



## MINUTES BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING November 13, 2024

### Members Present:

Kristopher Anderson	Jason Ponciano
Brian Connolly	Sam Richert
Tom Hoffman	Mark Sellin
Dave Hunstad, Chair	Joe Thill
Phil Lesnar	Patrick Warden
Keith Novy	Ward Westfall

### 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  
Ryan Schmaltz, General Manager, North Dakota and Customer Relations, OCC  
Adam Franco, Vice President, OCC  
Thomas Coffman, Engineer Principal MnOPS  
Barbara Cederberg, Emeritus Chief Operations Officer, GSOC  
Kelly Connolly, Chief Operations Officer, GSOC  
Olivia Phillips, Marketing Specialist, GSOC

---

On Wednesday, November 13, 2024 at 9:00 a.m., in person and by 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 the Board and guests to the meeting. He congratulated Barb Cederberg on her pending retirement at the end of the year. She continues to work part time on the innovation projects and in helping Kelly Connolly transition into her role as the successor Chief Operations Officer.

Dave Hunstad reminded Board members to contact him if they wish to serve as an officer or committee member as Board elections will be held in January. Tom Coffman will give the MnOPS update during this meeting. Finally, he advised the Board that the Finance Committee has been working on the 2025 financial projections. December 11 was set as a date for Board review of those projections.

Upon motion made and duly seconded, meeting minutes for the meeting held on August 14, 2024 were approved. Those minutes are currently on the GSOC website. Dave Hunstad directed that the “draft” designation be removed from those minutes.

Dean Parker gave a legislative report. The election results have been very close with a potential tie in the House. This could result in a sharing of power between the political parties. It is unknown what impact this might have on future legislation at this early stage.

New Statute § 326B.198 requires that the Minnesota Department of Labor create new training and certification standards for certain crew members of underground telecommunications installers using horizontal directional drilling for installation. Finally, the Minnesota Advisory Council on Infrastructure was created under new § 16B.357. This advisory council will examine infrastructure coordination and strategies to enhance longevity and adaptability of infrastructure throughout the state. It remains to be seen exactly how this might affect the damage prevention industry.

### **COO Report**

Kelly Connolly advised the Board that the January session of the Board meeting would involve strategic planning. She has spoken separately with a number of Board members and will work to synthesize several topics for discussion. She and Olivia also intend to present a communications and marketing plan in January.

Barbara Cederberg summarized the two major innovation projects that are pending. These are the GPS enabled locator device pilot project as well as a potential for map sharing through the use of the FuzionView software which is in development. She noted that AGC indicated an interest in helping to find funding which may be needed to complete the open source software release. There is a need for private utility pioneer partners to help serve as initial users and testers of the software.

Kelly Connolly met with the State Office of Broadband and discussed the issue of some users dividing tickets of continuous work to attempt to avoid the meet ticket requirement.

A Board discussion ensued whether GSOC should refuse to accept a ticket that, together with other contiguous tickets, appears to be an attempt to evade the meet ticket requirement. Some Board members noted that there was a need for action but that GSOC must be careful about making subjective judgments as to whether a party was actually in violation. Further discussion will be required to reach a consensus.

Kelly Connolly explained that the paid media messaging to help raise damage prevention awareness would commence in February. GSOC will develop an integrated communications plan. The intention is to provide education to key audiences, including by way of digital and paid radio media, DP meetings and marketing events, and statewide personal outreach to key audiences in specific trade industries.

Continuous improvement is being pursued in the call center’s operations. GSOC intends to remain at the forefront of exploring, adapting to, and adopting promising new innovations and technologies with goals of improving system usability, increasing safety, and reducing damages.

In addition to revising media messaging, GSOC intends to review and update its website and materials available for download. Finally, the 2025 education plan for DP meetings and other events is under development. Kelly advised that she and Olivia intend to define and set out clear metrics for evaluating 2025 media use and report back to the Board.

Board and stakeholder engagement will be emphasized. In particular, Kelly hopes to build some consensus around issues, including Minnesota Statutes Chapter 216 D changes. Strategic planning will be conducted for 2025 and beyond. The initial phase is expected to take place with the Board in January.

### **MnOps Update**

Thomas Coffman reviewed the third quarter data published on the MnOPS website for transmission volume and damages. In general, the report of damage rates seem to be slightly down in 2024. However, voluntary damage reporting continues to be low. It is suspected that only 1/5 or 1/4 of the total damages are reported due to the fact that only intrastate pipelines were required to report and voluntary reporting is modest. That should change in 2025 with mandatory damage reporting. Third quarter damage rates were slightly worse but first and second quarter damage rates were unusually low in his view.

He noted that the statutory framework appears to be functioning well since very few damages were caused by exemptions to the one-call law. He encouraged stakeholders to review the form MnOps has developed for damage reporting and any suggestions for revisions should be made directly to Thomas Coffman.

He noted that the Department of Labor, and not MnOps, will develop training requirements for certain telecommunications installers newly mandated under Chapter 326B.198. Finally, he noted there continues to be a high volume of locate complaints received during the busy season this year. It is hoped that Minnesota CGA will take up this issue over the winter to see if there can be improvement for 2025.

### **PR/Awareness Report**

Olivia Phillips reviewed the 2025 media partnerships. The messages are designed to increase 811 “brand” awareness through digital ads that can be tracked directly to key audiences. A mix of media will be used in order to reach both Metro and Greater Minnesota and specific messaging channels will be used to reach homeowners, industry professionals, the agricultural community and the general public.

New data driven technologies will be used to help identify people in key audiences to specific target audiences. Media databases will also be acquired in order to better utilize distribution and handling of various media channels.

The media partner relationship will continue with Gopher Sports Network as well as continuing to reach out to homeowners through our booth at the Home and Garden Show and the State Fair.

The Twin Cities Road Crew has been engaged again this year to outreach to grade schools. There will be 15 in-person assemblies at grade schools this year. Last year’s programming created a lot of energy and enthusiasm. Linder Farm Network will be engaged again to target the

agricultural industry. Banners will also be placed on public transit in the Twin Cities area. GSOC will also continue its substantial relationships with the St. Paul Saints and with Star Tribune, which has online media channels which cover the entire state of Minnesota. The relationship with iHeartRadio, including KFAN, will continue and achieves market penetration into a substantial portion of the Twin Cities Metro area and beyond.

GSOC has developed online learning tools which can be used for damage prevention education on an on-demand basis.

Two of GSOC's main outreach participation events, the 811 Run and the Day of the Dozers were viewed as substantial successes. Finally, a locate rodeo will tentatively be held on April 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> in Hugo, Minnesota.

### **OCC Report**

Tammy Gardner, the general manager of Minnesota advised the Board that OCC's direct hiring process for Minnesota CSR's continues as it has been quite successful. Due to increased retention of experienced CSRs, only three training classes were held in 2024. That is the fewest in a number of years.

The Notification Center experienced its busiest October ever. It is the first time over 100,000 notifications have been processed in October. Year to date, it has been the busiest since 2020. One area of concern is that homeowner ITIC use percentage is down.

Call durations are lower this year due to utilization of more experienced CSRs. ITIC percentages also at record levels at over 85% overall. The Notification Center continues to strive to have its maps as current as possible. Over 15,000 map updates have been processed so far this year.

Upcoming projects this year include ITIC call back projects as well as calling the top 200 volume ticket submitters by phone in order to try to reintroduce them to the possibility of submitting tickets online through ITIC. There will be header code changes with certain non-excavation tickets. The Notification Center will also develop an end-of-year communication.

### **Governance**

Jason Ponciano will become the new Chair of the Vetting Committee with Dan Munthe's retirement. The Vetting Committee will shortly commence a periodic Board composition review and consider whether to add additional Board Members and what subject matter expertise they ought to have.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business coming before the Board, upon motion made and duly seconded, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 12-noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Dean E. Parker  
Recording Secretary

Next Meeting Dates:

December 11, 2024 (closed session)

January 8, 2025

April \_\_, 2025 (to coincide with MnOps Safety Conference)

August \_\_, 2025 (may be moved to late August or early September to reduce Board  
Member conflicts)

*Shorter interim meetings may be set*