

Minutes of the Property Rates Information Management System
Working Group meeting held 22nd May 2006
at Mayville Regional Offices.

1. Welcome

Mervin Naik chaired the meeting.

Present: C Botha, Dept of Agriculture

L Couzens, LGTA
E Naude, DBSA
R Hulley, LGTA
Z Mohammed, Dataworld
M Naik, LGTA (Chairman)
J Channing, LGTA
B Mbatha, Deeds Office
J Louw, SG
C Ntansi, LGTA
M Fitchet, SAIV

2. Confirmation of the minutes from the previous meeting, 12th April 2006

The following changes were effected to the previous minutes:

P2 Item 3.2.1 MEC to read Minister of Land Affairs.

P2 Item 3.2.3 VRU to read BRU (Bio-resource Unit)

P2 Item 3.3 Change Provincial Treasury to National treasury.

P2 Insert 'Land zoning information is not yet available for all the rural areas. It may be documented but in most cases the LUMS has not yet been adopted by Council.'

The minutes were confirmed and accepted.

Additional agenda items:

Feedback from municipal workshops
Link with Dept of Agriculture
Umzimkulu data
Website
LG net

3. Items for discussion

3.1 Land parcel information

The meeting was formally introduced to Zack Mohammed, Dataworld, who has been appointed as the service provider to assist the Department in acquiring and packaging the base data sets per municipality. The contract is 6 months duration. The scope of work includes the maintenance on the data until mid October 2006. It is anticipated that the benefit of this support from the Department will be experienced as a saving for municipalities in the prices of their GV's.

In addition to the base data sets being acquired from various sources the Department will compile the status of the base data sets per municipality. At the implementation workshops the presentation made on base data sets, Municipal Registers of Property and the Information System focuses on the necessity for municipalities to appoint service providers to acquire information which is outstanding and to prepare their Municipal Registers as a matter of urgency. There is a concern that municipalities are not acting upon this recommendation to comply with the required time frames. In most cases municipalities have indicated that they would combine the preparation of the Registers with the preparation of the GV's. A cautionary note is that this may have an impact on the price of the GV's. The working group needs to strategise regarding how best to support municipalities in achieving this objective. It was stressed that municipalities include the status of the base data sets in their briefs to the valuers.

The option of proceeding to prepare the registers centrally through the Department was explored. It's feasibility is flawed by procurement issues though obviously a cost saving exists.

The meeting heard that the focus of the Department during the past month had been on the implementation workshops. These are 2 day sessions with the municipal officials of the various municipalities within each district. The purpose of the workshops is to provide accessible support material to enable the municipalities to proceed with the implementation process.

3.1.1 Approved and registered layers

Z Mohammed informed the meeting that the objective was to provide municipalities with the best available data sets. A presentation showing the status of the base data sets per municipality was viewed. Only 6 municipalities have prepared Registers which are current and maintained. 28 municipalities have property registers which require work to bring them to current standards. The majority have conducted some of the work but failed to have any maintenance in place which means that this needs to be updated. The agricultural sector is not adequately captured in most municipalities. The Public Service Infrastructure layer is of particular concern as the transport corridors often don't close out.

3.2 Data alignment

J Louw reported that the SG's offices continues with their work to complete the approved cadastral layer by December 2006. This has now been prioritised as an overtime project. The registered layer is outside the control of the SG. The Deeds Office and the SG continue to negotiate regarding a 5 year plan to link their respective data.

The SG has the mandate to maintain the registered layer and has adequate capacity to do this task. The real issue is around data cleansing, obtaining a current, seamless layer for the Province. It is important that the positional accuracy between the layers matches up. Of concern is the capacity of the municipalities to assemble this registered layer as the different layers tend to have different dates. The valuers can only rely on getting what is available per municipality.

3.2.2 Ingonyama Trust Board

The formality of acquiring the property information from the ITB was in the process of being finalised.

3.2.3 Department of Agriculture

J Channing reported that 2 training sessions had been convened by the SAIV with the training conducted by the Department of Agriculture during June 2006. A further waiting list was an indication of the demand for this information. Our thanks were extended to Cobus Botha and his colleagues at the Department of Agriculture for this opportunity. This software is a useful tool to support agricultural valuations. The Department of Agriculture indicated its willingness to extend this software to municipalities.

3.3 Deeds information

In most cases municipalities have obtained a single snap shot of this layer but failed to maintain it. The recurring problem is around capacity for this function. The proposal to use the available funding to purchase a dump from the Deeds Office was to be tabled for approval at the Steering Committee meeting, 24th May 2006. This information was now critical towards preparing the data sets required by the municipalities for their tenderers, July/August 2006.

3.3.1 Umzinkulu data set

Technically this municipality is still awaiting the requisite proclamation to enable the deeds information to be moved from Umtata to Pietermaritzburg. The time frames for this action are uncertain. The Department has undertaken to meet with this municipality to put a specific support programme in place towards the implementation of the MPRA.

3.4 LUMS

R Hulley explained that 19 municipalities have completed LUMS which have yet to be accepted by Council decisions. The Town Planning is still the legally acceptable layer which would be packaged as a base data set. The draft LUMS would be included where possible.

M Fitchet noted that LUMS offers information about land use rights. Valuers would find this information helpful in interpreting potential especially in the absence of the parcel on the existing roll.

R Hulley was requested to liaise with the service provider regarding the inclusion of these options in the base data sets. J Channing was requested to provide R Hulley with a list of all municipalities who would be implementing in July 2007. It was agreed that the 19 municipalities with LUMS information should be advised of the necessity to adopt these and to include this information in the GV tender brief.

3.5 Aerial photography

M Naik informed the meeting that the imagery expected by July 2006 had been delayed until September 2006. This is a critical delay as this recent imagery set will not form part of the base data sets to be packaged for municipalities to distribute to their tenderers at the compulsory briefing sessions held July/August 2006.

There was discussion around the scenario of obtaining a 2007 set of imagery for the entire province. It was agreed that a single set of imagery all from the same date would be hugely beneficial for the province. A strategy towards getting buy in from the municipalities towards pooling resources for this asset must be considered. E Naude stated that there were other users, Stats SA, DWAF, DPLG who would also benefit and agreed to lobby for contributions.

3.6 Property Rates Information Management System

It is clear that the compilation of all the various layers and the maintenance of these as a current registered layer requires a system. The meeting heard that the advertisement calling for Expressions of Interest have received a number of enquiries. The closing date for submission was 23rd June 2006. It was agreed that an important criteria from a procurement aspect was the existence of the preferred system in a municipality. This working group would have the opportunity to attend presentations of the short listed service providers towards a decision to procure a system which matched the requirements of the Province. It was agreed, in principle, that any members of the working group who had a vested interest in the procurement of a particular system should reclude themselves from the meetings to address this issue.

3.7 Website

The meeting was advised that Development Planning (Natalie Astrup) were now hosting the MPRA website. A hyperlink would enable users to access the site from the original address on the Departmental home page. It was anticipated that the transfer of information would be complete by 24th May 2006.

3.8 LG Net

E Naude lead discussion around the possibility of municipal valuers accessing information using the LG Net as a vehicle. The meeting heard that there were different opinions of the LG Net from municipalities but this option needs to be explored.

4. Date of next meeting: 22nd June, 9h00, at the Mayville Offices.

5. The meeting was closed with thanks.

This is an accurate reflection of the matters discussed at the meeting held 22nd May 2006.

Signed: (Chairman)