

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

OCTOBER 24, 2005

PRESENT

Charles Chisolm, Chair, Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality
David Litchliter, Vice Chair, Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services
Clay Lewis (for Leland Speed), Mississippi Development Authority
David Shaw, Mississippi State University
George Lewis, Mississippi Municipal League
Chuck Carr, Central Mississippi Planning and Development District
Joe Blount, Mississippi State Tax Commission
John Michael Simpson (for Larry L. "Butch" Brown), Mississippi Department of Transportation
Everard Baker, Mississippi Forestry Commission
Gene McGee, Mayor, City of Ridgeland
Joel Yelverton, Mississippi Association of Supervisors
Barbara Collier, Tax Assessors/Collectors Association
Rick Ericksen, Mississippi State Board of Registered Professional Geologists
George Phillips, Mississippi Department of Public Safety
Jim Steil, Technical Users Group Chairman

ABSENT

Tommy Moffatt, Senator, Mississippi State Senate
Dannie Reed, Representative, Mississippi House of Representatives
Eric Clark, Secretary of State
Robert Latham, Mississippi Emergency Management Agency
Andy Taggart, Madison County Board of Supervisors

Chairman Charles Chisolm called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and welcomed those present. Since a quorum was present, Mr. Chisolm asked for a motion to approve the Council meeting minutes for August 2, 2005. The motion was made by Joel Yelverton and seconded by Gene McGee. The minutes were approved.

The update on funding efforts for Council activities was presented by Chairman Chisolm. The Governor's Office will be sending a request to Washington for financial assistance for Mississippi post Katrina. It includes a request for funding for this group to work with the Governor's Commission on Recovery with the people in south Mississippi, in particular, to gather data toward developing the Mississippi Digital Earth Model (MDEM). It should be 7 or 8 digits of dollars. In addition, there is still a possibility that Congress will appropriate about \$2,000,000 that Mississippi can use for MDEM and on research. Also, Council activities have been included as part of the MDEQ '07 budget request. Vice Chairman Litchliter said he is still working with the Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) on the bonds that were approved during the Legislative

session that created the Council. Hopefully, the \$1,000,000 of bond funding for GIS technical infrastructure will be in the next sale in November.

The MDEM Development/Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM) Project was the next item on the agenda. Steve Champlin of MDEQ gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Mississippi Flood Map Modernization Initiative (MFMMI) update. The total FEMA funding for FY2003-FY2005 is \$6,989,000. For FY 2006-2008, the total FEMA funding is \$10,600,000. The flood maps for the three coastal counties of Harrison, Hancock, and Jackson were put on hold due to changes brought by Katrina. Bill McDonald of Mississippi Geographic Information, LLC, (MGI) presented the budget status and told the Council that the flood maps for DeSoto County are complete. The maps for Harrison County were completed, too, but are now on hold. The coastal DFIRM schedule has been modified to prepare new storm surge analyses and incorporate the storm surge data into new DFIRMs. It should take fourteen to fifteen months for new DFIRMs for the coastal counties. Robin Hoban of EarthData International discussed LIDAR acquisition and the ways they were able to help in the post Katrina efforts. They were able to provide data to federal and state agencies and a number of private firms requesting the information.

David Shaw gave a PowerPoint presentation entitled Katrina Response Mississippi Geospatial Community. The "magic" bus used during the emergency response was originally purchased on a NASA grant by the University of Mississippi several years ago as a global education mobile for GIS remote sensing training. It is now owned by the Mississippi State University Extension Service and was staffed by people from Mississippi State University and the University of Mississippi for this crisis. Also helping were students, research associates, state agencies, and GIS Corps people. The bus can generate its own power and has an internal network established so data can be shared from the server. The bus information system was tied to the Joint Field Office and they coordinated information. Specific products were: GPS locations for search and rescue, missing persons website and database, before and after pictures, and mapping support services. Maps produced included: state map with peak wind gusts with visible satellite overlay, aid and relief sites, fuel distribution sites, power outages by days, cell tower coverage, urgent medical evacuations, designated counties, Jackson County structure evaluation, and water depth analysis in New Orleans. One of the lessons learned is that more education is needed on GIS. So many people had no idea what GIS was or its capabilities. Another lesson learned was the need for backing up information. For example, Hancock County had digital data and backups stored in four different places. All four places were either blown away or flooded.

John Michael Simpson of MDOT led the discussion on the digital orthoimagery project. MDOT has \$1,000,000 that they want to use on digital orthoimagery, and they want it done under the guise of the GIS Council, but it needs to be done now. MDOT has a contract in place and the flying needs to be done in this leaf-off season. The vision is to have this data stored at ITS so everyone can use it. MDOT proposes a draft change order to attach to their existing contract. This would need to be authorized by the Council. Discussion of the proposal brought out that MDOT would like to obtain cadastral data but cannot with existing funds. If they can coordinate with local governments and counties get the cadastral they need, then MDOT's needs will be met. The question was raised whether the vendors could do the work. Robin Hoban of EarthData responded that this project has been on their radar; they bring in additional partners as programs get larger. Mr. Yelverton stated that this is the type of coordinated effort between state and local governments that he hoped for. He is working with Joe Blount of the Tax Commission on minimum standards for cadastral mapping (2 foot pixels in rural areas and more detail in urban areas), and on the flight schedule (can the state be segmented?). Local governments may want to put up their money to get better data at a cheaper cost. Also needed is training; money is needed for training. Counties are now understanding the advantages of a coordinated effort. There will be scoping meetings to

discuss how MDOT will pay for data collection and counties can pay for processing to meet their needs. Other organizations, including the Tax Assessors/Collectors Association and the Forestry Commission, want to participate in the scoping meetings. MAS, MDOT, and MML will provide staff for this effort.

Mr. Chisolm summarized the request as authorizing Mr. Simpson's committee to engage the contractor to meet the imagery needs of MDOT, adding any ancillary funds, for this leaf-off season. Joel Yelverton made the following motion:

"The Council hereby authorizes a request to MDEQ to issue a work order for development of statewide orthoimagery, in accordance with the terms of Article 1a, of the Contract between MDEQ and MGI, LLC dated February 17, 2004. The work is to be carried out utilizing funds made available to MDEQ by MDOT and such other available sources as may be obtained.

"The work order shall be drafted and negotiated with the Contractor by the Council's Digital Orthoimagery Committee, including representation from MDOT, MDEQ, ITS, MAS, MML, the county Tax Assessors Association, and any other interested parties. Imagery specifications must meet or exceed the standards already adopted by the Council.

"The Council urges the MAS, TAA, and the MML to enlist the support of the various county and city governments to participate in this effort. Additionally, the Council directs the staff to continue pursuing funding from various state and federal sources for this orthoimagery collection process."

David Shaw seconded this motion and the motion was approved unanimously.

Cragin Knox announced that the Data Acquisition Coordination website is ready to use. It will be set up as a link on the Council website at www.giscouncil.ms.gov. Claude Johnson will let us know when the switch is turned on.

Warehouse/portal development was presented by Claude Johnson. The bond money for the warehouse/portal development could be available in the November/December time frame. The requirements definition phase is 98 per cent complete with a target completion date of October 31, 2005. In excess of 160 people from across the state will have participated in the sessions when we are finished. Participants have included federal, state, county, and municipal governments; planning and development districts, and private sector entities. The GIS Clearinghouse/Portal Requirements document will be published after selected members of the Technical Users' Group have a chance to review it and report back. The next steps are developing a strategy/plan for a procurement project for the clearinghouse/portal implementation, developing the procurement instruments, issuing the procurement instruments, evaluating proposals, selecting lowest and best proposal, and executing contracts. The portal may be operating by spring.

Jim Steil reported on the annual meeting of the National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC). The federal government is in chaos, geospatially; especially hard hit is the USGS. NSGIC has been working on an imagery standard for the nation proposal. Since this product is needed by everyone and every so often, and the federal government needs the line work that comes from it, get the federal government to pay for it every three years. We are trying to get lobbying going on this. "Aerial" is not restricted to airplanes. The two-foot standard is almost universal, but the western states need just one meter. The mid-year meeting is always in Annapolis. Robin Hoban went to the NSGIC conference for the first time this year. She was amazed by the amount of participation from the southeastern states. She encouraged more people from Mississippi to attend.

The education and outreach update was given by David Shaw. Fundamentals of the strategic plan have been put together. We have some funding that we believe will make it through the federal cycle once we get past the resolutions that could be applied toward such things as

internships and coop expenses. We need to all be working together and view this as much more than just an educational institution as far as education outreach goes.

The suggested meeting dates for the next Council meeting are December 6 or 13, 2005, at 1:30 p.m. Vice Chairman David Litchliter said we will wait for comments on which date would be better and will let the members know when a decision has been made. John Dorman, Director of North Carolina Floodplain Mapping Project and Chief of Geospatial and Technology Management Section of North Carolina Emergency Management, may be a speaker at this meeting.

Joel Yelverton requested a meeting immediately following the adjournment to discuss getting out information to the counties regarding participation in the digital orthoimagery project. Among those requested to stay for the meeting were Cragin Knox, Bill McDonald, George Lewis, Barbara Collier, and Robin Hoban of EarthData.

Vice Chairman Litchliter adjourned the meeting at 10:47 a.m.