



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
OPEN SESSION  
August 14, 2019**

Members Present:

Alicia Berger	Keith Novy
Jodi Corrow	Ray Starr
Chris Fry	Joe Thill
Dave Hunstad, Chair	Patrick Warden
Phil Lesnar	Bruce West

Counsel present:

Dean E. Parker, Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP  
Kevin Moore, Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP (for closed session)

Guests (for open session):

Bob Hawkins, Assistant Deputy Commissioner, Department of Public Safety  
Jon Wolfram, Engineer Administrative, Office of Pipeline Safety  
Sam Richert, Xcel Energy  
Barbara Cederberg, Chief Operations Officer, GSOC  
Olivia Jensen, Marketing and Public Awareness Specialist, GSOC

Guests (for CenturyLink presentation):

Brian Fanciulli, Vice President Field Operations, CenturyLink  
Jason Topp, Counsel, CenturyLink  
Dana Bailey, Director, Government Affairs and Public Policy, CenturyLink

Guests (for OCC presentation):

Dan Florenzo, President, One Call Concepts (OCC)  
Adam Franco, Director of Operations, OCC  
Kimberly Boyd, General Manager, Minnesota, OCC  
Vincent Lacey, Chief Information Officer, OCC

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On August 14, 2019 at 9:00 a.m. at the Gopher State One Call offices, 1110 Centre Point Curve, Suite 100, Mendota Heights, Minnesota, 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.



Dave Hunstad welcomed the Board and guests, particularly Assistant Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety, Bob Hawkins and Vice President of Regional Field Operations for CenturyLink, Brian Fanciulli.

## **CenturyLink Presentation**

Brian Fanciulli provided an update on CenturyLink's transition of contract locators, the vendor that provides most of the field utility location services for CenturyLink which marks excavation areas by paint or flags. He noted that CenturyLink tends to issue these contracts in 3-year cycles. However, the last RFP had fewer bidders and only a single bidder in some states. Concerns over maintaining a healthy diversity in the supply chain and improving quality of locates led CenturyLink to determine it was appropriate to award the contract to a new company with a desire to improve the quality of the service and foster competition in the long run. According to Mr. Fanciulli, Unitek handled location functions in other states and had employees in Minnesota through its DirectSat subsidiary. Many alternatives had been tried, including subcontractors, but dedicated locators employed by the contract locator was settled on as the best solution. Currently, DirectSat has over 115 field locators in Minnesota as well as adding resources from other states. CenturyLink has also provided a significant number of its own field staff to assist in the work. Mr. Fanciulli understands that CenturyLink was caught up as of July 26<sup>th</sup> when there was no backlog and believes that industry stakeholders will have a much better experience going forward than existed at the time of the April changeover. He further advised they have created a project emergency team whose purpose is to deal with meet tickets and emergencies and improve timely performance.

Phil Lesnar raised concerns about the response and quality of locates experienced this year and voiced that CenturyLink needs a presence to fix issues when mislocates or other issues occur. Mr. Fanciulli encouraged the industry to try normal channels for issue resolution again as he believed DirectSat was now staffed to respond. He acknowledged that there was an initial period where they struggled with processes but believes much progress has been made. Jodi Corrow voiced concern that processes should have been worked on in advance of the vendor changeover, not during the busy season.

Alicia Berger reminded all that it is particularly important to respond timely to emergencies and to contact the emergency excavator within the one hour required time period. This is important even if the locate cannot be made within the required 3 hours, so the excavator can make a decision as to whether and how to proceed and what additional safety measures to utilize. She noted electing to use hydrovac equipment on an emergency basis can be expensive. Keith Novy noted that the entire situation has really impacted the way the rest of the industry does business and that there have been significant downstream impacts. He expressed concern that many in the industry have worked hard to build relationships between the operator and excavator communities and that the current situation has the potential to undermine cooperation, not just with CenturyLink but with the entire industry.



Others note that it is important to have someone local to call. Brian Fanciulli reiterated that an updated list of DirectSat contacts are available and that Chris Fry and his team at CenturyLink are the local resource in case stakeholders are not receiving satisfaction through their communications through normal channels with DirectSat. He noted that CenturyLink and DirectSat are not in the same spot now as they were over the previous 4 months and should be available to receive communications on issues to solve problems.

Phil Lesnar reiterated his desire for better communication to the industry at large, CenturyLink representatives advised the updated DirectSat contact list and a CenturyLink local contact list would be made available. In response to a question about what might be done to lessen the risk of a future repeat of the difficulties encountered by another telecommunications operator in the future, Mr. Fanciulli felt that the industry needed a robust mix of mix of contract locator resources and that the actions taken by CenturyLink will eventually help promote a more diverse supply of contract locators in Minnesota through its new arrangement expanding DirectSat's activities to Minnesota.

Numerous Board members participated in a follow up discussion. Board members noted that the overall lack of contract locating resources continues to be an issue in Minnesota. Concern was again expressed as to whether sufficient resources are being brought to bear to avoid problems this Fall or next year.

A discussion ensued concerning possible legislation. Alicia Berger commented that Board members should consider what aspects of legislation are going to help drive public safety and what will be the downstream effects. She encouraged other Board members to think about creative solutions and perhaps take another look at whether allowing locators two full business days plus the day the ticket is submitted might improve locate quality and timeliness. Dave Hunstad noted that the penalty provisions in the law were designed for certain circumstances years ago and may need review.

## **COO Report**

Barbara Cederberg gave the Chief Operations Officer report. Ticket volume is up year to date over 7%. The call center has been answering calls with very good average times to answer even though they are slightly up from last year. Review times for online submitted tickets increased substantially during peak days. This is an issue that the vendor is looking at carefully and is taking action to reduce those times in the future. The web ticket percentage so far this year is 73.9%, an increase from last year.

GSOC attended a total of 31 damage prevention meetings in all sectors of the State this year from February through April. The informational meetings were coordinated with MnOPS to communicate the nature of damage prevention being a shared responsibility of all stakeholders and the importance of communication between the stakeholders in enhancing the damage prevention process. Attendees were advised of the additional contact information made available



on tickets for communicating with facility operators. She noted that GSOC will need to revisit the meet ticket initiative next year. Excavators reported unsatisfactory results in large part due to the CenturyLink transition this year, making full attendance at meets difficult. Barb noted 11% of tickets were updates this year. Many stakeholders believe that percentage can be reduced substantially and the locating resources redeployed elsewhere if facility operators are consistent in attending the meets and appropriate use of meets is encouraged.

Barb reported that GSOC began receiving for CenturyLink's transition in early April. GSOC received fewer calls from stakeholders in July regarding CenturyLink issues, likely due to improvement in performance. GSOC continues to furnish CenturyLink and MnOPS with weekly reports to assist in their monitoring of progress.

Some systems issues were reviewed which resulted in temporary service interruptions. The vendor is working to determine the root cause and correct the situations leading to the interruptions.

Barb reported on several trips to other States for purposes of benchmarking GSOC's performance. In general, GSOC's notification center metrics for performance were superior to those of other states. Barb did glean some useful ideas for educational efforts and public awareness initiatives as well as gaining exposure to some new techniques, such as the use of project tickets in certain other States. Barb hopes to be able to visit 2 or 3 more States this Fall as the benchmarking effort continues.

2019 projects include nearing completion of the additional contact information project and beta testing by a number of users of the new experience user interface (UX/UI). Further, GSOC engaged with Minnesota Power for in person meetings with certain major private facility operators to discuss damage prevention issues.

Continuing this year and into next year, GSOC expects to roll out the new user experience format. The notification center has now reduced callbacks to correct errors in online submitted tickets by approximately half and will now ask the call center vendor to develop a target plan to further substantially reduce the proportion of callbacks.

Possible items for further consideration by the user's discussion group next year include a discussion of whether or not there should be snow tickets. GSOC believes there were over 1,600 snow tickets filed in January through March. Consideration will also be given as to whether or not to reduce notification center buffers. Finally, GSOC intends to work with the notification center vendor on reducing online submitted ticket review times where no callback is necessary and to consider additional criteria for direct release of tickets without call center review. Currently only reprocess tickets (updates, cancellations, etc.) are direct released to the facility operators.



A question was raised as to whether GSOC should be attempting to verify whether all survey tickets are being submitted by a surveyor. It was also suggested that there would be further stakeholder discussions about security concerns surrounding the disclosure of maps.

## **OCC Report**

Kimberly Boyd noted that ticket volume is up 7.3% year to date compared with 2018. July alone experienced a 7.8% increase year over year and actually exceeded the June ticket count, which is unusual. The notification center also experienced more high volume days than ever before. In 2017, the notification center had 3 days of 6,000+ tickets. In 2018, that number had increased to 12. In 2019, there have already been 14 days of 6,000+ tickets. She also reminded everyone that ticket volume in April was significantly up over 2018 as the extremely poor weather conditions in April 2018 did not exist this year.

Records continue to be set with online submitted tickets. Online ticket submissions are 73.9% of the total so far this year, exceeding last year by over 2 percentage points. The homeowner volumes in 2019 are similar to last year but the proportion of homeowners submitting tickets online has increased to just over 30%. This is likely due to increasing homeowner comfort with using technology as well as GSOC's awareness campaign to promote online tickets.

Call responsiveness slowed somewhat in June but is still the quickest average response she is aware of in the country. Call abandonment levels remain remarkably low due to the significant attention paid by the call center to customer service. Average times for reviewing online submitted tickets were higher in June and July. Some of this increase was due to addressing the compacted call distribution. Some of the CSRs were moved from reviews to answering calls during exceptionally busy periods. The notification center has responded by hiring some additional CSRs and training them specifically for online ticket reviews.

Ongoing online ticket projects include increasing the percentage of tickets submitted online, reducing the required callbacks due to errors in the tickets and continuing to educate ITIC customers over the winter.

Visual enhancements to the ITIC ticket submission system continue to be worked on and are now being tested with customers.

The notification center continues to conduct both onsite and webinar training for the use of ITIC, iMap and ticket management systems. Over 243 people were trained so far in 2019.

The notification center continues to monitor use of the extended start time feature. There were roughly 8,100 requests so far this year and approximately 3,200 tickets extended as a result of those requests.



Multiple system upgrades have been made this year including the software used by the CSRs, the software utilized for online ticket submission and the phone exchange hardware. There have also been over 2,600 map updates involving 28 counties during the period April-July. Kim also noted that the OCC Users Group Conference will be held in Portland, Oregon from September 22-24 and encouraged users to attend.

## **MnOPS Report**

Jon Wolfgram then gave an update from the Minnesota Office of Pipeline Safety. Jon Wolfgram reported that the Q2 damage reporting MnOPS has received is now online and available on their website. PHMSA has conducted its audit of MnOPS activities.

Jon commented that MnOPS has been working with CenturyLink on a weekly basis but indicated he could not provide any further information due to the fact that MnOPS investigation of the situation is continuing. He did note that in general, MS216D provides for remedies of up to \$1,000 per day per violation of the One Call law and that additional fines are possible for pipelines. He noted that MnOps standard practice is to talk situations through with the stakeholder involved when a fine is proposed and only when agreement cannot be reached does MnOps resort to the administrative judicial system. He reminded the Board that MnOPS is generally a complaint driven agency, although where they are aware of a pattern is developing they may take different action. He reminded all stakeholders that communication is key and encouraged communication among the stakeholders. If an operator will be late, consistent with MS216D, they should let the excavator know.

He also noted that 216D Stakeholder meetings of some kind would be held this Fall. He suggested the possibility of holding some smaller stakeholder group meetings to begin with, perhaps even dividing excavators into large company and small company groups to better assure there are opportunities for stakeholders to be heard. Then parties could come back together in larger stakeholder groups to discuss summaries of what took place in smaller groups and determine whether consensus may develop for statutory change.

## **PR/Awareness Report**

Olivia Jensen and Barbara Cederberg discussed the various awareness efforts. Numerous damage prevention meetings were attended throughout the State in 2019. GSOC also implemented multiple public awareness campaigns for the State including media efforts through StarTribune, iHeartRadio, Linder Farm Radio and AllOver Media.

GSOC was a sponsor of the 811 Walk/Run as well as a sponsor of the Minnesota United soccer team this year. GSOC was also a sponsor of an excavator association golf tournament and will have an ad in the Minnesota Vikings football yearbook for the first time this year. Marketing efforts also included coordinating and representing GSOC at numerous tradeshow events and stakeholder meetings including Northern Green Expo and the Minneapolis Home and



Garden Show, the League of Minnesota Cities Annual Meeting, Farm Fest, the Minnesota State Fair and Big Iron in Fargo.

Olivia Jensen has started a new effort to manage Facebook advertising for GSOC. The hope is to improve actual engagement with the audience by better targeted advertising. Website content is being reviewed and updated. The website is now available in multiple languages.

Respectfully submitted,

Dean E. Parker  
Recording Secretary

Next Meeting Dates:

November 13, 2019 [Note: scheduled to avoid conflict with National CGA meetings]  
January 8, 2020  
April 6, 2020 [date to be confirmed] (at MnOps Safety Conference)  
August 12, 2020