

**GREATER AUSTIN AREA TELECOMMUNICATIONS  
NETWORK (GAATN)  
INTERLOCAL AGENCY**

**1111 West 6<sup>th</sup> Street  
Austin, Texas 78703-5399**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
MEETING HELD March 4, 2002**

**Agenda Item No. 1:**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Patrick Jordan at approximately 1:32 p.m.

The following Board members announced as present:

George Mirick (alt.), on behalf of the University of Texas  
Tom Lott (alt.), on behalf of the Lower Colorado River Authority  
Patrick Jordan, on behalf of the City of Austin  
Wayne Wedemeyer, on behalf of University of Texas  
John Kohlmorgan, on behalf of Austin Independent School District  
Walter LaGrone, on behalf of Travis County  
Debbie Opdahl, on behalf of Department of Information Resources  
Frederick Harris, on behalf of Austin Independent School District

GAATN Personnel present:

Ronald Roberts, Project Coordinator  
Ashley Wolf, Project Manager

**Agenda Item No. 2:**

**Citizen Communication**

There being no citizens present, Chairman Jordan moved on to the next agenda item.

**Agenda Item No. 3:**

**Approval of February 4th, 2002 Board Minutes**

There were no corrections to the minutes Debbie moved to accept them with a second from Wayne; the motion passed unanimously.

**Agenda Item No. 4:**

**Hear report and discuss/consider Board Chairman Update.**

Chairman Jordan shared that the permitting process with the City has become more difficult. He stated that the issue had come up in planning underground routes into the future supernode site at the new City Hall. Patrick stated that the Street Cuts Committee was attempting to get better usage from the Utility Coordinating Committee by becoming more stringent in allowing cuts, the goal being to encourage planning months, possibly years, away. Patrick also shared that he was considering meeting with City Managers about the problem, adding that the present management would probably benefit from updated and current knowledge about GAATN. He requested that an agenda item be added for next month on how best the Board feels concerning communicating with each other and how we can establish communication with City Management, his impression is that they need to be reminded. He also encouraged the entities to discuss and share more information and help to facilitate bringing ideas forward to the city.

On another note he thanked Martha and Ashley for their work with the Budget. He noted that the Budget process was beginning for the various entities and encouraged the entities to use Martha and Ashley as a resource for budgetary questions.

Wayne asked Ashley where she was in the process of future planning. Ashley reminded the Board of the meetings that were planned outside the Board meeting to discuss the topic, specifically that they were lacking in attendance. She shared that her focus was on the ARA project and Budget. Wayne asked if there was enough information to produce a unified parallel analysis of GAATN versus Private costs to show and illustrate the savings that GAATN has made to all the participants together. Ashley stated that she would need better information from participants to put that together. Patrick added that the Gartner Group had noted a difference in cost to the City of Austin in their report of some \$40 million dollars for a private

company to function and perform like GAATN compared to \$10 to 12 million cost that was set aside for the GAATN CIP. Wayne noted that he thought UT was saving some \$11 million a year but that a unified document would speak volumes. Tom added that Tech Committee discussion had also hit on discussion of the Technology Plan which could be used to present this data. Patrick noted that he wanted to add a GAATN versus Private entity comparison to the agenda. Wayne added that he wanted a unified presentation of all GAATN participants as a whole. Patrick asked Debbie and Frederick their thoughts on pursuing this topic as an agenda item. Debbie answered that the important aspect that she saw with GAATN, and one she felt pertinent to the State at this time, was redundancy and survivability. She added that specificity as to equipment may not be as important as uses (as examples she gave video streaming for distant learning). Frederick inquired if there was a template already in existence for using to form this analysis. Patrick offered the Gartner Group information for use as a template and wondered again if this discussion should not be carried over through an agenda item next month.

Walter then inquired as to interest with linking to the Round Rock School District, he had been contacted by them. Patrick noted that, he too, had been contacted by Round Rock and reminded the Board that GAATN was mere blocks away (at McNeil). The consensus from the group was that they would be open to hearing from Round Rock concerning partnerships and opportunities between and among the networks and participants.

**Agenda Item No. 5:**

**Discuss/Approve Bickerstaff, Heath, Smiley, Pollan, Kever, & McDaniel, L.L.P, as the new GAATN Attorney.**

Patrick asked the GAATN Project Coordinator to explain the process for the record. Ron stated that he had worked with Brenda Dalton at AISD to generate the RFP. There were two respondents and a committee from the GAATN Board was set up to meet with them and review. The committee met previous to meeting the attorneys to go through the RFP and establish questions and process for the interviews, once this was done the proposals from the Attorneys were distributed so that the Selection Committee could begin looking over them. The attorneys then met with the committee and the selected firm has been brought to the Board for a vote. Debbie added that the selected firm had offered many intangibles, they commented on current legislative activities affecting telecommunications and they had Rights of Way experience. Tom added that the selected firm had a great deal of depth as opposed to the other respondent who would require a 'learning curve' to familiarize with telecommunications laws. Debbie mentioned that she had some requirements that she had given to Ron concerning the contract but that overall she was satisfied. Patrick asked AISD if they were happy and satisfied with the process to which John answered yes. Patrick then asked if there were any budget concerns but was told no by Tom, Tom explained they had looked at the money carefully and there was no significant increases.

The discussion then turned to the fact that the new attorney was also representing Grande Communications. Much discussion took place on this concerning the pro's and con's of this issue. Debbie then moved to accept the recommendation of the RFP Review Committee to establish Bickerstaff, Heath, Smiley, Pollan, Kever, & McDaniel, L.L.P. as the new GAATN Attorney, this motion was seconded by Patrick Jordan and passed unanimously. Contracts with the new Attorney can now be sent through AISD purchasing and Patrick asked the GAATN project coordinator to assist. He also thanked Katherine Mudge for her service to GAATN.

**Agenda Item No. 6:**

**Discuss/consider Financial Report from AISD**

Frederick passed out the Financial Report from AISD with little comment. Tom asked if the SWBell Payment had been received and John noted that it had under category 5745. Ron added that other payments from damage incidents had also been received and pointed those out to the Board, he added that there is presently, one issue outstanding but that it looked to be resolving itself since the damaging parties had admitted fault and had contacted Ashley to get an invoice sent for payment. No other comments on the report.

**Agenda Item No. 7:**

**Hear Report and discuss/consider Technical Subcommittee Update**

- A. Discuss a possible letter to Corning from the GAATN Board to investigate the condition of GAATN Fiber.**
- B. Distribute Pole Attachment Agreement for participant review.**

Tom mentioned that the Technical Committee had discussed sending a letter to Corning to establish a written trail for requests and help encourage activity in resolving questions about some of the original fiber.

Katherine suggested checking the closing documents with SWBell for information related to this topic. Patrick agreed and directed Ron to look into it. The consensus of the Board was that the letter could and should still be sent. Ron stated that he would get the information from the Maintenance Contractor put together into a letter and then send it through Patrick to Corning.

The Pole Attachment Agreement was looked over, the changes that had been made by Katherine had been included and the purpose was to give everyone a hard copy to look over. Katherine noticed a typo on Pg. 23 and others requested the actual forms to be included as well. Ron stated that he would correct and send with the fee schedule and forms.

Wayne then asked for discussion on the GAATN extension towards 620, Patrick asked that the Technical Committee look into that issue since UT has an interest in extending to pick up a research facility in Leander. Tom added that LCRA was also interested.

**Agenda Item No. 8:**

**Hear report and discuss/consider Network Manager's Update**

Ashley distributed a requested comparison of network rights from the beginning to the present, a task that was mentioned from the last Board meeting by John. She also distributed the time sheets which Walter requested include headers and a break out of Administration Activities. Patrick commented that the system had been set up the present way and that a change would have to be worked out internally at the City to accommodate. Walter stated that he did not wish to interfere with the established system and was not aware how the categories were set up and shared this concern with the Board. Ron explained to the Board, and Walter, that his activities almost wholly came under administration be it contracts, research, damage, or anything else that arose as an issue from the Board or the Technical Committee. He went on to explain that by and large technical committee discussions were where a large portion of his efforts were focused with the Board hearing the directly pertinent information through the Technical Committee update. He noted that a more diverse look at activities actually could be spread out a more than previous in the present system and would, perhaps, be more beneficial and explanatory for the Board. Ashley added that the headers would be redone for the next Board meeting.

**Agenda Item No. 9:**

**Confirm date, time and location for the next regular Board meeting as April 1, 2002 at 1:30 p.m. in room 517 of the Shapiro Building at LCRA on Lake Austin Blvd.**

Patrick reiterated some agenda items for inclusion for the next Board meeting based on discussions from this meeting.

- 1) Discussion of ring extensions (which would go through the Technical Committee)
- 2) Benefits analysis of GAATN as a whole vs. private usage.
- 3) Update the Pole Attachment Agreement-include fee structure and forms for applicants.
- 4) Contract for Attorney
- 5) Status of letter to Corning

These noted he adjourned the meeting at 3:23 p.m.