Phil Sullivan on PAC activities. This started with a discussion on what "data" is. Planning and Development Districts (PDDs) do a lot of work with cities and counties. Delivery system and development of Mississippi Digital Earth Model (MDEM) were discussed. The next PAC meeting will be held on September 9 at 10:30 a.m. Renee Newton announced that Phil Sullivan will be resigning as the Chief Operations Officer for the City of Tupelo effective December 31, 2004.

The TUG report was given by Jim Steil, TUG Chairman. People are lining up to work on the Clearinghouse. The next meeting of the National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC) will be held September 12-16, and a large contingent of Mississippi people will be attending. John Michael Simpson complimented Mr. Steil on the positive work he has done for TUG and MARIS, and Chairman Chisolm thanked Mr. Steil for the work he has done for the Council.

The next Council meeting will be held Thursday, December 2, 2004, at 1:30 p.m. March 1, 2005, is the suggested date for the first Council meeting in the new year.

Cragin Knox discussed a handout entitled, "GIS Coordinating Council Suggested Future Activities." The six major items listed on the sheet were: (1) Data Standards Development, (2) Express Product List Development, (3) Coordination of Data Acquisition, (4) Warehouse/

Clearinghouse Development, (5) MDEM Development, and (6) Business Model for Funding and Maintenance. Chairman Chisolm advised those present to look at this list; it is very important. This will direct us for the next year or two.

At the next Council meeting on December 2, we will be presented the draft legislative report and MDEM standards for approval.

Chairman Chisolm adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m.