



North Carolina
Geographic Information Coordinating Council
Local Government Committee

MINUTES
LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE
June 2, 2010

PROCEEDINGS

The quarterly meeting of the Local Government Committee (LGC), a committee of the Geographic Information Coordinating Council (GICC), was held on June 2, 2010.

PRESENT

LGC members:

Kat Clifton, City of Salisbury, representing NCLM
Gene Hume, Buncombe County, representing Carolina URISA
Chris Koltyk, Moore County, representing NCLGISA
Alex Rickard, Eastern Carolina Council, representing ARCED
Jerry Simmons, Pender County, representing NC PMA
Julie Stamper, Pasquotank County, representing NC ACC

Others:

James Armstrong, Richmond County, LGC rep to the SMAC
Matt Hayes, City of Wilmington, LGC rep to the Stream Mapping Advisory Committee
Tom Tribble, CGIA, Staff to the LGC

ABSENT

None

REPORTS

Statewide Mapping Advisory Committee (SMAC)

James Armstrong provided the SMAC report. The meeting was held on April 14. The SMAC discussed Ramona and acknowledged, as the LGC had suggested, that Ramona is not living up to its vision and that technology may have surpassed that tool. The SMAC's recommendation was that the consideration of Ramona be rolled into the NC OneMap refresh effort. James noted that the SMAC members even discussed using a 'wiki' type approach to keeping information on the GIS community up-to-date. Julie Stamper asked if Anne Payne, the SMAC chair, would bring that suggestion to the Management & Operations (M&O) Committee. James replied correct.

Utility Standard - As agreed at the last LGC meeting, James proposed that the SMAC revisit the Geographic Data Content Standard for Water Distribution and Sewer Systems, adopted by the GICC in 1997. The SMAC convened a subcommittee to review the utility standard. James is chairing the subcommittee which includes Rob Bailey, City of Charlotte; Katie Brewer; MSD of Buncombe County; Chris Butts, Moore County; Trey Clayton, City of Salisbury; Jeff Cooke, City of Goldsboro; Ray Kurtiak, City of Gastonia; Mike Mull, Town of Cary (and SMAC member); and Sarah Sheldon, Town of Wake Forest. The goal is to revamp the current standard without reinventing it, taking into account changes in technology so that the standard can be used effectively by a number of different jurisdictions.

The SMAC also recognized that it needs to revisit other standards periodically to ensure that the standards do not get stale and that they are updated to reflect changes in technology and other developments. Tom Tribble commended James for recognizing the need to revisit this standard and noted that this is an example of the kinds of issue that the LGC needs to raise to the SMAC and the GICC.

James deferred discussion of other SMAC topics because they will be covered in later agenda items.

Addressing - Tom reminded the LGC that the Addressing standard is not one that was introduced by the GICC but one that the FGDC has developed and posted for public comment. He noted that the deadline for commenting on the standard is June 16 and encouraged members who are interested in addressing to review the proposed standard and submit comments. The standard is at the FGDC site and there is a link from the GICC site. The SMAC also plans to submit comments on behalf of the SMAC and has convened another subcommittee to compile comments on the proposed standard. Steve Averett, Orange County, is leading that subcommittee and he has identified four or five volunteers who were solicited through an LGC Alert. The work is on schedule and expected to be completed before June 16. Julie asked if the proposed addressing list serv had been established. The consensus is that it was established but no one at the meeting has joined.

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)

Julie reminded the members that Alex Rickard had agreed to replace Jason Mann on the TAC. Alex reported that he spent 30 minutes on the phone with Jason getting up-to-

speed. The TAC meeting scheduled for May 13 was cancelled. The meeting has not been rescheduled. Alex looks forward to working on the committee and the refresh of NC OneMap. Julie asked if anyone had any ideas for a more descriptive name of this process that everyone has been calling the NC OneMap technical refresh.

Julie provided some background regarding the delay in the TAC's activities. Because the legislature did not provide funding for the NC OneMap technical refresh, the M&O asked Jerry Fralick, the State CIO, to designate a project manager from the Office of Information Technology Services (OITS) to lead a pre-planning effort to clarify everyone's vision of NC OneMap before the TAC attempts to develop technical and user requirements. Linda Lowe from OITS was tasked to provide this support. She attended the last two M&O meetings as well as the May 12 GICC meeting. Julie said that Ms. Lowe is very focused and experienced in project management. She has no GIS background but understands project management and how to develop the information required to get approval for projects within the state government process. Ms. Lowe is currently getting up-to-speed. Julie noted that she asked very good and pointed questions about the vision of NC OneMap and that she understands architecture and computer systems.

Julie reported that one recommendation has been to release a Request for Information (RFI) to the vendor community to get their thoughts on refreshing NC OneMap. The TAC's efforts are on hold until Ms. Lowe is fully engaged. Julie noted that Sarah Porper, the GICC member from the Office of State Budget and Management, sees the benefits to NC OneMap and recognizes the potential return on investment and strongly supports the effort to refresh NC OneMap and identify and justify the required funding. Julie noted that the M&O is meeting monthly and making progress.

WORKING GROUP FOR ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION (WGRP) AND WORKING GROUP FOR SEAMLESS PARCELS (WGSP)

Alex reported that about 15-20 people from state and local government are working on business rules and user case stories for how the translator should work. The goal is to develop good documentation that defines clear expectations for the software developers, who are expected to be selected next month. The goal is to develop a desktop translator for both parcel and street centerline data. The leadership team, which is comprised of the co-chairs of WGRT (Alex and Janet Lowe), the co-chairs of WGSP (Tom Morgan and Pam Carver), David Wyatt with the Eastern Band of Cherokee and Julia Harrell, with DENR and the PI for the EPA grant supporting the WGSP, is currently meeting every week. The larger combined WGRT/WGSP team is meeting every other week.

Alex used GoTo Meeting to demonstrate Sosius, a hosted online workspace resource that allows groups to share files, manage documents and communicate in a secure location. One folder allows the leadership team to communicate and allows them to post the membership, agendas, minutes, working documents, calendars, and so on. The larger team accesses a separate folder. Alex showed a database, which lists the 37 business rules and the seven primary functions or modules for the translation tool. He cited some

examples that described the level of detail in the documentation. The rules will be provided to the developer, who will assess the feasibility of the design. The team may have to revise the requirements based on the response by the developer. The hope is to finalize the business rules and case studies over the next month and begin working with the chosen developer in July.

Tom asked about the holdup on selecting the developer. Alex explained that the WGRT work is supported by a \$75,000 FGDC grant while the WGSP project is funded by a \$500,000 grant from EPA. The translator is only one component of the WGSP project but it is necessary to let the WGSP project take the lead because it has significantly more resources. WGSP is restricted by EPA to using one contractor at this point but negotiations are underway to allow that contractor to subcontract some of the work to developers that have more experience with GIS and this type of translator tool. The WGRT will wait until the contracting issue is resolved before deciding whether to use the EPA contractor and subcontractors or to engage a different contractor to work on the street centerline translator.

Julie observed that the working groups have done a huge amount of work and that the process is well documented and she commended both working groups on their efforts.

Tom asked if Alex could predict a time frame for creating statewide datasets. Alex said that a statewide dataset is beyond the scope of the WGRT and WGSP projects. The translators developed through these projects will allow governments to convert their data to a consistent format with the same attribute tables. The project will not resolve the issue of edge-matching along county lines so there will not be a single statewide dataset that comes out of this project. The capability will exist for accessing data that meet a consistent schema for all participating counties. The next step, at least for street centerlines, will be for DOT to take the translated datasets and integrated them into the Integrated Statewide Road Network (ISRN). The translator will assist DOT in building a statewide data set.

Regarding parcels, Alex observed that there is no impetus to build a statewide parcel dataset. Matching property lines along jurisdictional boundaries would be resource intensive and is not really required. Tom acknowledged that it more sense to access the most current parcel data, but data that had been through the translator so that a user could look at parcels for adjacent counties or regions.

SURVEYOR'S COMMITTEE

Alex reported that the Surveyor's Committee has not met but the Attorney General's Office did respond by letter to 1) the request from the GICC, based on questions submitted by the LGC, as to whether local governments can collect data for other local government jurisdictions without using a licensed surveyor and 2) a request from NC Board of Examiners and Land Surveyors (NCBELS) as to whether COGs are local governments. The Attorney General's responses are advisory opinions and not legal rulings. The opinion of the Attorney General's Office in response to the letter from the

GICC is that there is no territorial or jurisdictional restriction on local governments on the collection of GIS data by local government employees. Alex asked if the letters have been distributed to the LGC and to the local government community. Julie replied no. The letter to the GICC was distributed at the GICC. The letter in response to the NCBELS letter about whether COGs are local governments was not distributed at the GICC meeting. NCBELS met at the same time as the GICC and planned to review the letter at that time. Tom noted that an action item from the GICC is to publicize these rulings but that it would wait until after the next Surveyor's Committee meeting, which is scheduled for next week. LGC members agreed that the news is good. Tom commended the LGC for its persistence in being proactive on this issue, which has been ongoing for several years.

STREAM MAPPING COMMITTEE

There was no report. It was not clear whether the committee has met since the last LGC meeting.

GICC REPORT

Enterprise License Agreement (ELA) Status - Julie reported that no agreement has been signed as yet, at least to her knowledge, but that an agreement in principle has been reached. Local governments will get federal General Services Administration (GSA) pricing for any new ESRI products and will be forgiven any past due maintenance. Future maintenance costs will not change.

Chris Koltyk served on the ELA negotiations team. His interpretation is that the GSA pricing will represent approximately an 18% reduction from current pricing. Local governments will pay the same rates that federal agencies pay. Also, local governments will get GSA rates for ESRI training regardless of where the classes are offered. The maintenance forgiveness is only effective for agreements prior to January 1, 2010 and the forgiveness period will end in August 2011. Local governments will need to budget for maintenance starting July 2011. Finally, K-12 schools will receive free software. Chris indicated that George Bakolia expected the agreement to be signed by July 30. The Master Purchasing agreement for local governments will not be effective until the ELA is signed.

Julie said that since the agreement has not been signed it could not be publicized. Chris agreed but noted that some people are already talking about it and that it was mentioned at the NCLGISA meeting and the NC Arc Users Group meeting. Chris said that he participated on the negotiations team at the invitation of OITS and that formal announcements should come from the state. Julie expressed her appreciation to OITS for working on behalf of local governments.

Alex asked how the federal GSA pricing level relates to the current local government pricing level. Chris responded that the ESRI representative stated during the discussions that the pricing would represent an 18% discount but he said he was uncomfortable being

more specific until the contract is signed and the details are available. There is no percentage discount in the contract. The agreement simply states that the prices will be federal GSA prices. Alex asked if he would still be able to get a better deal by going to ESRI business partners for ArcView licenses. Chris noted that business partners can only sell ArcView. If you want to acquire an ArcGIS license, the business partners cannot give you a discount on the ESRI price. Chris also noted that if local governments had not been invited by OITS to participate in the negotiations, then local governments would not have had a negotiating position with ESRI. He believes that the outcomes are better than what local governments enjoyed under the last contract.

Tom said that he was pleased that OITS went to bat for local governments to the extent that they did. The primary purpose was to negotiate a new state government ELA to replace the one that will expire in July. He commended Chris on his participation and efforts. Chris said that the price breaks may not be large but the opportunity for more affordable licenses and the forgiveness on maintenance, especially for smaller jurisdictions, are real benefits. There are only positives out of this. Tom noted that one of the actions items from the GICC meeting is for staff to publicize the outcomes of the ELA negotiations but that will have to wait until the ELA is signed. At that point staff will conduct outreach and try to answer frequently asked questions.

NC OneMap Data Layer Review – Julie reminded the members that the LGC and others submitted a review of the 37 core NC OneMap data layers, which included assigning a priority rating (1-9; 9 being highest priority) to each layer. There were 33 responses, 22 from local government. One of the M&O's questions is whether the 37 layers in the list represent the layers that are most important to the NC GIS community. Regarding the current list, Julie indicated that the summary of results of the rating of the layers did not include any great surprises. Layers such as orthos, parcels and roads were all rated at the top with 9s. The lowest rated layers, including congressional districts, received ratings of around 6. There were no layers that need to be removed.

There was discussion at the M&O about missing layers. Not many respondents to the survey suggested new layers that should be added and the M&O asked if the LGC could revisit this question. Julie mentioned address points and historic districts as possibilities and solicited the opinion of the members. Tom read out the list of layers and suggested that it may be better to think of them in terms of themes as there may be multiple layers within a particular theme such as wetlands or imagery. Regarding imagery, Julie mentioned that the M&O had asked about the 4th (color infrared) band and leaf-on imagery. Julie noted that previously the leaf-on NAIP imagery was not considered for funding because it was not part of the 37 NC OneMap layers. Tom suggested that when the LGC responds to the M&O, if leaf-on is important to people, the LGC should include that as a layer to be added. The M&O can decide if leaf-on imagery is a subset of imagery or a separate theme. Julie asked if the leaf-on is useful. Jerry Simmons replied that from the PMA perspective of tax mapping the leaf-on is of limited value. Tom suggested that the primary value of leaf-on imagery is for land cover interpretation.

Gene Hume echoed the need to include addressing points among the layers. Julie agreed, noting that the state had spent \$1M to develop a one-time address points layer, which would suggest its value. Alex agreed.

Julie asked about historical districts. Chris was skeptical about historic districts, at least for counties. James asked if historical districts are not part of a cultural theme that could include various layers including cemeteries. Julie said that many local governments are collecting data on cemeteries. Gene mentioned conservation areas or lands. Tom asked if conservation lands fall under public lands or if this is a separate layer because some conservation areas include private lands that have easements guaranteeing their current use. Jerry and Gene agreed, noting that many of these lands are either owned by non-profit conservation organizations or by private landowners who have sold their development rights.

Kat said that historic districts and national register homes are important to municipalities, especially from an economic standpoint. They make a town or an area of a town attractive to home buyers. She noted that the commitment of time to provide the data would be minor. Kat believes city staff would rate historic districts as a 6 or 7. Julie noted that the effort to review the NC OneMap data layers is not going to impose immediate responsibilities on local government staff to provide data. Resources are limited right now and most money that is available is being spent on imagery. The idea is to identify the important data layers and estimate the resources needed to collect and distribute data through NC OneMap so that the GICC can make the case for additional resources. Kat suggested putting these layers under the umbrella of cultural assets. Tom suggested separating the cultural layer from conservation lands.

Julie said that she would report to the M&O that the LGC suggests adding address points; leaf-on imagery; historic districts and sites; cemeteries and other cultural assets; and conservation lands. Julie asked that if members have additional suggested to please contact her in the next week.

Action Item – Julie will submit to the M&O the LGC recommendations for themes / layers to be added to the NC OneMap priority list.

GIS in NC – Who? What? Where? – Julie reported that CGIA added a new feature to the NC OneMap site. It is designed to fill the gap that Ramona does not yet fill. Tom described the feature, called GIS in NC – Who? What? Where? It currently includes 4 items – a list of county GIS contacts; the location of GIS operations in county government; a calendar of events; and a summary of survey responses about map fees charged by local governments. He is working on some other items including a list of municipal GIS contacts, which he will share with Kat and Ryan Draughn with NCLM. Alex had previously suggested a list of GIS contacts for regional organizations. Since Alex is so busy with the WGRT / WGSP activities, Tom asked if Alex could assign the task of developing the list to one of his COG colleagues. Another idea is a university contact list of professors involved in GIS education. Tom solicited ideas for other

features that could be added that will make NC OneMap the site for people to visit to learn about GIS in NC.

Julie previously suggested adding more maps since GIS is a visual medium. Kat asked how frequently the lists would be updated. Tom replied that the plan is to update the lists as soon as errors or changes are identified rather than on some periodic schedule. Kat asked about the potential for people to update their own information. Tom replied that Julie had earlier suggested the 'wiki' concept and that this would be considered but not immediately. There are questions about universal access to the web site or to a database that supports the various lists. One option could be a log-on system for users that have registered. Tom said that this issue could be addressed as part of the NC OneMap refresh effort. Julie asked if there could be a summary of layers by county so that she could better deal with questions that she receives about adjacent counties and what data are available from them. Chris also expressed concern about the number of questions Moore County staff receive about data availability. He has developed an application, essentially a data dictionary, that is searchable and is on-line and accessible both to internal staff and external customers. Chris agreed to send out a link to the data dictionary.

Julie noted that CGIA staff are making incremental changes to NC OneMap based on the response to the survey that the TAC sent out in December.

STATEWIDE ORTHO PROJECT

Tom reminded the members that there is a section on the NC OneMap site on the ortho project that includes a weekly status report. The most recent one is dated May 26, one week ago. The imagery acquisition is completed for 100% of the available exposures. There are two small restricted areas owned by the military for which imagery was not collected but otherwise the imagery acquisition is complete for the entire state. Tom noted that he is not aware of any problems related to snow areas in the west. Aerial triangulation is currently underway and about 38% of the state is complete. Imagery processing is underway but is not complete. The status report shows maps of the status of these activities.

Quality control is not underway yet. Tom noted that he is still has on his to-do list to respond to Gene's request for more details about the QC process. Everything is still on schedule for delivery to begin in early 2011 and into the spring. This represents a remarkable effort considering the scope of the project – developing contracts; working with multiple contractors; getting 12 planes in the air; and so on.

Julie reported that the GICC recommended that staff conduct outreach to local governments so that everyone clearly understands the deliverables and the size requirements for storing and managing the data when it arrives. Tom confirmed that counties will receive a hard drive with TIF files for their county. In addition MR SID files for all 100 counties will be available for anyone to download from NC OneMap. Julie said that counties would also receive imagery for each adjacent county on the hard drive. Tom was uncertain whether the files for the adjacent counties will be in TIF or

MR SID format. Jerry asked if counties would receive mosaics or the individual MR SID sheets. Tom thought both but will confirm that. Jerry expressed concern about whether counties would be able to manage what could be as much as 300 GBs of data. Chris suggested that it would be very helpful for counties to understand precisely what will be on the hard drives, including the compression ratios for the MR SID files. Tom agreed that staff will need to be proactive about providing details about the project and the deliverables so that there is no confusion and so that counties can be prepared.

Kat asked how cities will acquire the data. Tom replied in two ways. Hopefully county staff will freely share the data with cities but if not the MR SID files can be downloaded from NC OneMap – for the entire county or by individual tile. Kat asked if a city needed to acquire the data on hard drive from CGIA is there a procedure in place for that – perhaps to purchase the data. Tom responded that the data will be free but could not yet answer the question about how TIF files would be delivered. Tom was skeptical that CGIA would have enough hard drives to give them away to everyone who asks. One option that is always available would be for the city to send a hard drive and CGIA would load onto it whatever data the city wanted.

Tom acknowledged that the members have good questions and that there is still uncertainty regarding the deliverables. Staff will conduct outreach to address these questions.

LGC WORK PLAN

Tom reported that the LGC was the first committee to explore the idea of a work plan and considered a draft one at its December 2009 meeting. CGIA proposed to develop work plans for each of the committees and that it made sense to use a common template. There are two reasons for creating work plans. One is that it allows committee members and staff to better document the committee's accomplishments in order to prepare the GICC's annual report that is submitted to both the governor and the General Assembly. Lee Mandell, the GICC chair, hand delivered and presented the annual report during 30-60 minute meetings with staff in the Governor's Office, Senator Basnight's office, Speaker Hackney's office, the Office of state Budget & Management, the Fiscal Research Office of the General Assembly as well as with Representative Tolson, who introduced the legislation that affected the GICC in 2009. These meetings emphasize the value of the annual report. The committee work plans will help staff and committee chairs document accomplishments and better prepare the annual report. The second reason for establishing work plans is to track accountability for actions to which committees have committed.

Tom noted that this work plan covers FY 2009-10 and documents the accomplishments of the LGC over the last year. He described the work plan. The first section describes the purpose of the LGC and lists the overall goals, the 2010 objectives and expected benefits by objective. The second section lists ongoing responsibilities. These include reporting responsibilities by LGC appointed committee and working group members; the responsibility for members to communicate with their constituent organizations; the

responsibility of members to encourage their A Team appointments to respond to requests for information and advice; and the responsibility for members to use the LGC Alert tool.

The final section is a list of major tasks for 2009-10, numbered by objective. For each task, the lead member, date initiated, expected end date and status is recorded. A timetable that follows provides a cross reference to the tasks by quarter. The list of major tasks is a record of what the LGC accomplished in 2010. Tom commended the LGC on its accomplishments and noted how many local government people are engaged in LGC initiatives and listed as examples the water/sewer standard review; the addressing standard review; the ELA negotiating team; and the work of the WGRT and WGSP. He also noted the successful outcome relating to the surveyors committee, an issue on which the LGC has been persistently engaged for several years.

Tom sought approval by the LGC of the 2010 work plan. Chris made a motion to approve the plan. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

For 2011, the LGC will prepare a work plan but that will need to wait until the LGC is convened for next year. Tom noted that the work plan is obviously a dynamic document and that tasks will be added during the course of the year, as occurred with the 2010 work plan.

APPOINTMENTS TO THE LGC

Tom reminded the members that appointments to the LGC for 2011 are made in June. Last year the LGC established staggered two-year terms for the members. The three members whose terms expire on June 30 are Chris, Julie, and Jerry. In June, Tom will contact the persons responsible for appointing LGC members at NCLGISA, NC ACC and NC PMA.

In July, the new LGC will need to make an appointment to the SMAC. The other committee appointments are not on a schedule.

Action Item - Tom will contact the persons responsible for appointing LGC members at NCLGISA, NC ACC and NC PMA.

SOSIUS DEMONSTRATION

Alex and Julie continued the demonstration of the Socius tool. Julie suggested that this would be a good tool to support the LGC meeting and to enable document sharing. Julie created a group with the members, the meeting schedule, the agenda for today's meeting, a link to LGC minutes and so on. Instead of distributing documents and communicating other information through emails, members can go directly to the Socius site. The site will only be open to LGC members and their committee appointees. Alex noted that we can create folders on Socius for any particular topic and enable public access to particular folders. Members will get emails or notification when items are posted or changed.

There are settings that allow you to control the amount of notification that you receive so that you are not bombarded with information. Julie, Alex and Tom all agreed that it appears much more functional and user friendly than Google Groups.

Alex said that it is free until your storage requirements exceed 200 MBs. The person who sets up the account is the manager.

If the LGC members think this is a good idea, Julie will communicate with members on how to become a member of this group. The members agreed that it would be good to test it. Kat asked if Julie signed up using her personal account. Julie is using her county email.

Action Item – Julie will invite LGC members to join the LGC Sosius work space.

NEXT MEETING

The next LGC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 25, 2010.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.