

Enterprise GIS Steering Committee (EGIS)
Meeting Minutes
July 7, 2011

I. Call to Order

The EGIS Steering Committee meeting was called to order at 1:30 pm on 7/7/2011 in the BTS Conference Room 330, Clearwater Annex building 3rd Floor.

II. Attendance

Introductions were done briefly. Committee members unable to attend are encouraged to send a delegate to attend in their place.

Business Technology Services (BTS) – David James, Tom Fredrick, Mike Dawson, Jason Griffin
Property Appraiser’s Office (PAO) – Pam Dubov, Charlie Dye
Department of Environmental Infrastructure (DEI) – Don Lord, Larry Solien, Marcia Colby, Elizabeth Hubbert
Planning – David Walker, Michael Schoderbock
City of St. Petersburg – Lesley Ward, Sharon Welch
Sunstar/EMS – Arthur McCooty
ESRI – Adam Carnow

III. Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting

Approval of minutes from the April 7, 2011 meeting: Pam Dubov made a motion to approve. David James approved and David Walker seconded.

IV. Aerial Imagery – Update

David James indicated that the County has purchased new imagery through an agreement with SWFWMD, who engaged ACA as the primary contractor and Pictometry as the sub-contractor for flying the images. Images were captured in December, and have been delivered. Pictometry training has begun and has been well attended. Jason Griffin and Mike Dawson (BTS) have installed the image library, which is being rolled out to BCC Departments and is already in use by several work areas. They are in the process of making the images available to the municipalities, as allowed by the license agreement.

One outstanding issue: a small number of images did not meet the quality standard; they will be re-flown soon.

Charlie Dye has been working on the ortho images. He indicated that the contract for the orthos has been paid, except for 25% to Pictometry that is being withheld pending the re-flights previously mentioned. ACA is helping to motivate Pictometry to get the new images flown.

Everyone in the county has access to the PAO server where the images are available for download. Compressed files are also available for download.

Mike Dawson indicated that NAD27 files are being used to create maps and graphics. The NAD83 files have not been reviewed for precision and accuracy. Charlie Dye stated that, from an image quality point of view, the NAD83 files are great.

V. BTS/EGIS FY2012 Budget update

David James stated that Paul Alexander presented the EGIS budget request as part of his BTS budget presentation to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC). The budget still needs to be formally adopted by the BCC; but, as there have been no objections, the anticipation is that it will be approved for \$1,100,000 for 2011-2012 year.

The budget included the cost of ortho and oblique imagery, which will be flown on a two-year cycle, for approximately \$180,000 every 2 years, as well as a proposal for a centralized GIS Services Bureau (“The Bureau”), infrastructure, software, and training costs.

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David James indicated that Pam Dubov and others have shown some interest in street level imagery as something to look into for next year, and there is a dollar place-holder in the budget for that item. Currently, there are only rough cost estimates, and the Committee would need to go through a full RFP process to determine which vendor would be the best match. The PAO hosted a presentation from one vendor to get an idea of what options and features are available through street-level imagery, including information they might not have thought of, such as using the images to enforce street-sign reflectivity requirements. The presentation from that vendor does not mean that is the vendor that will be selected after going through the RFP process.

Don Lord and Larry Solien agreed that there are many business justifications for street-level imagery. Pam Dubov stated that there are many different types of images for different purposes, which all need to be reviewed as part of EGIS. She continued that there seemed to be across-the-board support from the BCC for EGIS, recognizing that many departments with GIS needs have lost the staff necessary to complete those projects within their own departments.

David James concluded that the core of the EGIS budget is under Paul Alexander and his expenditures. Major projects like OPUS, CJIS, etc. are controlled through the BTS Board, which must approve any spending.

VI. EGIS Benchmark Planning – Update

David James presented on this item. The basic objective of the Benchmark project is to assess the viability of ESRI's GIS for supporting enterprise data maintenance. David James also discussed organizational, technology, and financial objectives.

Bureau

The Bureau will be a group of employees who will maintain centralized data. The team should be efficient, small, and flexible, with a key deliverable being a strategic plan with findings, recommendations, and projected costs.

EGIS Committee Objectives:

1. Establish the Bureau to provide support for any entities subscribing to the services.
2. Focus on a small subset of data, to include zoning, land use, street, and address data. This data will be managed along with parcel data provided by the PAO.
3. Train the Bureau in ESRI's Local Government Solution.
4. Migrate county data into ESRI's supported data model to assess how well it works. The Bureau will use a geographical area around Palm Harbor as the focus of the data maintenance.
5. Implement vendor-supported workflows for efficiency and testing purposes.

Technology Objectives:

1. Implement a stand-alone EGIS Benchmark environment that will be exposed in a controlled way to test users (will be a test environment for assessment purposes and will not to include live, production data). The environment should cross between desktop, web, and mobile devices.
2. Configure ESRI's Local Government Solution product without any customization or third-party tools.
3. At the end of the Benchmark project, leverage template maps supported by ESRI to determine what benefits can come from aligning the County EGIS to the ESRI's template products. Again, this will not be in production. If we align ourselves with the vendor-supported model, the total cost of ownership should be minimized.

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Financial Objectives:

1. Work with ESRI to develop an affordable multi-year enterprise license agreement.
 - a. Option 1: for primary Pinellas County government agencies including the BCC, constitutional officers, and independents;
 - b. Option 2: provides the option to propagate the license agreement to municipalities and other government agencies in Pinellas County.
2. David James and staff have had informal discussions with the cities of St. Petersburg and Clearwater about option 2.
3. Develop estimates for rolling EGIS out beyond the benchmark environment. The Benchmark period will allow for discovery of what this will take; the results will be summarized in a strategic plan.

David James indicated that they have tried to contain the cost of the ESRI Benchmark project, which will be in \$35,000 range. Most of the costs will be in training and technical support. The software is evaluation software for testing purposes; therefore, it is free. However, it cannot be used in production. ESRI will provide zero-cost support during the Benchmark project. Server and desktop software will be handled through use of assets already on hand.

Provisional schedule:

1. Training plan: Bureau staff will train in use of software, along with some other staff that will install and configure the software components. This will occur in July and August.
2. Execution of Benchmark activities will begin in August and continue through October.

Location:

Pam Dubov raised an issue for the EGIS Committee to review and approval prior to bringing it to the BTS Board later this month. She stated that the Bureau needs to be made up of people who can maintain special data, as opposed to BTS software developers. The work will be similar to that done by the mappers working the PAO, which also has procedures in place for quality control and data maintenance. However, the PAO staff does not have experience in handling things like negotiating enterprise-wide licenses; BTS does. Therefore, it was proposed that those involved be divided into two groups, to be supervised between the PAO and BTS. The PAO has created an area where the Bureau will work, including desks for 5 Bureau members and work stations where others who are not part of the Bureau can come to work with the Bureau data maintainers. Some other departments will always have their own data maintainers. Those personnel do not need to be in the Bureau. The Bureau should be supporting departments who are not staffed to maintain their own data, or who do not do enough data maintenance on their own. The Bureau will not be doing PAO base map work. The Bureau will be a separate department in the PAO for data maintenance.

The other elements in the Benchmark plan, such as software development and license maintenance, should be under BTS, which has experience in those areas. There is a vast difference between the functions of PAO mappers and the Bureau data maintainers, and BTS functions. The argument could be made that data maintainers should be classified, not exempt like BTS program managers.

In the PAO budget, the Bureau needs to be a separately managed, severable budget piece. One benefit to having the Bureau in the PAO is that the PAO budget is 85% funded by the general fund and 15% funded by independent taxing authorities, such as SWFWMD; therefore, those agencies that benefit from having an EGIS would be contributing to having that service.

David James stated that Paul Alexander is aware of this proposal, and supports it. This needs to be brought to the BTS Board and then the BCC for approval. The PAO would then need to go to the Department of Revenue with a budget amendment, if this is approved. The next BTS Board Meeting is July 21.

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Pam asked for input from the EGIS Committee members.

David Walker thinks this is a good idea. Don Lord thinks it might be outside of the accountability issues. BTS has had some concerns about managing data that they don't understand, and want this pool of resources for special projects. Co-locating would also be great for special projects. Don likes the idea and will discuss it with Kevin Becotte, DEI Director. Kevin will be back July 11th and will confer with David James.

There are a lot of assets we can share for common goals enterprise-wide.

David James stated that the main difference in this proposal is transferring the budget allocation from BTS to the PAO. BTS does not maintain any data; the PAO has the discipline to do that. Don commended the PAO quality control process and stated he was happy to support the proposal. Larry Solien will discuss the proposal with Pete Yauch.

David James will convene a special meeting with all EGIS Committee members to get input (when all committee members can be in attendance). The meeting will be publically noticed for Sunshine Law compliance. It will be a one-item meeting. Pam will not be available at the end of July but will send a written proposal to be presented at the BTS Board meeting.

VII. Enterprise License Agreement

Presented by David James. The objectives of the Enterprise License Agreement (ELA) are:

1. Leverage "economy of scale" to get discount on licenses and support from ESRI (instead of multiple independent contracts).
2. Establish well-defined authorized user terms.
3. Understand long-term support agreements. From the BTS perspective, we're very sensitive to software vendor escalation in prices (some up to 23% in one year). We need to lock in ESRI for a long period.
4. Look at virtual environments and make sure those functions are built into the agreement without additional cost.
5. Secure flexible licensing options for municipalities and other government agencies to leverage GIS. Some smaller municipalities may take advantage of the Bureau.

ESRI licensing model options (ArcGIS, etc.) were listed (presentation page 10). This is a wish-list, but may be adjusted based on price discussions. Some ESRI functions can be integrated with other software (i.e., Maximo).

Pam Dubov suggested that if the ESRI license agreement is renegotiated enterprise-wide, she would be willing to move funding from the PAO budget that was allocated to pay for a year of licenses for that office, to help cover EGIS licenses. There is a lot of consolidation potential; the EGIS budget is not all "new" money.

The objective is to have a provisional ELA to present to the committee by October. The County Attorney will be working on this as well. Final decisions on the ELA will come to the EGIS Committee, the BTS Board, and then BCC for approval.

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VIII. PAIRS Replacement Request

Pinellas Aerial Image Retrieval System (PAIRS) Replacement Request Review

One goal for this committee is to review and prioritize GIS work. Right now, we have a legacy public web service that allows the public to download aerial images (<http://pubgis.co.pinellas.fl.us/pairs/index.cftm>). This is using old software, does not have current images, and cannot be supported by BTS because the software is too old. This needs to be replaced.

David James presented the BTS process for reviewing software replacement requests and asked the committee if this process should be followed in regards to the PAIRS replacement.

In the case of PAIRS, the main users are public, and they don't come in to request a replacement, so the process is somewhat different than a normal replacement request would be. David James initiated a request himself. BTS reviews that request and creates initial estimates for the work. BTS (Mike Dawson and Jason Griffin) has created a document that describes the requirements for replacement software. The document is simple and summarizes what is wanted: an easy-to-use web-based application the public can access. The product should be consistent with other things on the web, should consolidate image storage efficiently, and, should use ESRI. David James clarified that they are not asking for approval of the PAIRS replacement at this meeting. They are just introducing it.

If the BTS process is followed, the next step requires the development of a request justification or "business case" assessing costs and benefits, etc. David James discussed the justification step (determining low-risk/high-value analysis) and asked whether the committee wished to complete that step for PAIRS.

Don Lord asked if there was a financial threshold to trigger this process. Usually, BTS does an analysis and if the request exceeds \$10,000, or 200 man hours, then it needs to be reviewed by the BTS Board. Otherwise, BTS makes the determination.

If a business case is made, the EGIS Committee would then review the request and determine its level of priority, facilitate funding, and execute the task.

Pam Dubov said PAIRS is a good example of a product the public uses. She wants to know if the need is great, current usage numbers, and who the customer base is. If the customer base is very small and narrowly-focused, maybe we should not be doing this without charging for it. Larry Solien stated that requests come in often for historical aerials. That was the primary purpose of PAIRS, since the public can no longer go in and review hanging files. PAIRS is often used for legal research, and it's the only source document remaining. It was possible to automate the records when staff was reduced. Any justification document should include an analysis of what the legal impact of not having the records available to the public would be.

David James indicated that the BTS business case process would cover all these issues, including stakeholder impact. It will estimate the value of things that are sort of intangible.

Larry Solien guided David James through review of PAIRS, reviewed 1926 images, and demonstrated how to use some features. He indicated that Mike Roiland can provide analytics, including the number of webpage visits, downloads, etc.

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After discussion, it was agreed that BTS will complete the justification and business case process. They will then bring it back to the EGIS Committee for consideration. However, the process should not be used for all changes; it must be done strategically to make sure things are done efficiently and timely.

Don Lord suggested raising the threshold for doing a business case/justification so that the process is not too extensive for each application that needs updated. We may need to do this in a more expeditious way. The biggest issue will be updating web-interface processes. David James indicated that the Benchmark process will help determine a high-level strategy for replacing current internal and web-based GIS processes. Pam Dubov suggested that we need not migrate anything we do not use. Larry Solien stated that they are building an internal committee to review how they use BTS as a department. The intent is to help the strategic plan. He believes it is reasonable to bundle solutions for time-sensitive, critical applications (there may be 50-70 of those) and then review less-critical applications afterwards.

Pam Dubov stated that the justification process should be used for getting something new or different but should not be used for what basically equates to a “conversion”.

She also suggested that we may need a DEI presence in the Bureau. Elizabeth Hubbert agreed that DEI will collaborate with the Bureau (not increasing its size). The Benchmark can include regular “reviews” by stakeholders to get feedback and input. End users will also review as the Benchmark data is pushed out to the web, etc. The Bureau should not operate in a vacuum.

Some of the data in the Benchmark will be from Planning and Public Works; but, it will not include Utilities data. The intent is to include data sets from all departments. It will be a collaborative activity to include anyone who wants to be included.

IX. Utilities/Public Works Data Sharing Request

Larry Solien introduced discussion of major updates to the CAD system. Through AutoDesk, they can now connect directly to ESRI. The current process is: the PAO sends a .dxf file for CAD; DEI stores the individual files on a server. The files are text, so it requires research online in many places to review graphical data. Larry made an alternate proposal for direct access to PAO data, through either software. It’s unknown what impact there would be on BTS resources; it seems to be a fairly minor impact. Charlie Dye indicated that even accessed through a server, the data would be text. Access to mapping data requires access to CAMA. DEI and the PAO will discuss what it would take to combine the .dxf and CAMA files, and how DEI could access them.

Planning currently has access to PAO’s CAMA data with a parcel layer, owner data, etc., which Curt Nielsen set up; but, it is very slow to load. Pam Dubov indicated that providing direct access to CAMA depends on the number of users, and suggested that replication of data might be preferable.

David James suggested that DEI create a request and follow the process with a business cost estimate, etc. Pam stated that PAO data is all public information. She wants to share it with everyone. The roadblocks are based on impact on performance and what an increased workload might do to the network, speed of the PAO system, etc.

Larry Solien stated that a first step is to determine what technologies will work best, and that perhaps there are solutions in the ESRI platform. Adam Carnow stated that ESRI can offer technical assistance and suggest best practices. Larry Solien will be spearheading this request.

Pam Dubov reminded the EGIS Committee that the PAO is working hard to get to ArcGIS 10. They will work on providing access but they also need to get to ArcGIS 10.

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X. Open Discussion

Tom Fredrick asked if a new Asst. County Administrator is going to be joining the EGIS Committee. Paul Alexander will discuss it with Mr. LaSala.

Several people will be attending the ESRI User Conference in San Diego next week, and they will report to the Committee when they return.

Don Lord asked if the Bureau will begin to maintain base layers that have currency problem, such as municipal boundaries. It was also indicated that Utilities has been in a multi-year project to pull all systems and relationship-based applications together in GIS; so, during conversion, care must be taken not to break something in the data model. Pam Dubov stated that the Benchmark is set in Palm Harbor specifically because it's not a municipality, and the purpose was to avoid requiring outside cooperation during the project. Don Lord needs real data; that's outside the scope of the Bureau Benchmark project.

Tom Fredrick and Charlie Dye both indicated that their departments are maintaining municipal boundaries up to date. But the data is not updated in Map Guide. Don Lord indicated that all is good, in that case.

Pam Dubov stated that for tax purposes, if something is annexed after a certain date, it's not relevant until the next tax roll year; so, it may not be updated in PAO records. However, it may need to appear timelier for other purposes. The PAO will explore how to update attribute data and boundary data earlier without impacting the PAO tax roll timeframe.

EGIS needs to find ways to make data available on the timeframes of multiple agencies.

Larry Solien asked if there was any way to get presentation material on what ArcGIS / ESRI for Local Government Solutions covers. For example, are there database schemas? How does it affect Public Works and Utilities? Also, ESRI is a product-based suite of tools. What business solutions do they have to leverage GIS data? We have in-house solutions that may be able to migrate to ESRI; so, there may be more bundling options.

David James will get ESRI to come in to present information on this product. Everyone should send him a request for what they would like to see in this presentation. This is a good time to do it because new products are being released at the ESRI User Conference.

XI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 pm.

Minutes taken by Amanda Coffey, modified and submitted by Becky Reed.

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Action Items from July, 2011 meeting

Action Item Number	Description	Assigned To
20110707-A	Analyze best method for Planning/DEI access to PAO's CAMA data	Larry Solien
20110707-B	Set up ESRI presentation on Local Government Solutions products	David James