

Minutes

2010 WI Presidents Council Annual Meeting

Monday, October 18th, 2010
Meeting room 121A, Dane County Extension Building, 1 Fen Oak Ct., Madison

Attendance

WI County Surveyors Association (Bruce Bowden)
WI Department of Transportation (Glen Schaefer)
WI Geographic Information Coordination Council (Gregg Moore, Kenneth Parsons)
WI Geographic Information Officer (Curtis Pulford)
WI Land Information Association (Kelly Felton, AJ Wortley)
WI Land Information Officer Network (Mary Jean Ritchie, Fred lausly)
WI Land Title Association (Mike McDonnell)
WI Real Property Listers (Ann Burton, Lauree Kratcha)
WI Register of Deeds (Dixie Edge)
WI Society of Land Surveyors (Frank Thousand, James L Rein)
WI State Cartographer's office (Howard Veregin, Jim Lacy)

Call to order

Meeting called to order by Jim Lacy (meeting organizer) at 1:00 p.m.

Introductions and Agenda Repair

After brief introductions, Jim asked that we swap the WIGICC and Presidents Council discussions for better flow. No other changes requested.

Presidents Council Future Directions

Jim presented the group with a very brief history of the Presidents Council. It was established in 1996, and has met 11 times over the years. Frank thought the group was originally formed by Roxanne Moore (Burnett County) in response to miscommunications on some legislative issues at that time. The group was formed *ad hoc*, no formal bylaws or charter exist. Jim explained that over the years, many different topics have been discussed at the meetings, but the primary focus has traditionally been on legislative issues. Frank added that it was also a good opportunity to build relationships between the organizations, and get to know the people involved.

In 1996, there were (according to 1998 minutes) 24 organizations on the contact list that received invitations to attend. Jim reported that according to past minutes, typically around a dozen organizations would attend each year. Some associations that participated early on, but not currently: consulting engineers, state bar association, realtors association, county treasurer's association, county clerks, and WI Bankers Association.

During the early years, the Presidents Council met regularly, until a three year gap in 2004-2006. No one present knows why the group failed to meet during that time. WSLS got it started again in 2007. Jim volunteered to be the "archivist" for the group in 2008, and keeps copies of all the meeting minutes.

With that as background, Jim led a discussion on "future directions" of the Council. This was motivated by an apparent lack of understanding of the Presidents Council. According to Jim, some folks assume this group functions more like a "true" council with officers, regular meetings, etc. He felt it was important for the group to re-affirm their purpose, and revisit the list of organizations invited to participate. He proposed four discussion topics: purpose, scope of membership, branding, logistics.

Purpose: Jim asked the fundamental question if this annual meeting of associations is a valuable experience, and if it should continue. All agreed it was important to continue, and that legislative issues should remain the focus.

Membership: Jim asked how, or if, the group would like to expand the list of participants in the annual meeting. Early on, there were around 24 organizations on the contact list, but the number apparently dropped off over the years. No one present knows why certain organizations have "dropped out", but it could be as simple as a missed e-mail communication. The group agreed in principle that we need to re-examine the list of invitees.

This led to a discussion of how to keep the meetings manageable. Jim observed that the current attendees are largely producers and maintainers of land information (broadly defined) versus users. Limiting the scope of "membership" to land information custodians could be one way to benchmark which organizations are invited. Otherwise, if every potential association that touches land information is invited, the meetings could get large and potentially less valuable.

Kelly added that she likes keeping the meetings less formal, and not try to grow the Presidents Council too large. The Presidents Council is also a great way to connect with other people who might be able to offer help and support on particular issues. Jimmy felt that an organization like WLIA (Wisconsin Land Information Association) is a better forum for getting users of land information together, and that the Presidents Council should continue focusing on legislative issues. Howard suggested there could be some benefits with expanding the participation to a broader audience.

With regard to legislation, Curt proposed that this group could invite appropriate legislative committees to attend our meetings and listen to our discussions. Jim relayed a conversation he had with Rep. Joe Parisi and Sen. Mark Miller where they gave the advice that constituent groups should "have their acts together and stories straight" before they approach legislators for help. Point being, it may not be helpful to have legislative committees involved as we try to hash things out.

Glenn noted, and others agreed, that there is some confusion about who was invited to this meeting. Jim will send the list of invitees. All agreed to look at the list and propose additional land information-related organizations to invite in the future. We will discuss proposed additions via email after Jim receives updates from the group.

We held off on deeper discussion of logistics until after the WIGICC presentation.

WIGICC (Wisconsin Geographic Information Coordination Council)

Gregg Moore, WIGICC Chair, introduced Howard, Kenny, and Curtis. Gregg indicated there are several reasons for WIGICC attending the meeting today. First, they want to build a relationship between WIGICC and the Presidents Council, since the missions of the two groups appear similar. They also want to make the Presidents Council aware of their efforts to seek permanency through legislation.

The WIGICC reps then provided a brief background on the purpose of WIGICC, and the history of how it was formed. Gregg distributed copies of the recent report on WIGICC accomplishments and recommendations for the future.

One recommendation in the report is for WIGICC to seek permanency through legislation. This appears to be the best way to establish a viable, permanent council compared to other methods such as Executive Order. WIGICC has been researching how councils in other states were established.

Among other recommendations, the report recommends membership be expanded to 19 voting members (currently 15 members). Three at-large members will be added, plus an additional municipal representative.

Ann asked how the Council will be funded. Is it looking for support through Wisconsin Land Information Program funds (WLIP)? Curt said nobody intends to tap into WLIP funds. Greg noted that funding to this point has come largely through a U.S. Geological Survey grant to the SCO. When asked where the funding would come from if not WLIP, Curt indicated that would be up to the legislature to decide.

Ann noted that she hopes WIGICC will be a body that considers broad input, and does not dictate policy to the rest of the state.

On proceeding with legislation, Curt suggested the Council could seek legislation that would create and validate the Council, but provide no funding. This might make initial approval easier, but going back a second time for funding could be very difficult. The general advice they have received thus far is to "do it right" initially and seek the entire package at the beginning.

Curt welcomes advice, now or in the future, from those present who might have any suggestions on how the Council should move forward with legislation.

Finally, if the Presidents Council is interested, WIGICC is willing to provide logistical help to keep the Presidents Council running. This could include, for example, assistance scheduling meetings, space on the WIGICC Web site, online forums for communication, and so on.

After discussion, the group agreed they want to keep things informal, and are not interested in having a Web site at this time. Putting the minutes online was not viewed as critical. This could be revisited in the future.

Jim offered to continue as meeting organizer in the future, if the group is interested. This would be a departure from tradition, where the organizer rotated between associations. The group felt having a single organizer would be good for continuity. Jim will organize the 2011 meeting.

Round Robin Updates - 10 minutes (max) per Association

County Surveyors Association (Bruce Bowden)

- Lack of funding for Public Land Survey System re-monumentation continues to be a big deal for most county surveyors.
- More education is also needed to help construction contractors, for example, understand the implications if they destroy monuments in the ground. This is an ongoing problem.
- Glenn noted that if a height modernization mark is destroyed by a Dept of Transportation (DOT) highway project, DOT pays the cost for replacement.

Dept of Transportation (Glen Schaefer)

- Status of Wisconsin Height Modernization Program (HMP). HMP is divided into three activity areas: Passive monument installation and observations, Passive monument maintenance, Wisconsin Continuously Operating Reference Stations (WISCORS) network.
- The passive monument installation process is continuing in Phase 7C, which is in the most northwesterly three counties of the State. Data processing is continuing for Phases 8A (Green Bay and Door County area), and Phases 6B, 7A, and 7B (15 counties in the northwestern part of the State just south of Phase 7C). Passive monument installation and observations are projected to be completed statewide in the next few years providing Federal and State funding continues.
- Monument maintenance is continuing at a rate of about 1,000 survey stations per year. At that rate, it would take one person 8 years to recover each of the over 8,000 stations in HMP. DOT continues to encourage local surveyors to assist in maintaining stations in their area. Many county surveyors have been a huge help in maintaining stations within their county.
- The WISCORS network is being constructed in five zones, each north-south zone extends from the southern to northern border of the state. Zone 1 along Lake Michigan was completed first and the effort has moved westward with WISCORS online for Zones 1, 2, and the southern portion of 3. Construction continues in the northern portion of Zone 3 and reconnaissance continues in Zone 4.
- The HMP is the geographic foundation for spatial activities requiring geodetic positioning, whether coordinates are in latitude-longitude, state plane coordinates, or county coordinates. By having a single spatial reference system for all projects in Wisconsin and being tied directly to the National Spatial Reference System (NSRS) maintained by the National Geodetic Survey, various activities can be accurately related spatially to all other activities also defined using the NSRS.
- Status of Electronic Recording of Wisconsin Transportation Project Plats (TPPs). DOT has been working with the Electronic Recording Council--Wisconsin to accomplish the necessary formatting and procedures to facilitate recording of TPPs electronically. Electronic recording will result in substantial savings

versus the traditional paper recording. Three "trial" recordings have been done. The system is expected to "go live" this week.

Geographic Information Officer (Curtis Pulford)

- Nothing specific to pass along at this time.
- Curt is very interested in how the elections will play out. He reports to the CIO, who will change after new Governor takes office.

Land Information Association (Kelly Felton, AJ Wortley)

- Regional meeting is this week (Thursday and Friday) in Stevens Point
- Having internal discussions about budget priorities, and considering how to be more proactive with legislation.
- New Web site launched recently, which Kelly hopes will eventually have a section(s) dedicated to issues of concern to WLIA members.
- Planning is in progress for 2011 annual conference to be held in Madison February 16-18, 2011. They are exploring the idea of having a legislative outreach reception for legislators. AJ and Kelly will keep the group informed as the idea develops further.

Land Information Officers Network (Mary Jean Ritchie, Fred lausly)

- Flat Fee bill took up a lot of time last year for many Land Information Officers, was controversial at times.
- New land records councils are being formed in each county. Existing land records committees were largely viewed as successful, now many people are trying to figure out the rules and policies for getting additional required representatives in place.
- LION will hold a meeting this Thursday (8/21) at the WLIA Regional meeting in Stevens Point.
- This is the year for updating five year land records modernization plans. As in the past, a peer review process will be used for evaluating the plans.
- With the new flat fee recording, it's unclear exactly how much money will be flowing into counties this year, or precisely how the expected boost in funding will be allocated within counties. Will also affect which counties are eligible for base-budget grants through the Wisconsin Land Information Program.
- Mary Jean noted how she has appointed a legislative monitoring committee within LION so they aren't caught off guard by any important proposals.
- Fred added that redistricting will a big deal for many counties in the spring of 2011.

Land Title Association (Mike McDonnell)

- His members are very happy with the change to flat fee recording. Makes things easier and more predictable for them.
- Working a lot recently on three-year correction instruments and electronic disclosure for condominium documents.
- Also working on issues related to marina condos, has been a big deal in the past.
- Office of Commissioner of Insurance (OCI) is looking at licensing agencies, not just individuals. Has always been individual agents to this point.

Real Property Listers (Ann Burton)

- Annual State Meeting held in September included sessions on utilizing new technology, adverse possession, municipal boundary & annexation review, and highway & railroad title issues.
- WRPLA Manual updated so now a 'living document' - members have access to the manual online, and hyperlinks have been added, making it even more useful.
- Foreclosures are creating issues for assessors and Real Property Listers - hopefully legislation will require more careful handling of doc's so there won't be so many errors in them.
- Legislative issues that affected us this year:
 - Flat fee legislation - includes formation of Land Council in each county, with representation by real property lister.
 - Affidavit of Correction - 'legalized' Affidavits of Correction already recorded, and set some standards for the use of Affidavits of Correction. We were involved in discussions w/ Land Title Association, Register of Deeds Association, etc over past several years to hash out concerns. In general, Real Property Listers still do not care for the widespread use of Affidavits of Correction, but will acknowledge those that follow statutory guidelines
- Largest issue we have been involved in has been the Dept of Revenue proposal for County Assessing, and follow up proposals/changes. Real Property Listers were active in discussions with Dept of Revenue via the State and Local Finance workgroup and Dept of Revenue's 'Town Hall Meetings'. There is a general consensus in our organization that reform is needed to have assessors standards & work improved, more consistent and timely reassessments, etc., but there are differences among us on how to accomplish, and concerns regarding costs.
- Since the current state administration was not able to get legislation approved, and since changes in administration are pending/uncertain, we feel that Dept of Revenue has taken a different course - utilizing input from meetings plus their own guidance, to make changes under current legislation. We anticipate many changes in how Dept of Revenue does business in the next few years, and these changes will directly affect us.
- The Dept of Revenue's assessment proposal incorporated some of the changes we were working toward, so we held off pushing our 70.09 reform. Now that DOR's assessment reform legislation has been put on hold, we are considering what steps to next take.

Register of Deeds (Dixie Edge)

- Redaction and flat fee were big issues for them last year.
- All 72 counties are working on how to implement redaction.
- They are also looking into correction instruments.
- Iowa County is part of a big vital records pilot project where the county is hooked into the state vital records system.
- She doesn't expect ROD will be focused on many legislative issues this year, last year was very busy.

Society of Land Surveyors (Frank Thousand, Jimmy Rein)

- Electronic recording of plats and rights of entry are issues of concern right now.
- Haven't decided how they will revisit the content of AB271 that did not pass last legislative session. Could start from scratch, or just focus on specific pieces instead.
- They expect to have more decisions by January on how they will proceed.
- They were surprised by a change to Chapter 236 that was pushed through by the Builders Association at the last minute.

State Cartographer's office (Howard Veregin)

- Howard distributed copies of the SCO's recently-completed strategic plan.
- Feedback on the plan is welcome, contact him anytime. Any comments on specific projects, such as looking at an updated statewide Public Land Survey System data layer, are welcome.

Summary of Action Items

1. Jim Lacy will send MS Excel contact list to entire group.
2. Suggest additional land information-related groups for contact list. Send to Jim. (ALL)
3. Jim Lacy will send draft meeting minutes to entire group.
4. Send meeting minute edits to Jim (ALL)
5. Gregg Moore will keep the group updated on WIGICC legislation efforts.
6. AJ Wortley, Kelly Felton will keep the group updated on possible legislative outreach session at WLIA annual conference in February.
7. Jim Lacy will develop a brief Presidents Council "history" document, get feedback from Frank, and share with incoming presidents prior to next meeting.
8. Jim Lacy will organize the October 2011 meeting.

Minutes Approval - New Procedure

Jim suggested that for better continuity we approve meeting minutes via e-mail within a month after the meeting. Group agreed this makes more sense than approving minutes from a previous meeting that most did not attend.

Ann Burton motioned for approval of October 2009 minutes, seconded by Jimmy Rein. Motion passed.

Next Meeting

Group agreed to meet next October, unless a specific need arises to hold a special meeting in April 2011.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.