RAMSEY COUNTY GIS USER GROUP

An alliance of communities sharing Geographical Information Systems

Meeting Minutes
2:00 – 4:00 PM, June 3, 2010
Shoreview City Hall, 4600 Victoria St N

1. Introductions

Carrie Mack, Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District
Mike Goodnature, Ramsey Conservation District
Matt Koukol, Ramsey County
Curt Peterson, Ramsey County
Matt Baker, City of Shoreview
Deb Jones, City of Falcon Heights
Liesa Miller, MnDOT Metro District
Jolinda Stapleton, City of Roseville
Meagan Beekman, City of Arden Hills
Melissa Baker, Capitol Region Watershed District
Matt Kocian, Mississippi WMO
Jody Yungers, Ramsey County
Jan Vanderwall, Roseville Area School District
Connie Bernardy, Ramsey County
Joel Koepp, City of Roseville/City of North St Paul
Ger Pha, City of Saint Paul

The meeting was called to order by Carrie Mack, Chair of the User Group at 2:05 PM.

2. May 2010 minutes

The May 2010 meeting minutes were approved with no changes.

3. Introduction of Matt Koukol, Ramsey County GIS Manager

Carrie Mack introduced Matt Koukol, the newly-hired Ramsey County GIS Manager. He distributed a handout that outlined his mission and plan of action for the new position.

Matt described his background in the GIS field to date. He had previously worked in environmental consulting and eventually got into teaching ArcView 3. He became a project manager at MnDOT and worked with Joella Givens in a GIS group that was sort of isolated from the rest of the department. After joining the Transportation Management Office, he got involved in MnDOT's base map production and took over maintenance of their linear transportation network data.

He described his goal of turning GIS at the County into an enterprise-level application, and thinking of the data as an enterprise asset. Once all data from the County's departments has been inventoried and collected, he would like to open it up and distribute it as much as possible. The 3rd quarter will be spent doing a data inventory, identifying needs, and determining the most crucial datasets (hope to be completed by the end of August). The next stage will be to start building some enterprise geodatabases.

Chair	**Vice Chair**	**Secretary**
Carrie Mack	Matt Baker	Joel Koepp
carrie.mack@rwmwd.org	mbaker@shoreviewmn.gov	joel.koepp@ci.roseville.mn.us

Jan Vanderwall reviewed the User Group's years of data sharing experience with Curt Peterson and staff at the County Surveyor's office. He noted that it has been a successful partnership and improved a lot of the data. He expressed hope that the design of the County's enterprise GIS would allow cities and other organizations to contribute as partners, and recalled the User Group's previous commitment of funds to assist the development of an enterprise GIS. Matt said that at MnDOT he had to work with dozens of cities and counties to get data about the 140,000 miles of roads, which was challenging and not always successful.

Curt Peterson stressed the need to update the User Group's ArcIMS site with new technology, and talked about the importance of parcels and address data as foundational layers of a good database. He outlined the joint powers arrangement for the User Group and County to collaborate on large, costly projects and common needs. Jolinda Stapleton added some details about how the User Group's fee structure for member organizations works.

Jolinda went over the history of how the existing ArcIMS application was developed with the vendor PlanSight, and how it came to be hosted and supported at Roseville. Deb Jones recalled that at the time, a firewall or similar technical issue prevented the application from being hosted by Ramsey County. She also mentioned how much support the Records and Revenue department lent to the application, and that their staff remain among the heaviest users of it. Joel Koepp noted that the application is not very robust and that it relies on non-Ramsey County staff to update and maintain it, which is unusual considering how many County staff routinely use it.

Jody Yungers from Ramsey County Parks said that they have long been supportive of an application that would allow for cooperative editing. They have recently won grant money to develop a user-friendly, web-based Active Living portal and related applications for park information and multi-modal routing, including a new model. She expressed a desire to have information with true connectivity that doesn't stop at any single city or county's borders. They have a $65,000 grant, $18,000 for a GIS intern, and now another $83,000 from an IT grant. The vendor will be Houston Engineering, which has previous experience building the GoCarverGo portal and is in the process of building a similar site for Anoka County. Curt Peterson was hopeful that the Active Living application would allow cities to get access and be able to do their own edits and updates to data.

Liesa Miller asked if all the GIS users and resources would be centralized in the County. Matt replied that infrastructure like servers and databases would probably be moved to the downtown office over time, and that he would have a staff to manage GIS resources and provide support. He did not envision any staff reductions or taking away GIS duties from other departments.

4. Self-Hosted Pictometry Discussion

Carrie Mack summarized the standing offer from Pictometry, which was the reduced cost of $7,200 and an annual 20% of that cost for maintence to acquire the self-hosted Pictometry product and web-based viewer. Joel Koepp reviewed the current usage of Pictometry, where everyone who wants access to the 2006 and 2008 imagery must have a special software product installed on each computer that will view it. There has

been very little usage of Pictometry to date because of how cumbersome it is to get up and running, and it is causing headaches for IT departments at all the organizations with access.

Carrie demonstrated the web-based viewer for the self-hosted imagery using a temporary login provided by Pictometry. Meagan Beekman asked if there would be 2010 imagery, and Jolinda Stapleton explained the difference of the schedules for collecting Pictometry imagery and the normal County flights (done on separate contracts).

Joel Koepp opined that despite the new cheaper price of the self-hosted product, some organization has to volunteer to install and support it for everyone's use, so until that is determined, it doesn't make much sense to go ahead with the purchase.

Jan Vanderwall asked about the possibility of the self-hosted system being a replacement for the existing ArcIMS Online Mapping application. Meagan added that she and her Arden Hills staff would use it if it were easier, but she still requires the mailing labels feature of Online Mapping.

Carrie Mack noted that the group would need to take a vote at the July meeting to authorize funds in time if the product was going to be purchased before the special pricing offer expires.

5. Ramsey County Updates: Curt Peterson

Curt updated everyone in the 1991 historical aerial imagery digitization project that the User Group helped fund. Half of the bill has been paid, with another 40% due now that the scanning is completed. The final 10% is due upon final completion of the project and delivery of the files.

They have an intern in their office developing a parks/recreation symbol set for ArcMap that will be shared with everyone.

The Sheriff's department is interested in doing crime mapping using the Omega Group's website (http://www.crimemapping.com). They are just getting started and figuring out how to get data out of the computer-aided dispatch system, and plan to eventually have publicly accessible crime maps.

The Active Living subgroup working on trails and ped-bike systems is pursuing the development of a standard data model based off the NRPA model. They are added fields to fill in gaps in the data model (more trail types, shoulders, bike lanes), and adding a field for the contact agency responsible for the facility.

Curt reminded everyone that they can contact John Jacobson at Records & Revenue if they find address anomalies or incorrect street names and street types in the property tax data.

Finally, he announced that Carla Coates would be leaving Ramsey County to take a position at the state Homeland Security and Emergency Management department.

Chair
Carrie Mack
carrie.mack@rwmwd.org

Vice Chair
Matt Baker
mbaker@shoreviewmn.gov

Secretary
Joel Koepp
joel.koepp@ci.roseville.mn.us

6. Community Announcements

Jan Vanderwall reminded Group members of the annual Roseville School District 623 golf tournament on July 20th, and invited anyone interested in forming a team to get in touch with him for details.

Meagan Beekman announced that the public auction for a portion of the TCAAP site in Arden Hills will be in late July or early August. The Army Readiness Center is currently under construction and will be a LEED Silver certified building.

Connie Bernardy thanked the GIS community for their assistance in providing data for the I-694/Highway 51 interchange project, which involved several improvements to safety on trails in the area.

After some discussion about everyone's availability, the Group agreed to postpone the July meeting date until the 8th instead of July 1st due to the holiday weekend.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 PM.

Minutes submitted by Joel Koepp, Secretary

Chair
Carrie Mack
carrie.mack@rwmwd.org

Vice Chair
Matt Baker
mbaker@shoreviewmn.gov

Secretary
Joel Koepp
joel.koepp@ci.roseville.mn.us