Delaware Open Data Council

Monday, August 22 2016

Approved Meeting Minutes

Councilmembers Attending:

* Rhonda Lehman, DTI
* Dana Rohrbough, GIC/DOS
* Steve Yeatman, Kids Dept.
* Mike Mahaffie, DNREC
* Robert Zimmerman, DNREC
* Adrian Peoples (in place of David Blowman), DOE
* Li Wen Lin, DelDOT
* Dean Stotler, OMB
* Jill Fredel, DHSS

Not Present:

* Meredith Tweedie

Others in Attendance:

* Miriam Pamillo, Office of State Planning
* Bonnie, DNREC

Council Meeting Called to Order at 1:03

* Review the previous meeting minutes
* Ms. Lin made a motion to approve the minutes and Mr. Stotler seconded, minutes were approved.

**Open Data Portal Launch Event**

Event was scheduled for Sept 22 but the date has shifted. Trying to work out the schedule now. We want to launch in coordination with a civic hacking event.

Mr Stotler – does this mean that we won’t launch until October?

Ms. Lehman - Soft launch before the press event, but not a month in advance. Then we need to do quality assurance of the data. We would get all of this done several days in advance. The press event we would have a scripted demonstration – highlight the visualizations.

Mr Yeatman - We could do a press event – then a press release for the hack night.

**Status of Datasets**

Ms. Lehman walked the council thru the latest dataset spreadsheet. Some datasets are still missing metadata and data dictionaries. Automatic refreshes are important.

DELJIS – meeting with Peggy Bell this afternoon – need automation for refreshes

DELDOT GIS layers – data dictionaries are starting

Mr. Mahaffie – can we change some of our agency priorities?

Ms. Lehman – Yes, if you have other datasets that you want to bring in, let’s add those to the list.

Mr. People’s – we are interested in showing visualizations related to demographics. We are thinking through this – and they will discuss internally.

Mr. Stotler – the state employee salary dataset is missing from this list.

Ms. Lehman – this list is not the whole list, this is just the high priority list. It will be a semi-annual refresh, and data dictionaries will be important. We are requiring data dictionaries, and these need to be understandable to the public, cannot be just a repeat of the column name.

Mr. People’s - for Department of Education, we cannot identify specific students. When we have any category where the count is below 15 it should not be shown, because it could identify specific students at low counts.

Ms. Lin – metadata – are you going to post the information as it is for the launch? It’s a lot of information, with a lot of definitions.

Ms. Lehman – if you want to choose that path, that’s fine. It can’t be left that way for good.

Ms. Wen Lin – would be good to see what feedback we get once it launches, so we can know what to define better.

Ms. Lehman – back to DOE and data suppression. For counts less than 15, this count is not published because of FERPA laws.

Mr. Peoples - We suppress the total as well, so it cannot be deducted from other numbers. So, we would need to add that number, say Hawaiians, into another category, but then it’s mixing categories together. We do not want to hide data, but do not want to identify individuals either.

Mr. Mahaffie – have you looked at what the census does on this?

Mr. Peoples - Yes, when feasible, they combine them in the census.

Mr. Yeatman – I’d like to continue this discussion at a later time, because we are struggling with the same issues and questions in our data. We were thinking of the less than 15 idea, and now I hear more information about that.

Mr. Stotler – have we heard about the other schools or departments of education doing?

Ms. Lehman – we can look at CT and NY.

Mr. Peoples – CT has student population 3 times the size.

Mr. Stotler- consistently will be important.

Ms. Fredel – do any of the open data portals publish in Spanish?

Ms. Lehman – we can take that back and find out.

Ms. Fredel – if we have additional datasets, we can add those to the list?

Ms. Lehman – yes, if you have more, we can add it to the list. We could also make it happen quickly depending on the data refresh and data dictionaries.

**Expanding the Council**

Ms. Lehman introduces the topic of expanding the Open Data Council.

Mr. Stotler – yes, Finance must be here. Office of Labor Market Information (OOLMI) too.

Mr. Mahaffie – OOLMI has tried a lot before, but there’s a bit of a threshold that they are at now.

Mr. Stotler – if not to generate the data, then to repurpose the data in the platform.

Mr. Mahaffie – they have struggled with how to present data.

Mr. Zimmerman – when the site goes live, will there be a feature where we will ask what they’d like to see?

Ms. Lehman – yes. It’s on our Council site now.

Mr. Stotler – what do we do with suggestions? It’s a great way to get good consulting.

Ms. Lehman – well, part of that is that we should attend their hacknights.

Mr. Yeatman – it’s easier to ask the agencies to participate now, since we will have data licenses available still.

Ms. Lehman – we should talk with the tech community to figure out how we work together.

Mr. Stotler – my review of data early on of other state’s open data portal – there were businesses that wanted to repurpose data for economic benefit. Credit collection agencies trying to get state employee data so they can do wage attachments. There may be things that they suggest, but that we don’t think is the state’s business. Connecticut has some examples. It is a requested dataset.

Ms. Rohrbough – the suggest a dataset is a vote up, social element in the portal.

Mr. Stotler – we need to be aware of opposite market pressures as well.

Mr. Yeatman – the data at the Kids Department is narrow, and the data at Kids Count is statewide, how do we bring this in, even though we do not gather that data.

Would we need permission? Like with Kids Count?

Mr. Stotler – datasets like that may reduce the requests that come in.

Mr. Mahaffie- some of what these organizations do is mix datasets that are state data with other data. We should have a discussion with them.

Mr. Peoples – we are trying to get to aggregate data to the portal – so that we don’t create aggregate datasets that are contradictory to the portal.

Mr. Stotler – Finance, Labor, and DSHS – is their data largely though DELJIS?

Mr. Mahaffie – Office of Highway Safety might be a good

Ms. Fredel – How about the Courts?

Ms. Lehman – that is the judicial branch – should we invite the executive branch first?

Mr. Stotler – we should expand at a controlled pace. We should consider Department of Agriculture.

Mr. Zimmerman – what’s your capacity to deal with this? We need to be able to support them. How prepared are the other agencies? Are these things already put together, like data dictionaries? May need a lot of care of feeding.

Ms. Lehman – it is a learning experience, I’m working with the folks closest to the data – work directly that data, and sit through it and get it done. That is the business side of things.

Mr. Zimmerman – if the timing of the Portal is not at the same time, the interaction would be more difficult. This is a challenge for us.

Ms. Lehman – incremental expansion is a wise thing. We can keep reprioritizing the master list.

Mr. Zimmerman – if there was a self-assessment so that we can give this homework to agencies first so they know what we will be asking for.

Ms. Lehman – if we expand, does this mean that the folks joining us, are they voting members?

Mr. Stotler – has Secretary Collins talked with the other cabinet members about increasing access to their data, but not necessarily joining the Council.

Ms. Lehman – the Executive Order does not need to be amended. Governor can appoint new members.

Mr. Stotler – Sec. Collins should drive this. Courts and Legislative and Executive Orders – if we invite Courts to participate but without membership on the Council, then that might be tough.

Ms. Fredel – with Meredith as a member of the Council, she can help too.

Ms. Lehman – we can invite them to the table, the executive orders mention legislative, judicial, and municipalities.

Mr. Stotler – we should wait until after we launch. They might be better suited to come in later. We would be walking the walk already.

Mr. Zimmerman – let it be guided by the call from the public for data from those other agencies, and second, the portal is an asset to us – it is an opportunity to leverage that tool. Some of the agencies might see benefit in the tool.

Mr. Stotler – that is a cabinet meeting.

Ms. Fredel – or that we recommend that to the cabinet?

Mr. Stotler- there may be datasets that would be helpful to the other agencies. We have to say, we are ready for new data. Who is ready next?

Ms. Wen Lin – Council should stand up the portal, and champion it.

Ms. Lehman - If we add more voting members, it might get harder to make decisions.

Ms. Wen Lin – The Governor’s Executive Order is the mandate.

Ms. Lehman – we will ask Sec. Collins to talk to the cabinet. And we can add them after the launch.

Mr. Zimmerman – is Sec. Collins already showing this at an upcoming cabinet meeting? Would be really good for him to demonstrate this, and ask for the next members who are ready.

Mr. Zimmerman – question on data mashups. Can people make mashups, or do we make them?

Ms. Lehman - It can go both ways.

Mr. Zimmerman - Is there a way to catalog what people think they learned from the data mashups? How do we discover what they discover?

Mr. Zimmerman - Tell us what you learned. Tweet to us, and send us a stories

Mr. Peoples - What kind of stories could be told across agencies.

Mr. Stotler – we may not agree with the interpretation. We want that feedback, but we have to be careful about this. There should be a feedback opportunity.

Mr. Zimmerman – reviews but then also the owner can comment.

Mr. Mahaffie – the whole community can also help self correct.

Ms. Fredel – you’ll have multiple groups drawing their own interpretations. Even a good accurate blogger will check their interpretations for agencies to comment back.

Mr. Mahaffie – the data owners could flag things they see too.

Ms. Wen Lin – data mashups that are part of the

Mr. Mahaffie - Council website – we can highlight great mashups we see.

Mr. Stotler – like an awards program, created useful government improvement, etc. Could be a useful analytics.

Ms. Wen Lin – even if they build an application, then to work with agencies.

Ms. Rohrbough – Check out GoCodeColorado.com, and see what has been done in another state. The Delaware Secretary’s of State’s office is interested in offering prizes for winning applications.

Mr. Mahaffie – could also put out our own prompts, not based around our data,that would then get us to other datasets needed.

**Strategic Plan**

Ms. Lehman – we are at the point where the strategic plan is due 9/30 per the EO. But, we have been so focused on the launch of the portal, that we may need a month extension.

How can we strategically expand the portal?

Mr. Zimmerman – were the dates in the EO first. I would think we would want to stand up the portal first, and get feedback.

Mr. Stotler – we should then draft it, given the administration timeline.

Mr. Peoples – we should consider the timeline of transition.

Mr. Stotler – E.O.’s are kept unless they are rescinded.

Ms. Wen Lin – DTI and DOS should have this in their transition plan.

Mr. Zimmerman – then write the plan with a revision planned in 6 months based on user experience.

Mr. Mahaffie – if you have other state’s framework to work on. Then we can give you comments before the next meeting.

Ms. Rohrbough -We can send you the outline.

Mr. Peoples – should it be to grow the data (deepening the roots of the data). DOE has 4 different sets that we want to add. Should the plan consist of going to saturation in data. Will the cabinet secretaries then think ‘we have enough data’.

Mr. Mahaffie – continual process for revising, rethinking, and strategic plan should be there.

Mr. Stotler –we also get up to the data set limit, and then it’s a funding question too. The strategic plan needs to balance continuing enhancement and continuing improvement. Do we continue to burn datasets for those with low views? Also, if we bring in datasets from other areas of government

Mr. Yeatman – also funding will be a part of the plan, growth, expansion of datasets.

Mr. Stotler – this shouldn’t be a fee for use for agencies.

Mr. Zimmerman – the cost of getting the data ready – that might be something agencies need to consider.

Mr. Stotler – we should make sure that we are saying this is with existing resources, not adding resources.

Ms. Lehman – the automatic refreshes should help to reduce the time needed overtime.

Mr. Zimmerman – this should save us resources over time.

**Open Discussion**

Ms. Wen Lin – do you want to use Google Docs for the Strategic Plan?

Ms. Rohrbough – yes, we can do that.

Mr. Zimmerman – what about Open Data Delaware? Will they want some consultation on the strategic plan?

Ms. Lin – yes, we should.

Mr. Stotler – refresh it 6 months and get their feedback then, or before? We should come up with it.

Mr. Zimmerman – would be great to say we have a strategic plan and that we will refresh it based on experience.

Next Meeting - Week of September 19th Ms. Lehman

Adjourned.