

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

**July 6, 2010**

**PRESENT**

Keith Harkins (for Trudy Fisher, Chair), Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality  
David Litchliter, Vice Chair, Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services  
Ray Barksdale (for Larry L. “Butch” Brown), Mississippi Department of Transportation  
Gerald McWhorter (for Delbert Hosemann), Mississippi Secretary of State  
Charlie W. Morgan, Mississippi Forestry Commission  
Rick Ericksen, Mississippi State Board of Registered Professional Geologists  
Jim Steil, Institutions of Higher Learning/MARIS  
Chuck Carr, Central Mississippi Planning and Development District  
Dannie Reed, Representative, Mississippi House of Representatives

**ABSENT**

Mike Womack, Mississippi Emergency Management Agency  
Jack Moody (for Gray Swoope), Mississippi Development Authority  
Gene McGee, Mayor, City of Ridgeland  
Matthew Dodd (for George Lewis), Mississippi Municipal League  
Tony Fleming, Clarke County Board of Supervisors  
Michael Caples, Mississippi Association of Supervisors  
Jeff Mullins, Mississippi Tax Assessors/Collectors Association  
Colin Baird, Mississippi Association of Professional Surveyors  
Tommy Moffatt, Senator, Mississippi State Senate

Vice-Chairman David Litchliter called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and welcomed those present. Since a quorum was not present, the approval of the minutes for the last meeting was tabled until the next meeting.

Joel Yelverton, Chairman of the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC), gave a report from the Committee on the Strategic Plan update. The PAC has had two meetings and one conference call. PAC members are: Joel Yelverton, Yelverton Consulting; Melinda McGrath, MDOT; Keith Harkins, MDEQ; Craig Orgeron, ITS; Knox Ross, Mayor of Pelahatchie; Wes Burger, Geosystems Resources Institute; Scott Delano, Mississippi House of Representatives; John Sullivan, Rankin County Tax Assessor; John Hendrix, Choctaw Nation; and Warren McKinnon, Mississippi State Tax Commission. The Council has contracted with Fairview Industries, represented by Nancy von Meyer and David Stage, to make a strategic business plan, which they have been working on for the last six months. The main focus is the sustainability of GIS in Mississippi. The three major parts of this preliminary plan are Mississippi GIS implementation plans, funding options, and benefits. The two major components of the implementation plan are framework data layers and

non-data framework components. The non-data framework components include coordination, technology and infrastructure, and education and outreach. This plan is to determine how we can fund the completion of the framework layers, update the data we have, and maintain the infrastructure. We asked them to find real world Mississippi application benefits of GIS. They are doing this. So far we have been funded by federal money from various sources, plus some from MDOT, other agencies, and counties. This is not a stable funding source, but we will continue seeking federal funds. Fairview Industries has contacted numerous states to determine what is working for them. The PAC will bring workable options to the Council from the long list that is being developed. Some that seem promising are pooled resources, administrative overhead, real estate transfer fees, and ad valorem tax reallocations. The PAC plans to meet at 10:00 a.m. on Council meeting days. They will also be having frequent conference calls with the contractors.

Cragin Knox of MGI gave a PowerPoint presentation on the MDEM layer development activities. The elevation model and contours have been completed for about three-fourths of the state. Hydrography and transportation data have been done in the coastal counties with Katrina funding. Also road center lines and addressing have been completed on the coast. Property ownership is being worked on in that area. NOAA has been putting a level of funding into the Geodetic Control layer for years. They lost stations on the coast during Katrina, but they are continuing to fund that through some grant money to the University of Southern Mississippi. Political boundaries data have been generated by projects on the coast or by DFIRM data. This year MGI will finish the digital terrain model and contour lines for the last part of the state for 100% coverage of the state. They have completed all the ground control points in the southwestern corner of the state. They are looking at hydrography using some LIDAR data that the Corps of Engineers have provided and the five-foot contours that were done last year. They are working on road centerlines with MDOT in the Delta region. The Deepwater Horizon oil spill interrupted these projects. There was no good baseline data on the coast, so DEQ got busy taking pre-impact water, soil, and plant samples. They coordinated this data with orthoimagery and infrared imagery. Black and white imagery was done at the same time. Most of the data collected was offshore, but some was onshore. Barrier islands, shoreline, up into Back Bay, and any of the estuaries were covered. BP is paying for this new imagery. Two spectrums in the color infrared will readily identify areas of hydrocarbon contamination.

Steve Champlin, Project Manager for the Mississippi Flood Map Modernization Initiative (MFMMI), gave a PowerPoint presentation update on the Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM) project. A few weeks ago we requested some funding for LIDAR from FEMA for their Risk MAP program. The Vicksburg USACE has been working on a LIDAR project. By the end of December, they should have 14,500 to 15,000 square miles of LIDAR. In addition, they have collected 2 ft. digital orthoimagery. Some of the basic sets of LIDAR are 1 ft. Class 2 contours, LAS files, and bare earth DEM and Tin. When the completed data is available, we will be able to get it. FEMA funding and spending were discussed. The funding for the FY10 Risk MAP program is \$2,369,705. Since the last Council meeting, four countywide final officials' meetings and "flood hazard open house" meetings have been held. Three countywide preliminary DFIRMs have been delivered. We are continuing to deal with levee certification issues involving many different counties. Up-coming activities include delivering eighteen countywide preliminary DFIRMs, holding numerous countywide officials and open house meetings, continuing remapping areas involved in levee non-certification situations, and continuing work on FY09 county projects which includes the Rankin County countywide DFIRM update project.

Scott Samson, Geosystems Research Institute (GRI) at Mississippi State University, talked about the education and outreach efforts. The NOAA/MDEM proposal was electronically filed on June 2 for \$2.7 million. Regarding the Geospatial Outreach Project, they have three “authorized training partners” instructors. They are offering almost every course that non-ESRI people are allowed to teach. They are planning to expand on the three original courses. Since June, 2006, they have had 1,874 students and 183 workshops and representatives of 65 counties. ArcGIS 10 program has been released. ESRI decided that they are changing the way you teach, and there will be a whole different approach for someone to be authorized to teach. ESRI’s authorized training program has now been changed to the certified training program. Each trainer has to be certified by a non-profit organization for certifying technical trainers. The cost is about \$3,000 per person. ESRI is rewriting the materials for the workshops in a whole new format. The teachers must engage the students in a discussion. The “open source” GIS class is a no-cost option for many of our communities who can’t afford commercial software. It is a two-day course and is compatible with proprietary software. Dr. Samson asked for feedback on what we think would be needed in a course.

Debra Brown of the Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services (ITS) gave an update on the Portal/Clearinghouse upgrade. They have just received ArcGIS 10. This delayed them in completing the upgrade. Gary Hennington of The Geospatial Group presented the GIS Portal/Clearinghouse development and update report. Feedback from a user survey stressed that it needed to be easier to use and to easily show their data. He gave a quick peek at the Clearinghouse. The choices are viewing data, downloading data or looking at available services. The user will be able to switch back and forth between MDEM and all available data easily. Everything has been put into seven themes with files listed and zipped. There will be good, working GIS examples from state agencies available to the public. There will be a “Twitter” link. ITS is working with MDA on a special project compiling information such as parks or historic courthouses in small communities within our state.

Gerald McWhorter of the Secretary of State’s Office gave an update and overview of the work they are doing to replace their current land management software development and GIS needs. They will be adding capabilities to index and make available a lot of the historical records that the Secretary of State’s Office has. The vendor that is developing their new software is SDS in Franklin, Tennessee. The new software will be completely web based and will be hosted by ITS. It will have GIS capabilities. They plan to conduct as much of their business over the internet as possible. Examples would be required reports or selling tax-forfeited land. Having access to the parcel polygon information will be very helpful in selling the property. Emphasis is on sixteenth section lands which are taxed once they are leased. All of their leases are on their website. The “deer” map shows all of the hunting and fishing leases that are coming up for bid within the next year. They are working with the Forestry Commission on timber lands that are on sixteenth section lands. The most crucial data are parcel polygons. He would like to have better access to the tax parcel information, have it consistently updated, have it in a format that would be useful to everyone, and have a plan for keeping it updated.

Vice-Chairman Litchliter reminded everyone that the next meeting date is October 5, 2010, at 1:30 p.m.

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned.