

**GIS Steering Committee
Meeting Minutes - November 19, 1996**

Present were (* authorized to vote):

* Rod Armstrong	State Information Technology Coordinator
Mahendra Bansal	Natural Resources Commission
* Jim Brown	State Surveyor's Office
* Dennis Burling	Department of Environmental Quality
* Lash Chaffin	League of Municipalities
* Blaine Dinwiddie	Omaha Public Power District
* Val Goodman	Legislative Computer Services
Ralph Guenther	Intergraph Corporation
* Les Howard	Conservation Survey Division
Erik Hubl	Lancaster County Assessor's Office
Fred Knapp	Lincoln Journal Star
Mele D. Koneya	Game & Parks
Terry Kubicek	Natural Resources Commission
Jim Langtry	Lancaster County Engineer's Office
Norman Nielsen	Nielsen Communications
* John Miyoshi	Lower Platte NRD
* Jon Ogden	Department of Roads
Scott E. Richert	Lancaster County Assessor's Office
* Tom Ryan	Governor's Policy Research Office
Jennifer Sharpe	USGS
Bill Shelden	Milestone
Ethel Skinner	Property Tax Division
Sam Somerhalder	Library Commission (Nebraska On-Line)
Rod Wagner	Library Commission
Connie Watson	SAIC
* Dayle Williamson	Natural Resources Commission
* Larry Worrell	Lancaster County Surveyor
Paul Yamamoto	Department of Environmental Quality
Larry K. Zink	Coordinator, GIS Steering Committee

NOTICE OF MEETING. A public notice of the meeting, pursuant to Section 84-1411 R.R.S. 1943, was published in the Lincoln Journal-Star on Tuesday, November 12, 1996.

ROLL CALL. Chairperson Jim Brown called the meeting to order at approximately 1:35 p.m. and requested a call of the roll. Nine duly authorized representatives were present. Therefore, a quorum was present to conduct business.

MINUTES. Rod Armstrong moved for the minutes of the September 17, 1996 Steering Committee meeting to be approved as circulated. Blaine Dinwiddie seconded the motion. The motion passed (*see vote #1 on the attached Voting Record sheet*).

REPORT ON NSGIC MEETING. Larry Zink reported on the NSGIC (National States Geographic Information Council) meeting that he attended shortly after the last GIS Steering Committee meeting in September. Approximately 115 people from 44 different states attended the meeting in Tucson, Arizona. NSGIC is a networking group which shares experiences and ideas. Also, NSGIC and the FGDC are establishing a closer, more formal relationship. NSGIC just received a grant from the FGDC to do a national study and some planning on framework data issues. The group is also working to establish a formal relationship with the National Association of Counties. While at the NSGIC meeting, Larry participated in a review of the new NSDI (National Spatial Data Infrastructure) strategy.

NSDI STRATEGIC UPDATE. The NSDI's strategy is comprised of three goals: 1) increase awareness and understanding of the NSDI, 2) develop common solutions for collecting data, access, etc., and 3) build relationships among organizations. A copy of these goals and their objectives was previously mailed to the Steering Committee. NSDI's strategy was reviewed and discussed by the executive committee which suggested adding: "promote increased coordination and cooperation, at the state and local level, among the various federal agencies and between those federal agencies and state GIS councils." This suggestion was well received by the FGDC.

FGDC PARTNERSHIP ISSUES. As part of the partnership agreement, the FGDC had invited the Steering Committee to submit areas of concerns or suggestions. At the last meeting, three committee members offered their suggestions: 1) Mahendra Bansal explained his concern about the selling of public information by private vendors, 2) Jim Brown mentioned the possibility of integrating a GPS base station with the federal network, and 3) Dayle Williamson suggested trying to get more cooperation through the various departments of agriculture. Both Jim and Dayle later noted that their concerns were being addressed in other ways. Mahendra responded with a letter addressing his concerns. A copy of Mahendra's letter had previously been mailed to the committee. No one on the committee had any objections to these concerns and it was decided that Mahendra's letter would be forwarded to the FGDC on behalf of the Steering Committee.

FRAMEWORK DATA COORDINATION—AN INTRODUCTORY DISCUSSION. The FGDC is currently focusing on how to develop, manage, and distribute what they see are core datasets that many agencies need. This focus is being referred to as "framework data" and it is a major part of the NSDI proposal. Larry presented the committee with an introductory discussion on framework data to ensure that everyone understood the terms. Larry indicated that the purpose of his presentation was to provide the Steering Committee with a background on the Framework Data concepts, so that the Steering Committee could discuss how and if they wanted to apply these concepts in Nebraska.

Larry closed the presentation with his recommendations for the Steering Committee. Larry hoped that the committee would decide whether these were concepts that made sense for the Steering Committee in terms of its role. If the committee agreed to these concepts, both the FGDC and NSGIC would be receptive in hearing from the committee about the roles it wished to play.

Terry Kubicek asked about the discussion of this topic at the executive committee meeting. Larry explained that the executive committee did discuss framework data and everyone was asked to respond to Larry's presentation. The only group to respond was the Natural Resources Commission and their written recommendations had been included with the agenda. Terry was concerned because the recommendations in Larry's overhead presentation was different than NRC's recommendations. Larry explained that his presentation was only used to provide the concepts about framework data and should not be viewed as a product of the executive committee.

Jim Brown asked the committee to discuss the concepts first, and then, it could address the specific wording. Once again, Terry raised his concerns about the difference between the recommendations shown in Larry's presentation and those that came out of the executive committee. Terry felt that it was more than just differences in words, but differences in concepts and policies. Jim noted that the Steering Committee should first decide whether or not it wanted to go into a national framework as opposed to how to go about doing it. There was further discussion on the intent of the executive committee. Larry emphasized that his presentation was only an introductory overview of the concepts and was not intended to be a document that was going to be forwarded to the NSDI or the FGDC. Larry noted that it was his understanding that the executive committee had wanted him to give the Steering Committee the same presentation that he had earlier given to the executive committee.

Jon Ogden agreed that the executive committee did decide to have the same presentation to the entire group. The executive committee did feel that it had enough merit to bring before the entire Steering Committee. Dayle agreed, but thought some changes should have been made before it was presented to the entire group. Jim noted that Terry and Mahendra did respond and their document was included in the agenda packet. Rod Armstrong asked if the executive committee had made a recommendation beyond having the presentation made. There was further discussion about the executive committee's intent. Jon proposed that the Steering Committee use this as a concept, and then, try to work with the FGDC. Jon also raised two concerns: what are the roles and who will be fulfilling these roles, because it may cause a need for additional staff and funding. Jon felt that the committee should recognize these concerns and be ready to address them before it moves forward.

Blaine Dinwiddie asked what the federal government was offering in return. Larry noted that if the Steering Committee decided not to participate, then someone else would step forward. However, if the committee decided to participate, then it could help shape and control what happened in Nebraska. Discussion about this continued.

Rod Armstrong made a motion to refer this topic back to the executive committee for further analysis and to come forward with a specific recommendation, which also included a general support for the idea. Larry Worrell seconded the motion. Jim asked for further discussion. Blaine raised his concern that by sending it back to the executive committee, it would only be returned with the possibly of the same discussion. There was further discussion about what Rod's motion meant. Rod explained that it would mean a specific recommendation instead of two or three. There was further discussion about what the executive committee should do and what, if any, documents should come out of the executive committee meeting. Larry called role for the vote. The motion passed (*see vote #2 on the attached Voting Record sheet*).

Rod Wagner from the Library Commission arrived, so Jim Brown moved to agenda item #7.

NEBRASKA GEOSPATIAL DATA CLEARINGHOUSE AND METADATA DEVELOPMENT PROJECT.

The grant for the Clearinghouse project has ended and Larry provided the committee with an overview of what had been accomplished and what has yet to be done. The GIS data inventory catalog was updated to provide Internet access to utilize the FGDC standard metadata and to engage the Z3950 protocols. There was also a metadata workshop with over 40 participants from various state and local governments. Six agencies have worked to develop either compliant or near compliant metadata and there are now 44 completed geospatial datasets. The existing metadata was modified from the pilot project so that it would fit into the new metadata framework as an interim. As required by the grant, a demonstration of the

Clearinghouse was made at the 1996 GIS Symposium and an oral presentation on the project was given by Larry at the recent NSGIC meeting. Since not all of the metadata has been integrated, a limited amount of outreach with other states and federal agencies has been done.

Things that remain undone. Because of a staff change at the Library Commission, the Clearinghouse is not using the most current software. Upgrading has also been delayed and some of the search capabilities (i.e., searching by geographic coordinates) is not possible using the current software. There is also some old metadata that has not been integrated with some of the new metadata that is available. The Clearinghouse has not yet been linked to other sites such as the Army Corp. of Engineers. There is also more metadata to be developed. Education and outreach continues and will be incorporated in the next newsletter. The final report is due as well.

At the last meeting, Larry explained to the committee that, because of staff changes, the Library Commission no longer has the resources to continue their support of the Clearinghouse. Therefore, at the direction of the Steering Committee, Larry worked to find potential other hosts for the Clearinghouse. Larry put together a list of requirements and likely issue considerations he thought the Steering Committee might be interested in. This list was then reviewed by Jim Brown and Rod Armstrong. The same list was also presented to the various people that Larry thought might be potential new hosts for the Clearinghouse. Larry used overheads to share this list with the Steering Committee.

Larry noted that technical expertise was needed to install, maintain, and upgrade new versions of the Clearinghouse software. Technical expertise and assistance would also be needed to work with other agencies as they create their metadata and to assist other Nebraska agencies that might want to set up a similar agency specific clearinghouse. Larry will continue to work with agencies to create metadata and will make sure that it is compliant with clearinghouse software. The GIS Steering Committee would retain ownership of the Nebraska Geospatial Data Clearinghouse name and its specific URL. The Steering Committee would also have final authority in terms of how the information was used, what information was in the Clearinghouse, and how it was presented. The Steering Committee was looking for a site that people could use with no cost to the user and with little or no financial support from the Steering Committee.

After talking to several people, Larry received three offers to host the Clearinghouse. At the last meeting, NRC had made an offer to be a host and its proposal was included with the agenda. Also included in the packet was a draft interagency agreement with the Library Commission. The Library Commission proposed working through Nebraska Online (a Nebraska Library Commission online service managed by a private network manager) to be the host. The third offer came from the UNL Library just prior to the Steering Committee meeting and Larry had not yet received their written proposal.

Larry explained that each one of the offers had their own unique strengths. The Natural Resources Commission has experience with metadata, which is something the other two did not have. The Library Commission/Nebraska Online has experience in providing interagency or agency online services for state government. The UNL Libraries has experience with the Z3950 protocol, which comes out of the library community. All three parties agreed to the conditions and issues that were presented by Larry. The only exception was with the Natural Resources Commission proposal. NRC agreed to set up a clearinghouse and indicated that it would coordinate with the Steering Committee. However, within NRC's draft proposal, there was not a clear statement of intent that the Clearinghouse web site would be the Steering Committee's site and that the Steering Committee would control the content. On the other hand, these two conditions were clearly agreed to by both the Library Commission and the UNL Library.

Jim Brown commented that the committee did not have to make a decision at this time. The committee could wait to hear the UNL Library's proposal. Dayle Williamson added that it would be a good idea to at least discuss the general concepts at this time.

Rod Wagner explained that the Library Commission had been involved in working with and developing the Clearinghouse from the very beginning and transitioning it to an Internet Web based site. Over the last year and a half, the Library Commission has worked with a private network manager to provide their Nebraska Online service. The Library Commission, through its Nebraska Online service, provides online access to a variety of state government information resources. About six months ago, a programmer who had done the bulk of the work on the Clearinghouse project left and that position has not subsequently been filled. Therefore, it has been a constraint for the Library Commission to meet all the requirements that the GIS Steering Committee has for this site. However, the Library Commission does have a commitment with Larry to help find some alternatives or solutions for the longer term. Rod was interested in hearing that the UNL Library had also expressed an interest. The Library Commission does a lot of work with the UNL Library on other projects and felt that their involvement was positive.

The Library Commission works closely with the private network manager supporting Nebraska Online services and together they provide online services for over twenty different agencies and associations. The Library Commission, working with their private network manager for Nebraska Online, has offered to meet the conditions outlined by Larry for hosting the Clearinghouse. The Library Commission has both the technical expertise and ability to operate the site. Rod asked the Steering Committee to consider the Library Commission/Nebraska Online as an option. Sam Somerhault, the General Manager of Nebraska Online, was also present to answer questions.

Dayle Williamson raised NRC's concern about whether or not the GIS Steering Committee could legally enter into an agreement with a state agency. NRC felt that the Steering Committee was a coordinating, liaison group and it could not enter into such an agreement. Dayle was concerned that a majority vote by the Steering Committee would bind all the committee members and the governments they represent to additional resources, staff, etc. Dayle also noted that whoever hosted the Clearinghouse would be responsible for the Clearinghouse. Because of the sensitivity surrounding Nebraska Online, Dayle thought the committee should be cautious about entering into an agreement with this particular group.

Rod Armstrong noted that the Steering Committee is a statutory body just like every other agency and that he believed (but noted he could not vouch for it without having some legal research done) is authorized under the inter-local cooperation act just like any state agency to enter into an interagency agreement.

Terry Kubicek added his concerns about the proposed contract between the GIS Steering Committee and the Library Commission. Terry felt that the question for the committee was whether or not all the agencies on the GIS Steering Committee would be bound by the agreement. Would such an agreement also bind all the sub-units of government and the information that they currently have or might produce? Terry felt that the contract confused metadata and data, that it was overall confusing, and that there were some serious public interest concerns that were not reflected in the contract.

Larry explained that he had taken the Library Commission's standard contract and changed it to reflect what he thought were the issues and concerns of the Steering Committee. Larry noted that this was a draft proposal for discussion purposes only and he felt that the Library Commission would be willing to change wording that the committee felt was necessary.

Terry thought there were different areas of concern to be addressed such as the access to data, the sale of data, the private network management of data, and the Library Commission's management of data of other agencies. Rod Wagner noted that there was nothing intended in the proposal to provide any interaction with agency data. It would only provide an index function to point people to an agency which housed the data. It did not provide access to the data itself, only information about the data.

Terry did not feel that the wording of the contract clearly expressed the intent of the parties involved. Terry also stated that he felt that the agreement language was deliberately obfuscating. Rod Armstrong asked Terry if he was suggesting that someone was trying to do something underhanded. Terry responded, "yes" to Rod's question. Terry commented that the role of the Nebraska Online private network manager and its management of metadata and data and their responsibilities and obligations were not clearly defined in the contract. Terry stated that he felt the Library Commission was fronting for a private initiative and was getting the GIS Steering Committee involved in it. Terry suggested that since the legislature is currently looking into the issue, it would not be a good time for the committee to contract with the Library Commission and its private network manager.

Tom Ryan asked of the Chair, that if people were going to start making allegations at the meeting, that they either make them clearly or in writing, for which he stated his preference. Or barring that, Tom suggested that the discussion be kept at a level where they were talking about this matter in a gentlemanly way, in a way that would provide information to those that are going to make decisions on this matter or refrain from the discussion.

Jim Brown stated his agreement with Tom and brought the discussion back to its original starting point. Jim noted that the discussion was about the committee's development of metadata and a clearinghouse to access and search that metadata. Jim also noted that the metadata was made available through the Library Commission and the Library Commission was no longer able to support the Clearinghouse and the committee is now looking for a new Clearinghouse home. Jim asked that the discussion be kept to finding the most appropriate home for the metadata. Larry asked the Chair if, given the allegations that had been made, he could note for the record that all three groups had stepped forward and offered to provide a lot of service for free. Given this offer for free service, Larry indicated that he felt the accusations made were hard to justify. There was some further discussion about how the contract was written. Terry agreed to put his concerns and comments in writing.

Jon Ogden asked Jim Brown if he thought it might be necessary to get the Attorney General's opinion on whether the Steering Committee could or could not enter into an interagency agreement. It was Jim's opinion that the metadata was a pilot project where agencies have been voluntarily creating metadata. The data was provided for free. All three of these groups had proposed to host the Clearinghouse for free. No one was attempting to charge for the data. It was just a matter of how do get the information out to the public for free. Jim did not feel that the committee needed the Attorney General's opinion to give data away for free. Dayle Williamson did not agree. More than just the agreement itself, he was concerned about the entire GIS Steering Committee. If the committee would enter into an agreement, it would be binding to all the representatives and their agencies on the committee.

Dennis Burling noted that the Steering Committee did not have a written agreement with the Library Commission for the pilot project. Therefore, he did not understand the need for a written agreement for hosting the Clearinghouse. He felt that through the Internet, all three groups could point to each other and they were all going to point to the metadata information at some point in the future anyway. Therefore, he did not understand why the committee was arguing over an agreements issue. Jim agreed with Dennis, but

added that it seemed logical to get a written agreement since the committee was moving from a pilot project into a functional, ongoing endeavor.

Jim Langtry commented that whatever group the committee chose to host the Clearinghouse, the agreement should be generic enough that if the Library Commission should change providers, the committee would not have to redo its agreement. Jim agreed that one of the committee's considerations should be the agency and the stability of its service. Val Goodman noted that he had talked to Senator Coordsen's office just prior to the meeting. It was suggested that Senator Coordsen would have to sign off on this type of agreement. They also mentioned LB 1375 and thought the committee might want to look at that before deciding. Further discussion about this and the public records law followed.

Jon Ogden suggested that the committee wait to review UNL's proposal. The committee could start reviewing the two proposals that were included in the agenda packet and could then review the third proposal as soon as it was available. Rod Wagner was willing to hold the Library Commission's proposal open until the committee had time to decide. Rod also noted that the Library Commission and the UNL Library often work together on different issues and suggested that maybe the Library Commission and the UNL Library could put together a common proposal. John Miyoshi suggested that the committee hear brief presentations from each of the proposal groups at the next committee meeting.

NEBRASKA PLANE COORDINATE SYSTEM—A LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL. At the last Steering Committee meeting, the committee reviewed Jim's draft proposal for the Nebraska Plane Coordinate System. At that time, Terry also had a few suggestions for changes to the document. Since then, Jim and Terry have worked together to finalize the proposal. Dayle Williamson moved for approval of the document. John Miyoshi seconded the motion. The motion passed (*see vote #3 on the attached Voting Record sheet*).

EDUCATIONAL EFFORTS. NACO Convention. Larry was working with Duane Stott and Dennis Wilson to plan a booth for the NACO Convention on Dec 3rd - 5th. The booth will have at least one GIS system operating. Erik Hubl is also planning to give a presentation. There will also be a panel discussion for the county assessors and commissioners. The panel will include: Larry Zink, Jim Brown, Norm Agena (Lancaster County Assessor's Office), Les Dugger (Scotts Bluff Assessor's Office), Larry Dix (NACO), and Cathy Lang-Morrissey (Department of Revenue).

Terry Kubicek asked why NRC was not represented on the panel. Larry responded that he had worked with Jim Brown and Norm Agena to organize the panel and that the constraints were not having too many people on the panel, and yet having a reasonable representation of the Property Parcel Task Force and a good representation of local government officials. Erik Hubl noted that he would be referring to NRC's DOQQ and soils work in his presentation just before the panel.

Community Colleges. Some of the community colleges had expressed an interest in GIS education, and after the last Steering Committee meeting, Jim Merchant and Larry met with several leaders of the Community College Association. Jim and Larry initially thought the colleges might offer a few GIS courses. However, the colleges were looking to provide facilities and public relations, if the GIS Steering would provide the classes. The group talked about the possibility of organizing a one day GIS informational show at the colleges' facilities. Then, depending upon the interest that was generated, something like an ArcView training session might be scheduled. Jim Merchant expressed his interest in helping to organize this, but was not available until a later time.

Mid-America GIS Symposium. The Mid-American GIS Symposium is being scheduled for the first week of May 1998 at the Cornhusker Hotel in Lincoln, Nebraska. Since there had been some discussion about sponsoring another Nebraska GIS Symposium during 1999, Larry suggested that the committee should start thinking about its plans for the next Nebraska GIS symposium.

UPDATE ON EFFORTS TO FACILITATE LAND RECORD MODERNIZATION. Larry reported that he had gathered a considerable number of resources and information on land record modernization. A list of these resources was included with the agenda.

A newly formed GIS subcommittee of county assessors should be a good step forward in helping with land record modernization. NACO has also created an information technology subcommittee that should also be helpful and Erik Hubl will be serving on that subcommittee.

UPDATE ON GPS BASE STATION NETWORK. Jim Brown reported that the Lincoln station is operational, but was not receiving data from it due to software problems. The software has been rewritten and should be ready. In Scotts Bluff County, Sprint Communications will be setting up a GPS station on the county building and it should be operational in December.

DRAFT GPS POSITION STATEMENT. Enclosed in the meeting packet was a copy of a draft GPS position statement that was written by Jim Brown. While meeting with other surveyor's from different states, Jim became more aware of reoccurring problems with operators and certification. Consequently, Jim returned from his meeting and drafted the position statement. North Carolina provided Jim with most of his research material for this document. Jim asked the committee members to review the statement and return their written comments to either himself or to Larry. Dayle had several comments and suggested that Jim call the GPS committee back together to look at it as well.

PSAN CONTRIBUTION. Jim explained that PSAN had contributed a check for \$9,200 to the GIS Steering Committee. The Department of Administrative Services was currently working on an account for these funds. The committee could use these funds to cover travel expenses and to help support GIS education and outreach programs.

Larry asked the Steering Committee if they were willing to use the PSAN money to pay for Duane Stott's expenses to travel to and participate in the GIS booth at the NACO convention in Omaha. Tom Ryan made a motion for the Steering Committee to pay Duane's expenses from these PSAN funds. Rod Armstrong seconded the motion. The motion passed (*see vote #4 on the attached Voting Record sheet*).

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS UPDATES ON THEIR AGENCY GIS ACTIVITIES. Les Howard handed out copies of the Nebraska Land Cover DataBase: Questions & Answers, dated November 13, 1996. Les also handed out copies of CALMIT maps of Garden County.

Jon Ogden handed out a copy of an update sheet on what the Department of Roads GIS section has been doing. Also in December or January, some people from Spain are planning to visit the Department of Roads to look at their decision mapping GIS software.

Dayle reported that the NRC continues to work on DOQs. Terry reported that the GPS control has been completed from Richardson County on the Missouri River all the way along the Colorado border.

Connie Watson, SAIC, extended an invitation for the committee members to visit the new analysis center in Omaha.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 21, 1997.

GIS Steering Committee
VOTING RECORD

Date 11/19/96

	Roll Call	Minutes #1	Framework Data #2	State Plane #3	PSAM/Duane #4						
DAS - Rod Armstrong	A/P	+	+		+						
DEQ - Dennis Burling Tom Lamberson	P	+	+	+	+						
CSD - Perry Wigley <u>Les Howard, Jim Merchant</u>	P	NV	+	+	+						
NRC - <u>Dayle Williamson</u> Terry Kubicek	A/P		+	+	+						
PRO - Tom Ryan	P	+	+	+	+						
DOR - Jon Ogden	P	+	+	NV	+						
Surveyor - Jim Brown	P	+	+	+	+						
LRD - Laura Valenziano Val Goodman	A										
John Miyoshi	P	+	+	+	+						
Blaine Dinwiddie	P	+	+	+							
Cliff Welsh	A										
<u>Larry Worrell</u> Jim Langtry	P	+	+	+	+						
Lash Chaffin	A/P			+	+						
Duane Stott	A										
Dennis Wilson	A										
TOTALS	9-P 11-P	8 (+) 1 (NV)	10 (+)	9 (+) 1 (NV)	10 (+)						

P = present
A = absent

"+" = voting for
"-" = voting against
"NV" = not voting