

June 30, 1998

Attendance –

Jeff Peake – UNO
Mahendra Bansal - NRC
Jim Lacy – CALMIT
Denny Wilson – Omaha Public Works
Jim Brown – State Surveyor
Larry Zink – State GIS Coordinator
Ed Kelley – NDOR
Scott Richert – Lancaster County Assessor
Jim Merchant - CALMIT

Purpose of meeting –

Based upon favorable discussions among GIS Steering Committee members, an initial meeting to discuss planning for a 1999 Nebraska GIS Conference and the formulation of a GIS/LIS User's Group in the state was held in Room 115 of the Nebraska Hall, on the UNL City Campus.

Identify committee –

Jim Lacy (CALMIT), Scott Richert (Lancaster County Assessor's Office), Jim Langtry (Lancaster County Engineer's Office), and Ed Kelley (NDOR), were identified as initial members of a committee to organize conference proceedings and develop strategy to initiate a user's group.

Meeting comments –

Jim Merchant suggested seeking additional members who were non-Lincoln, non-government, and non-Steering Committee, in order to provide wider representation for the committee. In speculating on the interest in a user group, he also suggested that potential user benefits be identified, such as possible discounts for subscriptions and short courses, to name a few. He also asked what the working relationship would be for the committee in planning for the conference versus establishing a user group.

Jim Brown commented that a combination of hard work by committee members and organizing a successful conference could certainly form the basis of continued support for a user group. He also pointed out the mission differences between the GIS Steering Committee, and a committee formed to establish a user group. The GIS Steering Committee mission is to reach out to new and non-users of GIS in Nebraska, while the mission of the user group committee would be to encourage current users. He voiced the opinion that the GIS Steering Committee should endorse the user group committee, but not get formally involved in the effort itself.

Jim Merchant offered that there might be tangible benefits to starting a user group as an Arc group, and then expanding into a more general GIS/LIS user group. He reiterated that the

potential benefits of becoming a member of the user group should be identified and established, in order to promote interest and enthusiasm for this effort.

Larry Zink suggested that the committee should be used to begin planning and organizing a 1999 GIS Conference, and use that effort to begin planting the seeds for establishing a user's group. In other words, use the effort of the conference organization as a project to garner support for a user group.

At this point, Mahendra Bansal asked what the fees would be for joining such a user's group. It was decided that this would definitely be something that needed to be determined as soon as possible.

Jim Lacy asked about the possibility of setting up technical and administrative aspects of the user group. Jim Brown and Larry Zink both commented that a definite interest would need to be identified before getting that specific in scope.

Mahendra Bansal then asked who the sponsors would be for a 1999 GIS Conference. Jim Brown responded that certainly, the GIS Steering Committee and the Professional Surveyors Association would be involved as sponsors.

At this point in the meeting, Larry Zink suggested that some time and thought should be devoted to coming up with a working name for a user's group. Several names were suggested and voted on, with the winning selection being identified as the Nebraska GIS/LIS Association.

Jim Merchant suggested that a proposal be set up to establish the components of this association. By components, he meant establishing bylaws, agenda, etc. He also said that establishing association components should be balanced with organizing the 1999 GIS Conference. Jim Brown added that this association should identify key issues that would be of interest to GIS users.

Larry Zink then distributed a draft outline for a proposed 1999 Nebraska GIS Conference, tentatively scheduled for May 11-12, 1999 at the Cornhusker Hotel in Lincoln. This draft outline had been drawn up at an earlier GIS user's group meeting on May 28th. This outline contained a rough itinerary of events for the two-day conference. Of special note was the first time period for the second day, which was scheduled to be a User's Group Organizational Formation and Business Meeting, possibly including a breakfast.

Jim Brown proposed that this second day time period be targeted as a good opportunity to present a formal association charter, bylaws, and other pertinent information to interested users.

Jim Merchant suggested that it might be useful to find a knowledgeable speaker from another state that has successfully initiated a similar user's group, in order to share experiences that might be useful in Nebraska. Scott Richert then provided everyone with a copy of an Internet article on how to start a user group.

It was then decided that another meeting should be scheduled to discuss, in more detail, organization of the Nebraska GIS/LIS Association, as well as plans for the 1999 GIS Conference. Subsequent meetings will tentatively be scheduled for once a month. In preparation for the next meeting, Jim Lacy agreed to research other organizations that currently have a user's group. Larry Zink will approach others for possible involvement. The meeting was then adjourned.

Next meeting –

The next meeting is scheduled for August 6, 1998 at 1:30 p.m. in the Conference Room of the State Surveyors Office, located at 555 N. Cotner Blvd., Lower Level, in Lincoln.

Meeting Minutes –

Minutes taken by Ed Kelley, Nebr. Dept. of Roads