

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

**625 East 10th Street, 6th Floor
Austin, Texas 78701**

**MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MEETING HELD August 9, 2005
625 East 10th Street, 9th Floor
Austin, Texas 78701**

Agenda Item No. 1:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Patrick Jordan at 1:10 p.m.

The following Board members announced as present at the start of the meeting:

Patrick Jordan, on behalf of the City of Austin
Gray Salada, on behalf of Austin Independent School District
Tom Lott, on behalf of the Lower Colorado River Authority
John Kohlmorgan, on behalf of Austin Independent School District
Martha Riekenberg-Krischke, on behalf of the City of Austin
Wayne Wedemeyer, on behalf of the University of Texas
John House, on behalf of the University of Texas

GAATN Personnel present at the start of the meeting:

Ronald Roberts, Project Coordinator
Ashley Caron, Project Manager

CTM CIO Pete Collins joined the meeting in progress.

Agenda Item No. 2:

Citizen Communication

No citizens were present and Patrick moved onto the next agenda item.

Agenda Item No. 3:

Executive Session:

Adjourn for closed session, under one or more of Tex. Gov't Code sections 551.071, 551.072, 551.074, and/or 551.076, to seek legal advise about pending, anticipated or contemplated litigation concerning:

- A. Construction, equipment, and product warranty claims;
- B. Damage to GAATN fiber optic cables, equipment, hardware, and other property; or
- C. Contractual or tort claims by or against GAATN; or
- D. the procedures and operations of the Board or the organization; and/or

to consider matters concerning

- E. real property purchase, exchange, lease or value;
- F. personnel matters; or

G. security devices or security personnel.

Reconvene for discussion and actions, if any, on matters considered in closed session.

There was no council present or need for executive session so Patrick moved on to the next agenda item.

Agenda Item No. 4:

Discussion on issues with the GAATN agency and existing procedures affecting utility projects.

Martha gave some background information on processes with permitting through the city. She noted that engineering and then going into the Utility Coordinating Council (UCC) can be costly because if it not approved then there are reengineering costs. Preliminary drafts brought beforehand avoid this expense but there are still delays. Projects take 3 weeks to be put on the agenda and then there are 2 weeks for the utilities to respond. It is not uncommon to be well into the second month before you have discussions. She noted that joint opportunities and other benefits do come out of the process. The bottom line is to minimize street cuts and there is encouragement to joint trench. Along with the good there are heavy delays in the process. Patrick added that GAATN is present at these meetings through both its maintenance contractor and sometimes even the Network Manager.

Martha further noted that the process was not 'guaranteed' and, in fact, can lead to instances where unknown utilities are present once the work starts. These, unfortunately, lead to setbacks if reengineering is required to work around them. John Kohlmorgan asked if there were real dollar amounts that illustrate the impact to GAATN and were savings possible in the process. Martha answered that, as an example, the City Hall project had cost \$18,000 in permitting cost from Alexander Engineering between September to May until final approval was accepted. Patrick noted that permitting fees are waived but that traffic control was not. Martha noted that barricading and traffic control engineering were more commonplace. John asked if the fees were applied equally. Wayne noted that there was little expectation for equitable treatment compared with everyone else and cited the issue on Colorado and Cesar Chavez as an example. He added that the handout Martha had given them at the beginning of the meeting did not indicate similar treatment when reading through numbers one to three on the handout. Martha added that the rules change sometimes and continuity was difficult to follow through some of the processes. Wayne noted that there was no way to figure the budget and predict costs if there are issues with varying costs to GAATN. He asked if there was a way to do permitting and traffic control in advance, maybe even a year ahead. Martha added that engineering could be done but that it would be subject to change should something occur in the interim timeframe. She added that permitting and traffic control had to be done when construction was imminent because the objective was to make construction palatable to drivers. John Kohlmorgan asked if it was enforced equally but no one could say but Martha felt that things were difficult for GAATN at times but added that Austin Energy and others may just have the process down and are more familiar with the various changes in the process that can occur. John then asked if public works had leniency and Martha said that GAATN was considered an outside utility.

Patrick noted that there was a general consensus that a 'one stop shop' would be advantageous to the process which exists to encourage participation and also to minimize street cuts. Wayne added that a central place for that 'one stop shop' could stay current on rules and methods. It was suggested that Pete Collins speak with Bill Gardner about these issues.

There then became a differentiation between the long and short-term objectives. The short-term objectives entailed addressing the problem of the permit at Colorado and Cesar Chavez. Martha explained that GAATN was the first one into the street and that others followed, in fact Austin Energy was extremely close, within 2 feet, and went in after GAATN did. A mix up in the paperwork created a denial for a permit a few weeks ago to Will Pitts, one of the GAATN subcontractors. The demand from public works was that the road had to be repaved. This is a permit left open from 1999 and would require a ROW to ROW repave at a cost between \$200,000 to \$300,000 dollars and GAATN is the only utility shown as responsible. Patrick noted that it was a good job of engineering that kept GAATN avoid damage, but that being first and proactive seems to have backfired on GAATN. Pete stated that he would get on this matter and asked for a week to report back.

Patrick then shared that another concern was the 42 miles of underground being considered by council, presently it is a resolution. He added that GAATN forecasts projects over a year in advance. Pete asked about being a part of the planning for this project and Ashley noted that she and Austan Librach had discussed the 42 mile, 20 year project for underground utilities but that he could not answer her questions on budgeting for the project. Pete then asked about Cap Metro and Ashley stated that it was a council decision and that she could not predict the budgetary impact either.

Pete addressed the Board members concerns on the costs and red tape that they were having to deal with by noting that he had the same problems with CTECC and had made some connections that could favor a positive outcome for the GAATN agency. Patrick noted that Pete would assist with items number one and two on the handout and he shared that Ashley would be directed by the Board concerning the budget. The consensus was to not budget for the projects at all at this time as it was impossible to budget based on guesswork.

Gray asked if there was a way to educate or influence the light rail and Pete said he would look into it and exited the meeting.

John Kohlmorgan noted that he would push for a meeting with Cap Metro soon and possibly go at the topic from that angle. There was general discussion on getting the word out about GAATN to the City Council and others both internal and external to the city. John Kohlmorgan summed up the discussion by noting that visibility was possible without going public. Ashley suggested that there might be partnerships available for the 3rd/4th street Cap Metro project, but John added that he preferred for them to pay GAATN to move.

Agenda Item No. 5:

Confirm date, time and location for the next regular Board meeting as September 12, 2005 at 1:30 p.m. in room 517 of the Shapiro Building at LCRA on Lake Austin Blvd.

A. Add agenda items for next month.

Time for next regular meeting was confirmed **as 1:30 p.m. on September 12, 2005** The meeting was adjourned at 2:16 p.m.