Montana Geospatial Information Advisory Council Business Meeting

9:00 a.m., November 13, 2025

Lewis and Clark County Library, Large Community Room, 120 S Last Chance Gulch, Helena, MT 59601

Executive Summary

Recording Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aea6SU8iE7M

Attendance

- **Council Members**: Jennie Stapp (Chair), Valentijn Hoff, Lee Macholz, Maureen Celander, Eric Spangenberg, Joe Kauffman, Brian DeMarco, Nick Youngstrom

- **Council Members Absent**: Allen Armstrong, Adam Carpenter

- **MSL Staff**: Erin Fashoway, Evan Hammer, Victoria Gersdorf (Admin), Sean Anderson, Rebekah Kamp, Troy Blandford, Garret Weichel, Patrick Jackson, Meghan Burns

Call to Order and Introductions

Timestamp: 00:00:00

- Chair Jennie Stapp called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees.

- Council members introduced themselves.

Agenda Changes

Timestamp: 00:02:30

- Action on the September 25, 2025, Executive Summary was postponed to the January 2026 meeting.

Approval of 2026 Meeting Dates

Timestamp: 00:06:00

Chair Stapp presented the proposed 2026 meeting dates. Discussion included avoiding January meetings during legislative sessions and possibly holding a pre-legislative check-in in December.

Motion: To approve the 2026 Council meeting dates

- **Moved by**: Valentijn Hoff

- **Seconded by**: Lee Macholz

- **Vote**: Unanimously approved

FY27 Budget Recommendation

Timestamp: 00:16:00

- Jennie Stapp presented the FY27 budget, noting a $50,000 increase due to inflation and pay adjustments.

- $500,000 was allocated for the grant program.

Motion: To recommend the FY27 budget to the State Library Commission

- **Moved by**: Brian DeMarco

- **Seconded by**: Eric Spangenberg

- **Vote**: Unanimously approved

MGIA Grant Program Internal Review

Timestamp: 00:51:00

- Sean Anderson presented the final internal review report.

- Recommendations included simplifying program focus, adopting a realistic and selective approach to grant application approval via a biennial grant cycle, streamlining program process and administration, support capacity building by focusing on standard projects, enhance contributions to statewide services and partnerships, refine training, evaluation, and accountability structures, review and evaluate grantee feedback and assess impact data.

Motion: To accept the final internal grant review report

- **Moved by**: Lee Macholz

- **Seconded by**: Valentijn Hoff

- **Vote**: Unanimously approved

FY27–28 Grant Program Priorities

Timestamp: 01:02:00

- The Council approved pre-funding of previously approved Tier 1 grant applications from FY25, totaling approximately $140,000.

Motion: To approve pre-approval of previously approved Tier 1 grants

- **Moved by**: Eric Spangenberg

- **Seconded by**: Valentijn Hoff

- **Vote**: Unanimously approved

GIS Day – Modern Cartography

Timestamp: 01:03:00

- Troy Blanford and staff presented LiDAR-based cartographic posters.

- The Council praised the outreach and educational value of the materials.

MGIA Council Appointments

Timestamp: 01:37:00

- Jennie Stapp welcomed Nick Youngstrom as the new DNRC representative.

- Maureen Celander, Brian DeMarco, and Eric Spangenberg were reappointed.

- The private sector seat remains vacant.

Esri Master Agreement

Timestamp: 01:39:00

- Erin Fashoway announced the successful negotiation of a new 4-year Esri Master Purchase Agreement.

- The agreement enables continued access to GIS software for state agencies.

Esri Governance Workshop

Timestamp: 01:45:00

- Council members discussed outcomes from a recent governance workshop facilitated by Esri.

- Topics included inter-agency collaboration, data standardization, and the role of the Council in supporting statewide GIS governance.

Financial Report

Timestamp: 01:54:00

- Jennie Stapp presented the FY26 Q1 financial report.

- Spending was on track, and the Council reviewed the updated collections dashboard.

MGIA Collections Dashboard

Timestamp: 01:55:00

- Erin Fashoway demonstrated the dashboard, noting a 40% increase in recorded document fees in Yellowstone County following the October 1 fee adjustment.

- Staff presented updates to the MGIA collections dashboard, showing a promising increase in recorded document fees following the October 1 fee adjustment.

GIS Coordination Report

Timestamp: 02:03:00

- Erin Fashoway provided updates on strategic goals, including improved stakeholder communication, support workflows, and upcoming webinars. The Council discussed the Geospatial Maturity Assessment and its implications for funding and policy.

- She also discussed the Geospatial Maturity Assessment and its implications for funding and policy.

Council Member Updates

Timestamp: 02:30:00

- **MAGIP**: Eric Spangenberg shared updates on GIS Day events and the upcoming Big Sky GeoCon in Whitefish.

- **Montana University System**: Valentijn Hoff reported on GIS instruction trends and interest in lidar data. He also noted a shift toward open-source GIS tools amongst his colleagues and university students.

- **Local Government**: Maureen Celander reported Garfield County is coming online with GIS and shared examples of Survey123 use.

- **Tribal**: Brian DeMarco- no updates to report.

- **MARLS**: Joe Kauffman noted a Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for December and will have an update ready regarding that in the January MGIAC meeting.

- **State**: Nick Youngstrom- no update.

- **Federal**: Allen Armstrong was absent.

- **Private Business**: Position remains vacant- no update.

Other Business & Announcements

Timestamp: 02:51:00

- The Council discussed the January 29, 2026 meeting (to be held online).

- Topics will include grant program status, Council orientation, MAGIP panel planning, and a show-and-tell by Maureen Celander.

- Floodplain mapping updates and MAGIP board representation will also be addressed.

Public Comment

Timestamp: 02:53:00

- No public comment was received.

Adjournment

Timestamp: 02:54:00

Chair Jennie Stapp adjourned the meeting at 12:25 p.m.