



MINUTES BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING November 12, 2020

Members Present:

Chris Fry	Mark Sellin
Tom Hoffman	Ray Starr
Dave Hunstad, Chair	Joe Thill
Keith Novy	Ben Wallace
Jason Ponciano	Patrick Warden
Sam Richert	Ward Westphal

Counsel present:

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

Guests:

Hawthorn Bjorback, Premier Locating, Inc.
Kimberly Boyd, General Manager, Minnesota, OCC
Barbara Cederberg, Chief Operations Officer, GSOCC
Adam Franco, Director of Operations, OCC
Olivia Jensen Philips, Marketing and Public Awareness Specialist, GSOCC
Jon Wolfram, Engineer Administrative, Minnesota Office of Pipeline Safety

On November 12, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. 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

Dave Hunstad welcomed the Board and guests. He observed that the Board would probably continue to meet virtually for a while despite the hope a vaccine will be approved soon. He suggested with Board assent, that the Board have shorter meetings with greater frequency during the time of virtual meetings.

He gave an overview of the meeting. This meeting will be devoted primarily to hearing about notification center operations from Barbara Cederberg and OCC.



Approval of Board Minutes

Upon motion and duly seconded, the Board meeting minutes for the meeting on August 14, 2020 were approved. Dave Hunstad directed that the open session minutes be placed on the GSOC website as final.

Election of Secretary and Appointment to Executive Committee

Dave Hunstad reminded the Board that a replacement was needed for the officer of corporate secretary as Jodi Corrow resigned when she retired and moved. Upon motion made and duly seconded, Ward Westphal was elected Secretary and appointed to the Executive Committee.

Legislative Report

Dean Parker provided a brief legislative report. Currently, it does not appear that there will be changes in the leadership of the committees that oversee changes to Minnesota Statutes Chapter 216D. A \$1.9 billion Bonding Bill was passed in October. The Bill includes \$700 million for road and bridge construction and \$300 million for wastewater treatment. This will directly impact excavation in Minnesota.

COO Report

Barbara Cederberg reviewed GSOC's Strategic Plan with the Board. GSOC's purpose: "Connecting Minnesota for Safe Digging", is reinforced by GSOC's values. GSOC aspires to be Safety Driven, an Industry Leader, Trustworthy and Collaborative. This mission and GSOC's values are driving a number of GSOC's new projects to follow through on its Strategic Plan.

The year 2020 is now expected to be GSOC's highest volume year ever. There is an 8.8% increase in overall ticket volume year to date through October. The proportion of ticket volume submitted through the web is up to a remarkable 82.9%.

Barbara is receiving a good deal of input from the field. Topics include overall ticket volume, positive response status, the desire to encourage greater use of meet tickets and calls for help in reaching facility operators were not responding to calls from locators.

The new user interface launched in March 2020 has received broad acceptance. Only a small portion of users continuing to use the legacy interface even though there is an option to use either one. Another 2020 project was to help assure the integrity of the ITIC polygon run by the excavator so that it would be accurately seen by users of other ticket management systems. This has now been implemented and Korterra and iRTH and those software users are now able to accurately view the ITIC created polygon.



Notification Buffer Size Change

All normal ITIC tickets other than reprocessed tickets (updates, minor modifications, etc.) and a few direct release tickets, continue to be reviewed by the notification center for quality assurance prior to transmission to facility operators to avoid problems in the field. The call back rate to correct errors in the tickets has increased in October to 6.7%. This is likely due to the many new users of ITIC. There were 800 new users in October alone. Callbacks, when due to the excavator incorrectly locating excavation entity tend to be off by less than 200 feet. As a result, a 300 foot maximum buffer should be adequate for ITIC submitted tickets. Currently the buffer extends to the nearest right-of-way or 500 feet whichever is less.

Barbara Cederberg recommended to the Board that this buffer be adjusted to block to block with a maximum of 300 feet, so the buffer would extend to the nearest right-of-way or 300 feet, whichever is less. After some discussion, upon motion made and duly seconded, the Board adopted this buffer change. The Board directed that Barbara Cederberg develop a communication to the facility operators to assure they were made aware of this change, which will become effective January 1, 2021.

There will be no change to the buffers for tickets called in by phone to the notification center. The software that is used to map those tickets requires substantial reprogramming and there are far fewer tickets involved due to the increased in usage of ITIC. Overall, this ITIC buffer change is expected to substantially reduce over notification, conserving locate resources, without impairing safety. This change will be communicated to the facility operators so that each facility operator may adjust their own notification buffers if they wish to do so.

Process Change for Start Time/Date of Tickets

Barbara Cederberg also discussed a process change to align with existing GSOC policy. Notifications to GSOC must be accepted by GSOC in order to become valid. Voice call tickets are reviewed as they are being prepared by the CSR and are accepted at the end of the call. Web submitted tickets must be reviewed by the notification center before they are accepted. It was determined that the start time/date was not being adjusted to sync with the time of acceptance. Starting December 1, 2020, web submitted tickets which have a work start time/date requested by the ticket submitter which is not 48 hours, excluding weekends and holidays, the time of acceptance of the ticket will be adjusted so that there is at least a 48 hour period. This is expected to affect only tickets submitted during peak times since review times tend to be modest at other times. In addition, OCC will devote additional resources to prompt review of tickets.

After Board discussion, it was concluded that this process change will be revisited after some experience with it to determine whether the new process is causing any issues in the field. GSOC will also begin to promote training of ticket submitters for authorizing for direct release. Traditional training will help assure that a ticket submitter is submitting quality tickets without



errors. This will help an excavator avoid changes to work start times/date due to extended review periods. It is hoped that a number of users will start to become trained for direct release.

One Call Process Review Team

The one call process review team has prioritized several efforts that could have a positive impact on reasonable use of locator resources and/or improving safety. They have come up with the following suggestions:

1. Limit tickets on busy days – request that users push out start times if they are able to do so.
2. Limit multiple updates of normal tickets – provide strong encouragement for use of meet tickets instead.
3. Force new marking instructions when a ticket is updated for the third or fourth time – theory is that some of the work has already been done, so the marking instructions should be revised to reflect only what excavation remains.
4. Require an excavator state the reason why “no” white marks on ticket requests and insert the reason in remarks section.
5. Request more precise marking instructions when a ticket is submitted with “mark entire lot”.

Barbara Cederberg then discussed the utility mapping pilot project team work group that has been formed under a subgroup of the Minnesota Geospatial Advisory Committee. GSOC is participating along with OCC, Utility Logic/Vivax-Metrotech and Subsurface Solutions/Radio Detection as well as other facility operators to explore potential offered by advancing technologies and to encourage implementation where appropriate. Among other things, the hope is that some of the technologies will prove useful in helping develop more accurate facility operator maps of their utilities. This will in turn lead to more timely and accurate locates, improving safety and efficiency in the field.

Finally, GSOC is working on a metrics project to provide data to facility operators and excavators that may be useful to them.

MnOPS Update

Jon Wolfgram indicated that MnOPS continues to perform inspections despite the pandemic. Three vacancies now exist due to retirements. MnOPS is looking for one new inspector and will create two damage prevention positions for investigations and inspections.



MnOPS is working on an alert notice to excavators and utilities. Topics will be white markings, communications between locator and excavator and complaints.

MnOPS intends to change its approach regarding complaints. It will remove the complaint form and take complaints by phone call instead. When they do so, they will be questioning what steps did the complainant take to resolve the matter? Did they talk to the offender themselves? MnOPS finds that it is expending a lot of time and resources just finding out who to contact, particularly when it is receiving anonymous complaints.

MnOPS plans to hold a final 216D Stakeholders meeting and will review the change in the complaint process at that time. Jon then reviewed enforcement efforts for the year. There is an uptick in complaints overall. More complaints regarding lack of white marking and more complaints on the excavator side for failure to mark on time or to mark accurately.

PR/Awareness Report

Olivia Jensen Phillips reviewed the awareness activities for 2020 with the Board. Overall, the engagement with Star Tribune Companies for online awareness messaging has been viewed as being very successful. Metrics indicate that impressions are up and Star Tribune campaigns were the third largest source of traffic to the Gopher State One Call website. The campaign continues to target homeowners, the agricultural industry and the Hispanic community which is heavily involved in the landscaping instructions industries.

GSOC also has campaigns with Pioneer Press.

The St. Paul Saints initiative was mostly deferred to 2021 due to the pandemic but the Saints did have 75,000 visitors to their field this year. The Twins campaign was entirely deferred to 2021.

Event participation is substantially diminished due to the pandemic. The Northern Green Landscaping Show will be entirely virtual this year. GSOC will experiment with a virtual booth and website advertising. The Home and Garden Show status is unknown as this point. It is hoped that Farm Fest will take place in 2021. GSOC is beginning its efforts regarding damage prevention meetings for spring 2021 already. Setting up virtual meetings will involve more work than the traditional onsite meetings. GSOC will discuss with the various utility coordinating committees to determine how the events will be held and will produce videos to be viewed at the meetings if they take place virtually.

Overall, GSOC expects its PR and awareness spending to be slightly down for 2020/2021 due to less travel and promotional expense and the discontinuance of certain advertising campaigns.

OCC Report



Kimberly Boyd advised the Board that the work from home model continues to be successful with a slight increase in the number of people working at the notification center. This year, the notification center is keeping seasonal staff longer and adding some additional staff. September was actually the first month where the notification center felt the impact of the pandemic directly at the beginning of the second wave of infections. Fortunately, since most of the staff is working from home, some could continue to work even if they were quarantined. Several small, socially distanced training classes were held over the Summer and into the Fall.

Adam Franco provided some perspective on the unique experience of Minnesota. All the states that OCC works in combined have experienced a 1.17% increase in ticket volume on average this year. Urban areas have generally experienced decreases with more rural states experiencing increases. Minnesota is the only higher volume ticket state that is experiencing increases in the 8% range.

Kimberly Boyd advised that the notification center will probably be in a hybrid mode after the pandemic, work from home will continue to be a preferred option for a number of CSRs but personnel such as database or training coordinators can work more effectively from an office.

Kimberly Boyd reviewed volume information with the Board. 2020 volume reflects an 8.8% increase year-to-date compared to 2019. GSOC is on pace for a record year, finally eclipsing the previous record reached in 2004. Each of the months of April – September had over 100,000 tickets. This is the first time in memory this has happened. Emergency and meet tickets are down slightly. There is a modest increase in non-excavation tickets and boundary survey tickets, extended start requests are not being used much at this time.

Online submitted tickets are over 82% of the total tickets. There are 23,000 more homeowner tickets than at last time this year. Homeowners continue to submit a majority of their tickets online which has really helped the notification center continue to maintain prompt service. It takes a good deal less time to review a web ticket than it does to handle a homeowner call.

Review times for online submitted tickets have increased this year. Next year, OCC will be measuring the ITIC review times as a part of its key performance indicators and will devote more resources to help assure a shorter review time. Alerts will be placed into the ITIC system to alert the excavator that start times may be adjusted at peak times to allow for review of the ticket.

Winter projects include reaching out to high volume callers to make sure they are aware of the ease of the ITIC system, certifying more customers for direct release of tickets and continued GIS updates from counties and other units of government.

Ticket Information/Full Name

In response to an inquiry by Keith Novy, it was decided there will be a concerted attempt to make sure that first name and last name information is obtained for the ticket submitter and the



field contact in the even the locator needs to quickly identify someone to call for further information on a ticket.

Adjournment

There being no further business coming before the Board, upon motion made and duly seconded, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dean E. Parker
Recording Secretary

Next Meeting Dates:

January 13, 2021

April __, 2021 [to be scheduled to coincide with MnOPS safety conference or safety summit]

August 11, 2021

November 10, 2021