



Upper White River Watershed Alliance, Inc.  
Technical Committee Minutes  
May 1, 2003

The meeting was called to order at 2:38 PM Thursday May 1, 2003. Those present were as follows: Mr. Kenton Ward, Hamilton County Surveyor; Mr. Robert Thompson, Hamilton County Surveyor's Office; Mr. Don Anthis, City of Noblesville; Mr. Bob Meyer, Upper White River Board of Directors; Mr. Larry Stout, ISSD; John R. Wilkins, Upper White River Board of Directors; Mr. Wade Amos, Goode & Associates; Mr. Rusty Spiars, Woolpert; Mr. Marcus Turner, American Consulting; Mr. Dave Coats, Polis Center; Mr. Jon Buechler, Polis Center.

**Review of Minutes of April 9, 2003 Meeting:**

There were no changes made. The minutes were approved.

**Polis Contract:**

Mr. Ward stated that they have received money from the Guide Settlement from the Trustees for a feasibility study for a watershed wide GIS. They have asked the folks from Polis to come today to discuss the feasibility study and getting a contract ready for the Board. The next Board meeting is May 15 at 9:00 and will be at the Indianapolis Water Works.

Mr. Buechler stated that Polis Center is currently under contract with the Indiana Department of Environmental Management; it's EPA Grant to build a Water Quality Atlas for the State of Indiana. It will be rolled out in about one week and the test watershed will be the Upper White River Watershed. There is a variety of capabilities; there is mapping capabilities, if they have a little time at the end of the meeting he would be glad to give them a demonstration of where they are and show some of those capabilities. The purpose was to bring together state and federal data; one location so people could either view it, query it or down load it. With that they were to develop five custom capabilities; one of them was a simple easy to use bureau for the public; they have a section they call profiles, which are some standard maps and graphs of eight of the fourteen watersheds. They have a very complete data source for southwest Indiana, for the I-69 corridor, by the end of the year geologic survey will have those 170 layers plus more layers available statewide. One other dataset that is very key is the AIMS Database (Assessment Information Management System), it's 5000 plus points where IDEM samples data, fish tissue, and it covers over ten years. Right now they don't have all of the parameters in there, they have what IDEM has provided them, but they have about ¼ of a million points or samples. They will be able to identify a stream or watershed, a specific sampling point, plot it out on a map so they will be able to see where the sampling point is in your watershed and then also generate a graph of e-coli or chloride and then if they would like to download that data they can do some additional things. Maybe there is some local data, additional data and additional applications that maybe could be leveraged from this first product. Maybe the Upper White River could build a watershed that would take advantage of existing data that is there as well as the applications and then develop some additional capabilities on top of that rather than starting with a clean slate.

Mr. Ward stated that what they are looking at is finding out what data is there, who's doing what with what data; not only for State and Federal, but also for cities, towns and counties; also the platform that this is on. To see what kind of project this would entail pulling all that together, both cadastral, hydrology and water quality.

Mr. Buechler stated that they are well on the way, some of the capabilities of the sites are hindered by the fact that there is no local data there; contour data. They are very interested in taking that undertaking and putting together a scope of work and developing a feasibility; find out what they would like to do and where they would like to end up and the cost of that.

Mr. Ward asked if they believed that they could have something for the May Board meeting.

Mr. Buechler asked if he was referring to the actual scope of work.

Mr. Wilkins asked if Mr. Ward was referring to a proposal to spend the \$15,000.00.

Mr. Ward stated that he was correct, the meeting is May 15.

Mr. Buechler stated that to get a proposal is doable. The execution of the contract is going to work its way through the university probably.

Mr. Ward asked if Mr. Buechler would elaborate on the process.

Mr. Buechler stated that they would start off with a kickoff meeting with all the potential participants, they will look to them to bring together the various focus groups or individuals that need to be interviewed and to organize those meetings; they would work together to develop a questionnaire; they will schedule a series of interviews to discuss the data, the user needs and requirements; what they want to get out of this specific applications; how they would use the system. They would summarize the information and have a group meeting to go over some of the findings and from that they would develop the requirements and the plan for going forth, which would be a time frame cost and level of effort.

Mr. Ward asked that as far as their process of getting the contract approved through the university, how long does that usually take.

Mr. Coats stated that it is usually two weeks, but can be longer. Getting a proposal to them is easier than getting a contract to them.

Mr. Ward asked if they got the proposal to the Board on May 15 that would give them time to look it over and get some comfort with what is being proposed; later the Board may give Janice the ability to sign that contract.

Mr. Meyer stated that he believed so.

Mr. Buechler stated that the university has a standard contract; it's pretty small, but they could send that along so they could look at that.

Mr. Stout stated that in an organization such as this, if they interview all of the participants and build a wish list it's probably going to be more than the organization can afford. He stated that he believes that this is significant that this doesn't automatically find its way into the final product, but perhaps some review by the technical group and the Board; is that appropriate? Once this final document is published people tend to put great stock in it.

Mr. Buechler stated that there is a meeting where they summarize the findings and that is the time to go through that; not necessarily the entire group, but a small group to refine.

Mr. Wilkins stated that what he is saying is review the raw findings before they get translated into a report.

Mr. Stout stated that Polis probably does want people to give them a wish list; that almost always generates things that are unreasonable to expect in the final product.

Mr. Wilkins stated that the deliverable is a specification that then would go out to a number of firms that would be interested in bidding on this, but they know, in the ball park, what that cost is going to be. He presumes that they would want to know what that is up front so they don't give a product specification that is going to cost a million dollars to implement; they would waste their \$15,000.00.

Mr. Meyer stated that he did not have a number, but he did believe that he hit on a good point; they really should make sure there is some sort of input back from Ms. Admire and her fellow trustees so they are heading in that direction.

Mr. Ward stated that at the last meeting he told the Trustees they would have an opportunity for input in this process. The three Trustees along with IDEM themselves would probably be interviewed.

Mr. Meyer stated that before there is a final contract there would be a witness test to make sure it's in the thinking of this group, but maybe it should also be run by the Trustees to make sure it's close to what they had in mind.

Mr. Ward stated that he believed that the Trustees and the Citizens Committee had some very good comments at the last meeting; they will have to glean from that because two or three people were talking at the same time.

Mr. Wilkins stated that they also said that it would be their expectation that the Alliance would handle the logistics.

Mr. Buechler stated that they would work with them to pull the group together, but the fee is such that they would like some help pulling the people together and they would gladly host them at their place if that would make sense. They need to have one point of contact and a backup who they could coordinate the people to be interviewed and would assist them in getting the people to an interview spot.

Mr. Ward asked if they would like to have two or three places for interviews so they can regionalize the interviews.

Mr. Buechler stated that it would probably make sense; he would leave that up to them. There is one thing to build this; there is also another issue to sustain it; through this interview process that needs to be looked at. There are potentially other partners also that may want to help to contribute to the sustainability; bringing in applications that exist currently that they would like to test their model with local data.

Mr. Ward asked if he sees this as being a method to augment what they are doing for IDEM now.

Mr. Buechler stated that he would hope so; he would hope those capabilities could be taken of advantage of. They built a regional GIS for the Metropolitan Indianapolis Board of Realtors so they have a starting point; they have some database of what data is out there; having been to all of these counties he has a good feeling for the quality of the data.

Mr. Stout stated that in a project like this Metadata is pretty important as part of the finished product because they are going to be talking about piecing together data from different years, different scales, different levels of detail, different projections, maintained at different intervals. When you start talking about it being sustained, it's a problem when you first put it together because some of it already hasn't been sustained by the time they get it. He believes that it is important to give whoever is going to use this some kind of a clue of what they are looking at and a way to access that information.

Mr. Ward stated that they had thrown some numbers out early and they decided to forget that, do the study and see how much it will really cost before they go and ask for the money.

Mr. Meyers stated that there was some early talk going back a year or more ago when they had numbers of a \$200,000.00, which the Committee did not like. There hasn't been any recent discussion so he did not know if that has become more palatable or they chose to ignore that and decide that GIS is of such value that they would at least like to check it out. In the mean time they have directed other moneys for lots of other purposes so they may feel more willing to release that kind of number; he does not know what they are willing to spend. There's no guarantee that because they spend \$15,000.00 they will go any further.

Mr. Wilkins stated that the best way to make this happen is to have a specification that contains two or three options with a price on each option; rough estimates plus or minus 25% with a benefit analysis; something they could go to the Trustees with and make a presentation.

Mr. Coats stated that some of this will come out in the interviews with what is it that the folks really want this thing to do; what are the capabilities they want to have; how user friendly do those capabilities need to be; that will help to see the answer to that question. They were interested in at least planting the seed somewhere about the L-THIA Project; they talked to the folks at Purdue and have seen them demonstrate that capability; that's an interesting existing model; they have asked other people about their feelings about it and folks have said that they trust the model, but what is lacking is good accurate local data and it would be an even more powerful tool if that were available to it; they would like to see an opportunity somewhere along the line, with some group, develop that; because of the work that they have already done and because of the work that has already been done on the Water Quality Atlas there might be an opportunity like that.

Mr. Stout asked how dependent that model was on land use.

Mr. Buechler stated that it was very dependent; it takes an existing land cover model and tells you what percents are and you can physically go in and change those parameters.

Mr. Stout asked what the odds were that they could go in and put together a land cover model from this large of a reason.

Mr. Buechler stated that they have land cover, but it's from the USGS; they've taken that Raster File and they have 1 ½ GB polygon file; they have generated land cover statistics.

Mr. Stout stated that he did not know that this existed; it gives them something to start with. He stated that he knew that Marion County has done some multi spectral photography.

Mr. Wilkins asked how this would work with Purdue; would it be Purdue staff doing it or is would this be in the form of a grant to Purdue.

Mr. Buechler stated that they have talked about finding a grant or a project to do a test with and that is the extent of it today. Their detail data, surface model data and any land cover data would have to be processed at Purdue and would reside at Purdue and their web application would be integrated into that application.

Mr. Wilkins asked if Purdue would maintain it.

Mr. Buechler stated that he believed that they would for research purposes; there would have to be some level of funding. The maintenance is not a big deal; it would be more of what would be involved in getting the model to work with the detail data rather than the gross data.

Mr. Stout stated that in this context, maintenance doesn't mean updating the data periodically; it means just keeping the thing running.

Mr. Spiars asked if housing this has been discussed.

Mr. Ward stated that there has been possibilities floating; maybe approaching Polis to house it there; there has to be somewhere to house it; he didn't believe that it would be proper to house it in a County; it should be somewhere where it would be deemed neutral in the political layers above this group would not have a problem with it.

Mr. Buechler stated that Polis is serving up Marion County's data from their server on top of the Water Quality Atlas; it's two different projections. They could go to the City of Anderson and do the same if they are given permission. He can get in to any of the 200 layers of the city's data and manipulate it. With Mr. Stout in the AutoDesk world, they have a grant out right now to see if they could make that happen. Counties like Hamilton and Marion could be served up directly from the server; they could maintain the server; it's all brought together seamlessly and then the Counties that do not have a web presence would have to be housed someplace.

Mr. Stout stated that soon most of the major web map servers by the major GIS vendors will be able to comply the OTC web mapping service specification, which is the same technology they are using it's just confined within ESRI right now; the other major vendors are striving to achieve that same functionality to a standard so they could bring up Hamilton County data just as Polis is bringing up Indianapolis data.

Mr. Ward asked Mr. Buechler where they go from here; is it in their ballpark right now.

Mr. Buechler stated that it is in their ballpark right now to put a document together and get it to them as quickly as possible.

Mr. Ward asked if they needed input from anybody their.

Mr. Buechler stated that he did not believe so; if he did he would call him.

Mr. Meyer stated that for the purpose of the study that they are proposing; the responsibility of identifying those people that have data and soliciting that participation would fall upon who.

Mr. Stout stated that Goode & Associates have done some work with this group.

Mr. Amos stated that they have a database that they could probably query to the best of their abilities to get a good working list of people they could contact.

Mr. Buechler stated that they could contribute what they know.

Mr. Wilkins stated that there was a concern that the entity that is going to put the proposal together has the inside track; how is this going to play in the private sector; the consulting sector.

Mr. Spiars stated that there was a consensus that whoever did this phase should not be able to go onto the next phase.

Mr. Wilkins stated that he did not recall a conclusion.

Mr. Ward stated that he believed that there was a conclusion; a lot of ideas got thrown out on the table; they wrestled with them for a while. Mr. Ward stated that he believed what they were talking about at the time was doing what Hamilton County did where Woolpert was the overall consultant and then they helped them get their items together and review the proposals and come up with the Q & A and kind of look over the consultants shoulder; Woolpert could not bid on another piece of the pie.

Mr. Meyer stated that there is a certain timeliness to all of this and he would hate to see the Trustees spend valuable money and then only six months later they could have bought something off the shelf that wouldn't have cost but a tenth of that. When it's done it would need to have a shelf life to it.

Mr. Stout stated that software would not really have a key to this; they are talking about data more than they are talking about software.

Mr. Meyer stated that they need to get a tight definition of where the Trustees are comfortable seeing money being spent geographically; this will have a lot to do with who they interview.

Mr. Ward stated that it has been pretty much right on the thread of the stream for what has been done so far; when he was talking to them last month he got the feeling that they were willing to look outside of that area.

Mr. Stout stated that he believed that they would be flexible only to a point.

Mr. Meyer stated that he would initiate the inquiry by e-mail and get it to anyone who wishes to see it.

**Set Meeting Date:**

The next meeting was is for Thursday June 12, 2003 at 2:00 PM.

The meeting was adjourned.

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Kenton C. Ward  
UWRWA Technical Committee Chairman