

GREATER AUSTIN AREA TELECOMMUNICATIONS NETWORK (GAATN) INTERLOCAL AGENCY

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

February 6, 2024 1:00 p.m.

LCRA Dalchau Service Center

3505 Montopolis Drive, Austin, TX 78744, Building A, Room A502/503

Teams Videoconference link provided 72 hours prior to meeting on homepage of www.gaatn.org

Remote audio-only option for public access: (512) 831-7858, Access Code: 934 116 724#

MINUTES

1. Call to Order and Roll Call:

GAATN Board Chairman Dain Herbat called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

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

Paul Hodge, on behalf of Austin ISD (remote)

Steve Martin, on behalf of City of Austin (remote)

Gary Weseman, on behalf of Austin Community College (remote)

Dain Herbat, on behalf of Travis County (on site)

Steve Pyle, on behalf of State of Texas DIR (remote)

Jaime Guerra, on behalf of UT-Austin (remote)

Robert Saddler, on behalf of LCRA (remote)

Harold Nall, on behalf of UT-Austin (remote)

Frank Ammons, on behalf of GAATN (remote)

Carlos DeMatos, on behalf of GAATN (remote)

Sarah Eichelberger, on behalf of GAATN (remote)

A quorum was established at roll call.

GAATN Contractors:

Chris Gonzales, on behalf of BryComm (remote)

Doug Wilson, on behalf of JC Communications (remote)

Members arriving after roll call:

Syd Falk, GAATN attorney (on site) – arrived at 1:08 p.m.

Mike Lohrstorfer, on behalf of Austin ISD (remote) – joined at 1:13 p.m.

2. Citizen Communications: There were no citizen communications.

3. Network Management SLA Mid-Year Feedback Session:

The Board provided the following mid-year feedback for the six categories of deliverables for the GAATN Network Management SLA evaluation:

1. Section 1 – Network Management Engineering, and Planning: This upcoming year will be a challenge due to the Backup NOCC decommissioning and relocation as well as AISD projects impacting GAATN nodes. Keep up the focus and pressure to make progress.
2. Section 2 – Engineering Documentation: Continue efforts with formally documenting TxDOT agreements. Determine whether there is an agreement on file for the Travis County and City of Austin (COA) strands on 620.
3. Section 3 – Damage Management and Disaster Recovery: Great job on completing the DR plan! Next focus would be to help facilitate a disaster recovery/business continuity tabletop exercise in the future.
4. Section 4 – Financial Management: Continue budget forecasting in light of the need to place planned projects on hold to accommodate unplanned relocation of Backup NOCC.
5. Section 5 – Contract Administration: Continue working with AISD and legal to conform with new

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AISD RFP requirements. Help facilitate vendors onboarding to the new AISD system (ACH payments). Good job managing a large number of RFPs at the same time.

6. Section 6 – Business Administration: Keep up the good work! Develop policy and procedures for exchange of ring fiber from one entity to another.

4. Review and Approve the minutes for the regular Board Meeting of January 9, 2024:

Gary Weseman moved to approve the draft minutes as presented; Steve Martin seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

5. Consent Agenda Items Reviewed and Recommended for Approval at the January 23, 2024 Technical Subcommittee Meeting

A. Seeking recommendation for COA SRS new node site Capital Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG) entity-specific project at no cost to GAATN

Jaime Guerra moved to approve Consent Agenda Item 5A as presented; Steve Pyle seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

6. Board Chairperson Update – Discussion and possible action regarding:

A. Travis County request for non-emergency maintenance moratorium for election window from February 17 through March 15

Dain announced that Travis County has requested a non-emergency maintenance moratorium for February 17 through March 15 due to the election. He noted that they will request another window in October/November. Jaime asked about a particular UT project and if that would be allowable during the election window; Dain asked Jaime to send him and management an email so they can review and determine the potential impact. Frank said that any GAATN projects previously scheduled during this window will be rescheduled to accommodate the moratorium.

B. Network Manager's Spending Authority

Dain said he requested this agenda item to review the Network Manager's spending authority and determine whether it is appropriate to increase it. Sarah reported that the Network Manager's spending authority was last increased from \$20k to \$25k in 2010; since then, the cumulative inflation has been approximately 40%. Dain said the spirit of the policy is to allow the network manager to buy a reel of fiber as needed and make an emergency repair without requesting Board approval. Gary said he is concerned about all expenses, even little ones, due to the impending cost of the Backup NOCC. He asked how items under the spending authority are tracked and reported; Sarah said that the majority of expenditures approved by Frank are for emergency repairs and they are noted on the job budget tracking sheet as approved by Frank, under the approval column. She said there may also be some smaller maintenance items that are also approved within the spending authority and noted on the job budget report as such. Sarah noted that the spending authority is couched under the GAATN Maintenance Policy; there is not a stand-alone policy. Syd said there could be a stand-alone policy with two prongs – an emergency spending authority limit and a routine maintenance spending authority limit. Syd also suggested there could be a check and balance by requiring the network manager to get approval from the Board Chair for certain situations. Frank said that he would schedule a meeting with the Board and Tech Chairmen and GAATN legal to discuss further and then report back to the Board.

C. Austin ISD 2022 Bond construction impact at GAATN super node sites

Paul reported that they received their proposal for the pre-fabricated data center for Travis High School. They are exploring the same solution for Northeast High School which would require moving GAATN out of the school building and into the pre-fabricated building. Paul said he will be reaching out to management regarding documented easements at Travis High School.

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D. Seeking approval for GAATN Backup NOCC four transport ring decommissioning remaining costs at an amount not to exceed \$240k to be funded from the FY25 MAC budget

Frank presented the remaining costs for the transport ring decommissioning for the removal of the GAATN Backup Network Operations Control Center (NOCC). He noted that the first half of the costs were approved at the October 3, 2023 Board meeting, which included costs for excavation, fiber, and some engineering. The remaining costs, totaling \$233k, include remaining engineering, permitting, labor, and materials other than fiber. Frank noted that the decommissioning has to take place regardless of where GAATN relocates its NOCC in order to protect the network and keep it whole. Dain clarified that this agenda item is just approving the funding but not the scheduling of the decommissioning; his priority is to minimize the time that GAATN is without two NOCCs. He would like to see the new Backup NOCC already operational so entities can migrate their equipment before the current Backup NOCC cables are decommissioned. Frank said that is certainly the goal, but it will be tricky, due of the uncertainty of the relocation and the time that the new construction could take. Frank recommended that meetings should be taking place between GAATN Board representatives, Convention Center staff, and COA CTM management. Dain said that he would be happy to attend those meetings; Frank said he will schedule a meeting between the Board and Tech Chairmen and the COA Board members regarding the decommissioning. Frank noted that the Convention Center gave GAATN the notice to vacate in April 2023 and it has almost been a year since GAATN received that notice. Dain reiterated that the plan should be to bring up the relocated NOCC first before decommissioning the current backup NOCC. Gary said that the COA should prioritize GAATN permitting for the decommissioning and relocation. Frank said that is why it would be helpful for the GAATN Chairs to meet at least monthly with COA representatives until the decommissioning and relocation is completed. Dain Herbat moved to approve the remaining costs of the decommissioning of the four transport rings from the GAATN Backup NOCC at a cost not to exceed \$240k to be funded from the FY25 MAC budget; Steve Martin seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

E. GAATN Backup NOCC relocation, associated agreement, and subcommittee update

Frank reported that, at the January Tech meeting, the Backup NOCC subcommittee recommended that GAATN proceed with a professional survey and subsurface utility engineering (SUE) review of the Fire Station 4 property where the proposed NOCC will be for design approval purposes. He said that management has engaged BryComm to subcontract this work. At the last Board meeting, it was noted that the Fire Department had requested that approval be obtained from the neighborhood association and the historical society. Frank said he was able to provide Chief Teliha information regarding the options for the aesthetics of the outside of the pre-fabricated building. Frank said he let Chief Teliha know that Syd would begin working with the COA attorney on the Backup NOCC interlocal agreement once GAATN receives the approval to relocate to the Fire Station 4 property. Dain said he thinks that a 10-year or more agreement would be a good faith contribution from the COA; Steve Martin agreed with that and said that everyone up to the City Manager's Office is aware of the preference to have a long term agreement for the relocated NOCC.

F. Property damage claim against JD Abrams/Lone Star Paving for damage to C1N at IH-35 and Rutherford on 9/20/21

Syd said that Gunnar has been in contact with the Lone Star Paving attorney, who sent the indemnity demand to the subcontractor. That attorney said they are having discussions with the subcontractor's attorneys. He will update the Board with any developments at the next meeting.

7. Network Manager's Update:

A. Project status report

Frank reported on the following upcoming and recently completed projects:

- SRS Upgrade Segment 1 – to be rescheduled due to election moratorium

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- SRS Upgrade Segment 4 – to be rescheduled due to election moratorium
- SRS Upgrade Segment 6 – to be rescheduled due to election moratorium
- A1N Upgrade Segment 1 – completed 1/10/24
- UT B1N JJ Pickle node redundancy installation – completed 2/5/24

B. Job budget report

Sarah reported that management is tracking 51 jobs totaling \$3.1 million. So far for FY24, 18 jobs have been completed and \$512k has been invoiced. There is currently \$2.6 million encumbered for the remaining 33 pending jobs. GAATN has received \$162k in project reimbursements and damage claims since July. The fund balance bottom line is \$1.03 million.

C. GAATN Cost Avoidance Report Update

Sarah reported that she sent the cost avoidance entity spreadsheets out today and has requested that entities respond by February 27, so she can compile the responses and present the summary at the March Board meeting.

8. Executive Session: There was no executive session.

9. Update Roll Call (only if executive session called): Since there was no executive session, there was no need for an updated roll call.

10. Discussion and possible action regarding the financial report and current fiscal year budget issues:

11. Meeting and Action Items Summary:

Frank reviewed the following action items for network management and/or legal from this meeting:

1. Check to see if management has an agreement between Travis County and COA for fiber usage on 620.
2. Look into engaging a vendor to conduct a table top disaster recovery exercise in the next six months to a year.
3. Work with GAATN legal to draft a fiber sell policy between GAATN entities.
4. Schedule meeting with GAATN Board and Tech Chairmen to discuss increasing the Network Manager's spending authority.
5. Paul will send email regarding easements at Travis High School.
6. Facilitate meetings between GAATN Board and Tech Chairmen and COA Board Members to discuss GAATN Backup NOCC decommissioning.

12. Confirm date, time, and location for the next regular Board meeting on March 5, 2024 at 1:30 p.m. at LCRA Dalchau Service Center 3505 Montopolis Drive, Building A, Room A502, Austin, TX 78744 and via Video Conference on Microsoft Teams.

The date, time, and location for the next regular Board meeting were confirmed; the meeting adjourned at 2:34 p.m.