



## MINUTES BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING November 9, 2022

### Members Present:

Brian Connolly	Sam Richert
Tom Hoffman	Mark Sellin
Dave Hunstad, Chair	Ray Starr
Phil Lesnar	Patrick Warden
Keith Novy	Ward Westphal

### Counsel present:

Dean E. Parker, Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP  
Kevin J. Moore, Hinshaw & Culbertson, LLP

### Guests:

Tammy Gardner, General Manager, Minnesota, OCC  
Kimberly Boyd, Customer Relationship Manager, OCC  
Jon Wolfgram, Deputy Director, MnOps  
Bill Schlunz, Public Works Director, City of Waite Park  
Barbara Cederberg, Chief Operations Officer, GSOC  
Olivia Phillips, Marketing Specialist, GSOC

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On November 9, 2022 at 9:00 a.m., in person and by Zoom videoconference, the Board of Directors meeting was called to order by Chair, Dave Hunstad. Roll call was taken and a quorum was determined to be present. Dean Parker was asked to act as recording secretary.

### **Chair's Report; Approval of Minutes**

Dave Hunstad welcomed everyone and provided a brief overview of the meeting.

Upon motion made and duly seconded, the minutes for the August 10, 2022 meeting were approved. Dean Parker then gave a brief legislative report. It appears control of the Minnesota State Senate has changed from a Republican to a slim Democratic majority. There is some speculation that the same party controlling both the legislature and the Governor's office might result in a larger infrastructure bonding bill next year than what otherwise might be the case. This could affect the amount of excavation in the State.

### **COO Report**

Barbara Cederberg began by reviewing the core values developed in the GSOC Strategic Plan: the values of striving to be an industry leader, safety driven, trustworthy and collaborative.



and reiterated that these core values have been driving GSOC's operations activity as well as its special projects.

Ticket volume this year is down approximately 5.4% year to date from 2021 even though there were significant increases in volume during the months of May, June, July and August. GSOC now expects that overall ticket volume will be lower for the year.

GSOC is continuing to follow through on its meet ticket initiative by developing an education program. Stakeholder feedback will lead to some revisions in processes, such as placing an expiration date on meet tickets. There are also ongoing discussions by stakeholders as to whether a voluntary meet ticket calendar can be put together for the Metro area. It would be complicated. GSOC is working on putting together excavator damage prevention videos for use in education and expects they will be available mid to late Spring. GSOC has also been working design engineer education. GSOC expects to attend professional group conferences during the 2023. GSOC further understands that damage prevention phone numbers may be listed on design tickets and is involved in a project requesting information from facility operators so appropriate contact phone numbers to engineering departments will appear on the design ticket.

GSOC received feedback from facility operators questioning why all field contact information for certain excavators was always the same. Initial inquiries have determined that this is what the excavators intended. GSOC is reviewing this further now. GSOC is continuing work with OCC on development of a Tableau data analytics tool used by individual stakeholders. An initial phase of the project developed a tool for the website which is currently in use and analyzes general industry information. The new tool will be available through iSite and will allow analysis of more specific stakeholder information.

GSOC is engaging in a user visioning process. Several meetings have been held so far. Planning of workload for locate resources is a critical issue. The utilities mapping project working on creating a blended view of multiple utility maps is now entering a second phase. GSOC is working on a scope of work for software development which will integrate into the existing notification center system.

Barb Cederberg is a member of two Next Practices Committees for the Common Ground Alliance (CGA). She attended a GPS/GIS Next Practices strategy session in October. She received very good feedback from the group regarding their desire to see GSOC continue to develop software for the blended map project.

Barb asked the Board what GSOC might do in furtherance of the meet initiative. Sam Richert suggested finding out why users were declining to use a meet to see if there was a reason that might be addressed. Phil Lesnar suggested that GSOC study what was happening during the busier months so there was a better cross section of information available. Keith Novy suggested a think tank group from the industry be hosted by the notification center. He suggested there was a need for better documentation which was easier to fill out and more user friendly, perhaps something that could be filled out using the GSOC app. He suggested that GSOC consider



development of the ability to post that documentation to the public portal so anyone could retrieve it. A committee of the Board was selected to follow up with Barb to review documentation for meets consisting of: Jon Wolfgram, Phil Lesnar, Keith Novy, Mike Mediola, Ward Westphal and Mark Sellin.

The GSOC visioning team has identified delayed field marking and the projected increase of excavation volume a critical issue for 2023. GSOC recommends an executive level industry working group comprised of representative stakeholders to discuss what might be done to cooperate to alleviate the situation.

Phil Lesnar noted that he has experienced some locators not wanting to sign the documentation over concerns they will be held responsible. Dave Hunstad noted that some excavators have been filing excess tickets and then effectively using them in lieu of a meet. The Board was reminded of the MnOps alert notice issued earlier in the year which noted that an excavator must have a good faith intent to excavate in order to file a ticket.

## **PR/Awareness Report**

Olivia Phillips reviewed the 811 5K Run which was held at Bde Maka Ska on August 13. There were 107 participants and lots of booths in support from the industry. The State Fair had a record turnout and over 10,000 yardsticks were given out. This was particularly remarkable in view of the fact there were fewer volunteers to staff the booth this year.

GSOC expects to forge new relationships with KARE 11 Television this year with a new ad mechanism. GSOC is also looking at University of Minnesota Gopher Sports due to the possibility of reaching an audience during the key Spring season. GSOC is also increasing its visibility at the Home and Garden Show. GSOC will have a signage present at the Idea Home and will also have a presence on the website.

## **MnOPS Update**

Jon Wolfgram advised the Board that Third Quarter damages for reported damages were at a rate of approximately 1.43 per thousand locates. This rate has been holding relatively steady and the damages continue to have a variety of causes.

The top five enforcement issues continued to be relatively consistent during 2022. The top category of violations is failure to mark or mark on time, with over 137 violations of that type. Substantial finds have been proposed but are still in the discussion phase.

MnOps has performed an analysis of its utilization and damage prevention related work. approximately 1.75 FTE equivalent in human resources hours have been involved in one call case complaint investigation and other enforcement effort for the year to date.



Looking ahead, MnOps is looking to change things up by holding regional pipeline safety meetings consisting of one day each. The idea is to create shorter more locally held programs in order to try to increase attendance from operational personnel.

## **OCC Report**

Tammy Gardner, General Manager for the notification center, gave a staffing update to the Board. The notification center intends to retain more staff over the slow winter season this year. Some of that staff will be cross trained so they are able to assist other centers which are busier in the winter time. As a result, no additional hiring is expected until March.

Ticket volume is at 786,988 through the end of October which is approximately a 5.4% decrease from the same time in 2021. Use of ITIC online ticket submission has remained strong and continues to be at an overall all time high of 83.7% year to date.

Home owner tickets submissions are less than 2021. Homeowners have submitted 78,585 tickets (10% of the total ticket volume) as of the end of October. This compares with 86,125 for the similar period during 2021. The overall proportion of homeowner tickets to all tickets has dropped from 10.4% in 2021 to 10% in 2022. Homeowner use of the online ITIC ticket submission feature remains good but is also down to 56.0% from 62.3% in 2021.

The Board briefly discussed some potential new efforts in order to reverse the trend of online submitted homeowner tickets. Ideas include a modified recorded announcement for incoming calls and radio ads that emphasize the click before you dig message. Keith Novy also suggested teaming up with school districts and moving from “call before you dig” to “click before you dig” and note the app in a home owner oriented ad establishing a QR code for the Home and Garden show download the app was discussed as well as potentially developing the capability for creating a ticket through SMS messaging (text). Another possibility was partnering on websites of various hardware stores to help promote underground damage prevention. Even though there are some concerns about the reduced home owner ITIC submission percentage, Minnesota’s rate remains among the highest of OCC States.

Most online submission tickets continue to be reviewed for quality by the notification center as a matter of ongoing policy. The time to review these tickets averaged a little over 7 minutes during October and the notification center would like to reduce this average time. The main contributor to the average length of time to review is the number of callbacks that are made to the excavator to correct apparent errors in the ticket. The notification center has undertaken a significant effort to reduce the proportion of callbacks through education during the callback process as well as email alerts and offering training so that tickets could be directly released. OCC has also continued to work on automatically generated marking instructions which would substantially reduce the proportion of call backs. The notification center is working on obtaining feedback from other States and creating samples comparing manual instructions to auto generated instructions for review by a subcommittee of the Board.



An analysis of tickets through the end of October shows little change in the proportion of emergency and meet tickets. The use of non excavation tickets has risen slightly but is still only about 1% of the total. Update tickets are substantially less than previous years but a big portion of the reduction is likely due to a notification center policy change which allows only a single update before requiring creation of a new ticket.

Tammy Gardner reviewed numerous security improvements to the technology this year. Penetration tests have been run by an independent third party testing all OCC infrastructure. All call center workstations have been upgraded to the newest supportive version of Linux. Two factor authentication is utilized for all internal access points and a new senior manager of infrastructure has been hired. Items such as internet and telephone lines as well as internal servers all have redundant capabilities and the notification center is now interlinked with other OCC centers which can respond in the event of a particular center being out of service, including Minnesota.

The notification center continues to record information on cut line and locator related calls voluntarily received by the help desk from stakeholders. Total voluntary damage reports to the notification center were down just slightly on a year over year basis. Phone reports of utilities not marked have substantially increased this year, which is consistent with other anecdotal information received on delayed locates.

Projects for 2022 Including contacting the top 200 callers to make sure they are aware of the benefits of ITIC, contacting users with the same 3 phone numbers to confirm whether or not those are the best numbers for design tickets and retiring the former version of ITIC. OCC Users Group meeting was held in September. Pat Warden commented how useful the meeting has been in terms of both education and networking.

Phillippe Barzin, the Co-Enterprise consultant, provided an update with regard to the Tableau data analytics tool phase 2 development. This phase is oriented towards providing a user with a tool that will help analyze the user's own data concerning the one call tickets. Beta testers commented favorably on the use of this tool. Dave Hunstad indicated that if there is an issue you can quickly get to a view of that ticket to help understand the issue. Phil Lesnar indicated it can be useful to look for patterns and one can see if there is a problem in a particular city or with a particular facility operator and use it to hone in and solve the issue. Tom Hoffman and Ward Westphal also commented that the tool may help a contractor user identify more quickly where an issue is.

Beta testing upgrades are in process now and a demonstration was furnished. Other Board members were asked to volunteer for additional beta testing.

## **Finance Committee**

Pat Warden advised that the Finance Committee has reviewed the third quarter financials and also reviewed the 2021 Financial Statements with the auditors and all appears in order. A financial projection will be covered at the next closed session meeting.



## **Adjournment**

There being no further business coming before the Board, upon motion made and duly seconded, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dean E. Parker  
Recording Secretary

## **Next Meeting Dates [subject to cancellation]:**

January 11, 2023

April 5, 2023

August 9, 2023

November 8, 2023

*Shorter interim meetings may be set*