

State of Connecticut
GENERAL ASSEMBLY



CONNECTICUT DATA ANALYSIS TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY BOARD
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Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 2, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 A.M. by Chairman Scott Gaul.

The following members were present:

Voting Members: Bree Berner, Michelle Riordan-Nold, Seth Klaskin, Thad Dymkowski.

Non-voting Members: Alfredo Herrera, Christopher Regan, Colleen Murphy, David Labbadia, Deborah Schander, Joe Greelish, John Neumon, Michelle Parlos, Scott Gaul.

Guests: Amy Griffin, Nick Smarra.

Chairman Gaul expressed appreciation for former member Frank Gentile, and the commitment and service he provided to the Board throughout his tenure.

Chairman Gaul elaborated on the powers and duties of the Board, which include advising the executive, legislative and judicial branches of the government on data policy, development, and maintenance. The Board may also issue reports and call on agencies to appear before the Board to provide information regarding data.

Chairman Gaul provided timelines for the development of the 2025-2026 State Data Plan . He conveyed his aspirations of member involvement throughout the development process.

Additionally, he noted that the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) strategic planning will also be discussed today due to its many parallel duties with the Board.

Mr. Herrera presented on GIS. He provided a summary of GIS, including historical timelines dating back to its inception. He elaborated on each step undertaken for the development and accomplishment of a five-year strategic plan. The process began with literature review, identifying successes and shortcomings by looking at other strategic plans, interviews with stakeholders, and surveys to better understand community needs.

Mr. Hererra shared the goals of the GIS plan, which include the use effective governance, policies, and standards to manage geospatial data; the implementation of a sustainable funding model for imagery acquisition, GIS data, and geospatial technologies; an increased access to data, spatial analysis, web services, and viz capabilities for local and regional govt and other stakeholders; providing direct analytic support and enhance capacity building for State Agencies, and; broadening communication and engagement across different levels of government and other organizations.

Chairman Gaul proceeded to discussions regarding the State Data Plan for 2025-2026. He noted that the deadline for the preliminary draft of the plan is due October 1, 2024, after which the Board will hold a public hearing on November 5, 2024. The finalized plan is due December 31, 2024. He encouraged members to ask questions and if available, share recommendations of stakeholders that may provide information and guidance to achieve the goals of the Board. The goals include improved access to data, supporting agency capacity, and using data for decision making.

Chairman Gaul emphasized consideration of these pillars, and whether the Board should maintain continuity or revise for adjustments to incorporate recommendations from members.

Ms. Griffin presented on agency communication and surveys regarding data. She and Chairman Gaul stated that the results of the subsequent report following agency communication will be available to Board members in the next few weeks.

Ms. Griffin elaborated on the varied success of the Board's three goals within the agencies. She also noted challenges, which include budget and staff skillset among others.

Mr. Klaskin asked whether agencies, such as Department of Administrative Services (DAS) offer data training to existing staff and whether agencies have such capacity.

Chairman Gaul stated that multiple resources are indeed available, including training through DAS, however, there is demand for additional resources, availabilities, and tailored trainings.

Mr. Klaskin added that his perception of the results of surveys and other communication with the agencies seems to focus on the need for an institutional approach for teaching data access, and pondered whether it may be useful for the report to include recommendations for funding a concentrated educational program for agency data officers and other staff

Mr. Neumon asked whether job titles and descriptions have been captured in the surveys. He noted that even in his role as an Assistant Attorney General, there is much focus on data, however, different agencies may use different titles.

Chairman Gaul confirmed that the survey questions reflect job classes and will be verifiable when the report becomes available.

Mr. Labbadia stated that the end users of data will expect improved visualization and analytics. He emphasized the importance of offering training for data scientists and engineers in order to strive to achieve a maximum improvement of visualization and analytics.

Chairman Gaul stated that Pauline Zaldonis, the Open Data Coordinator for OPM, actively works with agencies in this regard, although added that the plan would attempt to address any existing gaps.

Mr. Klaskin recommended a standardized data set management so that agencies can have a formulated following of data sets they prioritize or maintain with the hope of building a

comprehensive data library.

Ms. Riordan-Nold added to Mr. Klaskin's recommendation and informed and reminded members of the Data Collaborative which seeks to help the public make informed decisions based on data. She contemplated the measurements agencies would use in standardizing data.

Mr. Dymkowski asked the number of agencies that have maintained data organization plans and whether that had a bearing on their responses, and how the Board can implement them the State Data Plan.

Chairman Gaul explained that it varies by agency and relevancy on their day-to-day work. Some agencies have comprehensive data policies, while others may be basic.

Multiple members of the Board, including Mr. Klaskin, Mr. Dymkowski, and Mr. Labbadia offered comments on Artificial Intelligence (AI) data. They noted the usefulness of AI, however, expressed concern of possible challenges, including the creation of digital identity.

Chairman Gaul concurred and clarified that AI privacy and security will be considered and addressed as it is likely to impact agencies.

Seeing no further comments or questions, the meeting was adjourned.