



MINUTES BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING April 7, 2021

Members Present:

Chris Fry	Sam Richert
Dave Hunstad, Chair	Jim Smith
Phil Lesnar	Ray Starr
Dan Munthe	Ben Wallace
Keith Novy	Patrick Warden
Jason Ponciano	Ward Westphal
Mark Sellin	

Counsel present:

Dean E. Parker, Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP
Kevin J. Moore, Hinshaw & Culbertson, LLP

Guests:

Tammy Gardner, General Manager, Minnesota, OCC
Kimberly Boyd, Customer Relationship Manager, OCC
Adam Franco, Director of Operations, OCC
Barbara Cederberg, Chief Operations Officer, GSOC
Olivia Phillips, Marketing and Public Awareness Specialist, GSOC
Dan Maschka, Damage Prevention Manager, Northern Natural Gas
Thomas Coffman, Engineer Principal, Minnesota Office of Pipeline Safety

On April 7, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. by Zoom videoconference, the Board of Directors meeting was called to order by Chair, Dave Hunstad. Roll call was taken and a quorum was determined to be present. Dean Parker was asked to act as recording secretary.

Chair's Report

Dave Hunstad congratulated OCC employees on promotions. Kimberly Boyd is being promoted to Customer Relationship Manager for some western states including Minnesota. Tammy Gardner has been promoted from Operations Manager at the notification center to General Manager for the Minnesota Notification Center. These promotions are a positive reflection on GSOC as the demands placed on them have prepared them well for the next step in their careers.

Dave Hunstad requested that Board members consider volunteering for national board engagement activities as the pandemic subsides. The OCC Users Group Conference is in September and covers issues of interest to notification centers. The National CGA Conference has



been deferred from the Spring to October and covers underground damage prevention more generally. Attendance keeps Minnesota engaged and helps collect and develop new ideas. Chris Fry noted he is attending the Global Excavation Safety Conference virtually this week.

Approval of Board Minutes

Upon motion made and duly seconded, the Board meeting minutes for the meeting on January 13, 2021 were approved as well as summary minutes for the February 3 and March 3 meetings.

Board Discussion: Reports from the Field

Jason Ponciano and Keith Novy noted significant contributions to ticket volumes due to cable drops and project builds as communications companies continue to build out infrastructure. Adam Franco noted that for the 1st quarter of 2021, OCC is seeing a 38% increase year over year in the amount of tickets on average across all of the States where OCC is active. Some of that increase is attributable to regions that were essentially shut down as to construction in the early part of 2020, but it still represents a substantial volume increase. Milder weather also likely played a significant role.

The Board discussed the issue of locators not being able to perform locates on time. Ben Wallace believes the process changes being implemented by GSOC in April should be helpful. He indicated tree tickets covering a large geography area continued to be a problem. For example, the City of Minneapolis intends to plant thousands of trees this year. Barb Cederberg intends to meet with the City to discuss how work flow may be evened out. Jason Ponciano noted that staffing was being looked at carefully and that communication between stakeholders was key. Ben Wallace indicated his company was attempting to add additional staff as well.

Last year there was good cooperation with Metronet in the fiber optic project build in Rochester, Minnesota. Parties noted they are already seeing fiber projects that no one has notified them about in parts of the State where there are limited resources. Communication companies are asked to advise locate companies of the general location and magnitude of planned project builds. The potential of reserve locate crews poised to travel to these locations was discussed but concerns were raised this would not be cost effective. All excavators on the Board confirmed they were anticipating a busier year and that activity was brisk already.

COO Report

Barb Cederberg noted the GSOC Strategic Plan continues to drive activities both within and outside the notification center. In general, the call center is operating very well and early ticket volume for the first 3 months of the year is up 23%.



The recommendations suggested by the process review team are being implemented in April, 2021. They include the following:

1. A dynamic high ticket volume alert will be placed on Mondays and Tuesdays where high volumes of tickets are expected. The alert will request excavators push start time of tickets out by ½ - 1 day in order to give facility operators more time to locate.
2. A suggestion will be made for meet tickets to be utilized based on the duration of work.
3. Marking instructions will be required when a ticket is updated a second time. This presumes that most of the time excavation work has been completed in a certain area so the remaining area to marked should be less.
4. Excavators will be asked to indicate the reason why no white marks are being made in the remarks section of the ticket in the event the excavator will not use white markings. In general, the Office of Pipeline Safety has indicated there are few instances where white marking is not practicable.
5. Excavators will be requested to furnish more precise marking instructions when they indicate mark entire lot if that is possible.

While these changes appear modest, they account for a substantial depletion of locate resources according to the process review team. The process team believes these changes will help improve timeliness and quality of locates during peak season.

Barbara Cederberg reviewed the Metrics Pilot Project where facility operators and excavators have each received certain data relevant to their tickets. Each of the top 100 facility operators and excavators by volume have received the report. Others may request the report and GSOC will provide it to them. Keith Novy inquired as to whether the frequency of these reports should increase, especially for excavators. Barb responded that it is a good deal of work and she will need to monitor this further.

Barb also indicated that GSOC is investing in the National Excavator Initiative. CGA has identified certain items excavators can specifically improve upon. GSOC is looking at really trying to reach excavators in the field. The pandemic prevents person to person visits but the National Excavator Initiative has created a number of videos. GSOC intends to purchase the rights to utilize them.

MnOPS Update

Thomas Coffman from the Office of Pipeline Safety advised the MnOPS virtual safety conference will be on April 16 and invitation reminders will go out shortly.



OCC Report

Kimberly Boyd indicated this would be her last presentation as General Manager of the center and noted how much she has enjoyed serving as General Manager for the notification center. OCC continues the work from home model for many CSRs and administrative staff. Currently, there are 89 agents working from home and 6 working from the call center. OCC did not have to suspend any training classes this year in Minnesota and used a hybrid system of office and in home training. There were 5 call taking CSR classes and a specialized ITIC review CSR class, 1 additional class is scheduled. 9 additional employees were kept on staff during the winter months spring in order to help stabilize work force and prepare for the busy season. They worked on various projects into the early Spring.

Ticket volumes for the first quarter increased 23% over the first quarter of 2020. There were over 5,000 homeowner tickets in March (vs. approximately 2,100 last year). Over 65% of those tickets filed by homeowners were online.

More ticket submitters are being qualified for online submission of emergency tickets. Some ticket submitters are expected to be qualified for direct release of all tickets. There are new key performance indicators for web tickets in 2021 which will help assure review and processing of those tickets within a shorter period of time.

There has been great cooperation from the stakeholders and online submission of tickets has increased to over 86% so far in 2021.

Keith Novy suggested that GSOC consider some kind of promotion to acknowledge the high volume of tickets and cooperation from ticket submitters this year. Barb will develop a promotion to announce.

Adjournment

There being no further business coming before the Board, upon motion made and duly seconded, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dean E. Parker
Recording Secretary

Next Meeting Dates:

GOPHER STATE ONE CALL

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One Hour Sessions:

May 5, 2021

June 2, 2021

Additional one hour sessions may be set

Tentative traditional Sessions (subject to cancellation):

November 10, 2021

January 12, 2022

Shorter interim meetings may be set