

**MINUTES**

**JOINT INTERIM COMMITTEE ON ADVANCED COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

**Wednesday, January 22, 2014**

**1:30 p.m.**

**Room 151, State Capitol  
Little Rock, Arkansas**

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The Joint Interim Committee on Advanced Communications and Information Technology met on Wednesday, January 22, 2014, at 1:30 p.m., in Room 151 of the State Capitol, in Little Rock, Arkansas. The following committee members attended:

Senators Bill Sample, Chair; Jake Files, Linda Chesterfield and Bobby Pierce. Representatives Mary Slinkard, Chair; Mary "Prissy" Hickerson, Karen Hopper, Sheilla Lampkin, Greg Leding, Charlotte Douglas (alternate), Andy Mayberry, Joe Jett (alternate), David Hillman (alternate), and David Whitaker (alternate).

Also attending: Senator Eddie Cheatham. Representatives Mary Broadway, John Catlett, Ann Clemmer, David Fielding, Jeremy Gillam, Debra Hobbs, and Stephen Meeks.

Senator Sample called the meeting to order.

**Geographic Information Systems Annual Report [EXHIBIT B]**

**Mr. Shelby Johnson, Geographic Information Officer, Arkansas Geographic Information Office (AGIO);** was recognized and presented a PowerPoint entitled, "Arkansas GIS Board, Annual Status Report of the Arkansas Spatial Data Infrastructure."

Mr. Johnson gave an update on Arkansas' spatial data infrastructure and its capabilities within the state. He reported that in 2009, AGIO created a single statewide master address file/program that could eventually be tied to the map. He explained that an address is one of the most collected and redundant pieces of information stored by government. According to Mr. Johnson, the master address program will eliminate redundancy and errors, ultimately saving money. AGIO has partnered with the County Assessor Mapping Program to focus on the development of parcel maps in Arkansas. Mr. Johnson reported that AGIO is providing technical assistance, leadership and guidance to the county assessor's office to map real estate tax parcels. He noted that this database is important to economic development in Arkansas.

According to Mr. Johnson, the road data for Arkansas was created in 2002 to provide a standardized road database that can be used by all levels of government, the private sector, and the public. This database has been completed for all seventy-five counties in Arkansas. Mr. Johnson stated that the database contains lines representing road names, address ranges, and postal codes. Maintenance of this database is primarily done by county 911 offices. AGIO does not create or develop any of the data however; it does integrate local information into a common database.

Since 2009 another database complimentary to that of the road database is the physical address point database. This database represents physical address locations and like the road data, is built by local government partners. Address point data improves emergency response, election administration, revenue generation, and economic development. According to Mr. Johnson, the physical address data is critical to public safety. The physical address point database currently has complete data for 48 of Arkansas' 75 counties. AGIO discovered that a lot of the 911 county operations were entirely paper-based operations. AGIO is working to try to move the county 911 operations from a paper environment to a digital environment. This is being done to update, maintain, and access the address information more expeditiously. Mr. Johnson mentioned that during the last legislative session, the General Assembly initiated a Blue Ribbon study on 911. The purpose of the study is to investigate 911 and public safety policy. He noted that AGIO supports this initiative.

Mr. Johnson announced that in 2011, AGIO began work on the State Broadband Data and Development Project with Connect Arkansas. At the end of 2014, this project will have added physical address point data for thirty-six counties. He stated that AGIO does not have a recurring funding source to invest in new data, noting that AGIO works with all of its counterparts such as state and federal agencies and local government to fund investments in new data. Some of the needs include: completing the parcel mapping in the counties that are not finished and having a recurring source of digital orthophotography.

**Arkansas Broadband Manager's Report [EXHIBIT C]**

Ms. Claire Bailey, Director, Department of Information Systems (DIS), was recognized and gave a brief overview of the Arkansas State Broadband Manager's Report.

Ms. Bailey stated that Act 1168 of 2013 designates the director of the Arkansas Department of Information Systems to serve as the state broadband manager to promote, develop, and coordinate broadband expansion and appropriate broadband infrastructure for all areas of the state. The initial report was to establish a baseline as to where Arkansas stands and to track how the state can move forward.

Ms. Bailey explained that broadband is a critical economic driver and a key element for excelling in education, noting that its availability is needed statewide. She emphasized Arkansas's need for affordable broadband with adequate speeds. Ms. Bailey reported the 2012 TechNet State-by-State Broadband Index ranked Arkansas 50<sup>th</sup> for broadband utilization. The data used to develop the state rankings is based upon three categories: broadband adoption, network speeds, and economic structure. Act 442 of the Regular Session of the 89<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, Connect America Fund (Federal Communications Commission), Delta Technology Education Center and FirstNet are some of the initiatives to increase broadband availability.

Ms. Bailey shared that some of the common barriers to getting broadband to the consumer are lack of interest, failure to see a need, too expensive and/or no access to a computer. According to an electronic survey entitled "Provider Barriers to Expansion of Broadband Coverage"—responses from 36 out of 77 providers surveyed showed that 59.9% expected cost to exceed revenue generated, 26.5% listed no barriers, 25.6% noted limited opportunities to expand, 26.5% listed regulatory issues, 23.5% cited competition, 23.5% noted the state of the economy, and 8.8% reported other reasons.

Ms. Bailey stated that some of the next steps for the next reporting period (July 1, 2014) include finalizing a broadband plan, continuing to conduct outreach with service providers, and working closely with Arkansas Connect to ensure that DIS is not duplicating any efforts.

Representative Douglas inquired about Arkansas' ranking 50<sup>th</sup> for broadband utilization and asked about internet cost in Arkansas compared to surrounding states. Ms. Bailey stated that this information can be added to the next report or if compiled sooner shared with committee staff for distribution.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:53p.m.