

## Notes: Meeting of the Regional Coordination Committee of the NYS GIS Association

Thursday, September 18, 2014, 11am – noon

**Attendees:** Star Carter, Jacob Needle, Doug Schuetz, Ross Baldwin, Steve Pollachov, Sam Wear, Lisa Warneke, Ben Houston, Jim Daly, Alan Leidner (Committee Chair and Assn. Past Pres.)

**Alan Leidner:** Announced that the NYSGISA Board approved an Open Data policy statement after receiving comments from Regional POCs, Board members, Committee Chairs and GAC members. The Policy Statement will soon be posted to the website. Based on a discussion with Sam Wear, may make sense for the Association to adopt a formal procedure for developing and approving future policy statements.

**Ben Houston, Chair Awards Committee:** Discussed the Association's Awards Program and invited POCs to nominate individuals in their regions to the different categories. Ben will send out detailed instructions. Deadlines are approaching for nominations for awards to be given out at the October Summit.

**Alan Leidner:** Reminded POCs about election nominations, the drive to re-register lapsed members, and the upcoming Summit encouraging members to attend. Mentioned the formation of the Transportation Professional Affiliation Group and expressed the hope that other PAGs would be formed in the near future.

### Reports from around the State

**Star Carter, Adirondacks:** Working on a grant to provide upgrades to GIS viewers.

**Jake Needle, Western NY GIS:** Held a GIS event on a battleship anchored in Buffalo harbor with about 75 attending. Planning a geocaching event in Erie County Park, and a GIS flash mob event for the spring.

**Doug Schuetz, Rockland County:** Doug has been named Commissioner of both the County Planning Department and the Public Transportation Department as well as retaining his GIS responsibilities. Working on modifying Rockland's data licensing policy. Hopes to report positive movement in the near future. Is close to launching a new application which will provide an information tool for the public to stay up to date on Indian Point nuclear power plant. May be applicable to other counties with nearby nuclear plants.

**Ross Baldwin, LIGIS:** Has been working on improving the LIGIS website. Will be holding a user conference on October 9<sup>th</sup> at Brookhaven Laboratory. Check [www.ligis.org](http://www.ligis.org) for details.

**Eileen Allen, North County:** Sent a written report describing a June 3 regional meeting at Plattsburgh State with 12 in attendance. Many traveled a long distance to get there. Meeting resulted in the scheduling of Pictometry afternoon workshops on 9/10 and 9/11 at Plattsburgh State. About 35 participants overall and considered a big success. Future events are being planned.

**Lisa Warneke, Syracuse region:** Interested in a status report for GIS in NYS counties to encourage Syracuse GIS development. Wanted to know if the Summit might contain content for interested community members. Alan said that NYSGISA officers are available for discussions.

**Alan Leidner, GISMO:** Initiated planning for GISMO's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary conference and celebration to be held in May 2015. Initiating free student membership. Working with the American Geographical Society

on a proposal for an ROI study for NYC and NYS. Starting to work with the US Geospatial Intelligence Foundation (USGIF).

**Jim Daly, GIO Suffolk County and newly elected vice-chair NYS Geospatial Advisory Council (GAC)**

Jim informed Regional POCs about the GAC meeting scheduled for Wednesday, Sept 24<sup>th</sup>. Andrew Nicklin, NYS Director of Open NY will speak. The GAC will also be considering a revision of the 1996 State GIS policy statement. Jim said he was looking for inputs from regional groups. Jim discussed the new structure of the GAC. Bill Johnson, State GIO, is no longer GAC Chair. Eric Herman was elected Chair and Jim, Vice-Chair. There is a new set of bylaws.

- Sam Wear wondered what the difference would be between the GAC and the NYS GIS Association. Jim agreed that there was the appearance of overlap but felt things would be sorted out over the next months as roles became more defined.
- Lisa Warneke noted that many smaller local governments are in the midst of a financial squeeze and GIS operations are affected. In the Syracuse area 30 units of local government have only 5 planning positions among them and practically no GIS personnel. Likely that across the state's poorer counties and municipalities GIS positions are being cut, at the same time that GIS could be part of modernization that could bring operational and financial benefits. Jim replied that for this reason the State was preparing to implement "Share GIS" to provide GIS services at no cost. Lisa remarked that without GIS personnel these services might not be used effectively and noted that what was needed were resources to institutionalize GIS at the local level. Alan L. agreed that this could be an issue that the Regional Committee and the NYSGISA push for. Jim agreed that GIS personnel in the trenches were needed. He noted that the GIS manager in Riverhead LI was at risk. He thought letters of support from key individuals, including the GIO and Association leadership, might have an impact.

**Action Item:**

Alan Leidner will follow up with Jim, GAC members, NYSGISA leadership and Bill Johnson on effective strategies for building GIS in less affluent, financially challenged jurisdictions. He will also determine whether letter writing to Riverhead leadership could be useful in preserving their GIS position. He will also follow up with Lisa Warneke to see whether a strategy can be devised to help promote GIS in the Syracuse region.