

Minutes

2011 WI Presidents Council Annual Meeting

Tuesday, October 4th, 2011

Meeting room 121A, Dane County Extension Building, 1 Fen Oak Ct., Madison

Attendance

WI County Surveyors Association (Emily Pierce)
WI Department of Transportation (Glen Schaefer)
WI Geographic Information Coordination Council (Jon Schwichtenberg, Trish Nau)
WI Geographic Information Officer (Curtis Pulford)
WI Land Information Association (AJ Wortley, Kelly Felton)
WI Land Information Officer Network (Fred lausly)
WI Land Title Association (Craig Haskins)
WI Real Property Listers (Lauree Kratcha)
WI Register of Deeds (Lisa Walker, Michael Mazemke)
WI Society of Land Surveyors (Frank Thousand, Al Schneider)
WI State Cartographer's office (Howard Veregin, Jim Lacy)

Call to order

Meeting called to order by Jim Lacy (meeting organizer) at 9:00 a.m.

Introductions and Agenda Repair

After brief introductions, Jim called for additions or changes to the agenda. No changes requested.

Presidents Council Participation

Jim asked the group the follow-up on the conversation from last year about how, or if, we should broaden participation in the Presidents Council. Discussion last year suggested the group wanted to remain small primarily for practical reasons, but we did not reach a formal decision on how to proceed.

After much discussion, the group agreed we should solicit broader participation in the annual Presidents Council meeting. Those present felt it is better to err on the side of being inclusive.

Jim suggested this approach is fine, but the group may need to revisit the current model of how meetings are conducted. Specifically, it may become unwieldy to have too many reports, and we may instead need to focus on specific issues suggested by the participants.

Action: All organizations will send Jim suggested contacts for other groups to invite to future meetings.

Cross-Promotion of Events and Sharing Information between Associations

Howard described his past experience trying to distribute information on events of mutual interest to the groups participating in the Presidents Council. He found there was no easily identifiable or systematic approach for "getting the word out" to the various associations.

Question: how can we improve communication? Should each organization identify one person to receive communications related to events, or other topics? Howard noted there have been times in the past where he distributed an item to multiple organizations, but had little to no response in return.

Lisa suggested that, while unfortunate, there really isn't any way to avoid the problem of people simply not reading their e-mail.

Glen mentioned the SCO's weekly e-mail newsletter, and whether that could be a means to get information out to folks. After discussion, it appears there is no perfect solution, but that e-mail (for better or worse) is the best method for spreading information between Presidents Council organizations.

The group decided an e-mail listserv was one simple step we could take to improve the situation. How to further share messages sent to the listserv will be up to the discretion of individual associations.

This topic led to a discussion of a Web page for the Presidents Council. When the group has met in the past, the decision was to steer away from setting up a Web site for the Council. There is now renewed interest in setting up something for the Council, but the group agreed it should be very basic.

Actions: Jim will setup an e-mail listserv for the Presidents Council through UW-Madison. Jim will also create a very basic page on the SCO Web site to hold past agendas, meeting minutes, and basic information about the Presidents Council.

Round Robin Updates - 10 minutes per Association

Register of Deeds Association (Lisa Walker)

The ROD Association is working on or monitoring a number of legislative activities:

AJR 24 - Appointment of certain officer in county and judicial circuit offices permits counties to choose to elect or appoint county clerks, treasurers, registers of deeds, surveyors, and other county officers, except sheriffs, district attorneys, coroners, clerks of circuit court, and county chief executive offices, county supervisors, and judges. WRDA opposes this legislation.
****Read for the first time and referred to the committee on Urban and Local Affairs.**

AJR-26 - Eliminating State Treasurer & Secretary of State - This proposed constitutional amendment, proposed to the 2011 legislature on first

consideration, deletes from the constitution the offices of secretary of state and state treasurer. WRDA is watching and has not taken a position.

****Was passed and now on to the Assembly.**

AJR-51 - This constitutional amendment, proposed to the 2011 legislature on first consideration, makes elections for the office of district attorney, sheriff, register of deeds, county clerk, treasurer, surveyor, coroner, and clerk of circuit court nonpartisan and changes the term of office to begin on the first Monday in June. WRDA opposes this legislation.

****Read for the first time and referred to the committee on Election and Campaign Reform.**

SB-165 - Under this bill, a resident of Milwaukee County may obtain a free birth certificate for one year following the effective date of the bill if the resident needs the birth certificate in order to obtain a driver's license or identification card for the purpose of voting. WRDA is watching.

****Read for the first time and referred to committee on Judiciary, Utilities, Commerce and Government Operations.**

Other Activities:

DOCX - A WRDA DOCX ad-hoc committee was formed to investigate impacts of "robo signed" documents and Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems (MERS). Robo signed documents result in a break in the chain of title, fraudulent documents in our files and loss of recording revenue.

The goal of the committee:

1. As recorders we need to be informed, have answers and be proactive on this issue
2. Inform and Educate the Public
 - a. What is our role as recorder?
 - b. What are other states doing?
 - c. Create action plan
 - d. Decide whether or not to take action
3. Work to get legislation similar to Illinois enacted
4. Assist the Wisconsin Department of Justice in their investigation into Robo signing

During the discussion, Craig (WLTA) noted that Wisconsin is doing very well with regard to MERS. His company doesn't sign title unless a real person signs the documents. He also noted that most of the foreclosures in Wisconsin are handled by 4-6 quality law firms, which has led to fewer problems.

Social Security Redaction - Counties continue SSN redaction projects. Below are the statistics per DOA through June 13, 2011.

- 2,397,219 documents were redacted in 2010. Presumably most were redacted since June 25, 2010, when the extra \$5 per deed document recorded could start to be collected for redaction purposes.

- 55,812,792 documents were yet to be redacted at the end of 2010. This makes for an average of 775,178 documents yet to be redacted.
- 42 counties have retained fees for redaction purposes but had not done any actual redactions in 2010. This maybe because they were still selecting a private company to do the redactions, had been converting documents to electronic format in preparation for redaction, had purchased software first before doing the actual redactions, or other reasons.
- 51 counties have submitted extension requests for collecting the social security redaction fee into 2012.
- Counties are encouraged to submit the requests by November 1, 2011.
- Craig noted that the flat recording fee has been great for land title companies; it has greatly simplified things. His organization would prefer the recording fee stay at \$30 so they don't need to go back and modify systems again. He hopes that we don't have a mix of some counties charging \$25, while others charge \$30. (it appears at least a couple of counties will be dropping their fee to \$25 in 2012.)

Statewide Vital Records Information System (SVRIS) - "Death module" has started. Birth module went live January 1, 2011. Death module's anticipated live date is mid-year 2012.

Action: WLIA, LION, and ROD will get together to discuss the soon-to-expire redaction fee.

Real Property Listers (Lauree Kratcha)

- RPL just concluded their Annual State Meeting in Middleton last week. The session included great topics such as Assessment Anomalies, a basic overview of GIS for those who were not aware, and presentations on Trusts & Estates
- The largest issue they are facing is the Department of Revenue's Assessment Reform process. The RPL's have been attending the DOR's State and Local Finance meeting workgroups held in February, May, and August. During these discussions main issues were brought up such as the need to create uniform practices among assessors statewide, and the need to use technology to make the assessment process more efficient and transparent.
- The DOR will be reporting in the near future that they will be working with all local units of government to indicate that assessors will be required to follow the Uniform Standards of Professional Practices. Also, the assessors will be required to maintain and store assessment data electronically, specifically property cards, by 2013.
- The DOR's assessment reform process is looking at putting together a legislative package to update existing statutes that have been outdated due to technology and general changes to our society. It is possible that the RPL statute 70.09 could be included with this package, so this year we are once

again holding off any proposed updates to 70.09. Many details need to be worked out in the process yet—specifically how the data will be shared between, state, county and local stakeholders.

State Cartographer's office (Howard Veregin)

- Howard provided some brief highlights of the SCO's annual report, available on their Web site at <http://www.sco.wisc.edu/>
- SCO has completed work on new web mapping applications related to land survey information ("ControlFinder" and "PLSSFinder")
- A new web application called The Wisconsin Historic Aerial Image Finder ("WHAIFinder") was unveiled earlier in the year. WHAIFinder provides free access to a statewide set of 1930's aerial photography.
- Also rolled out a completely new Web site that they hope will be easier to navigate, and allows users to find information more quickly.
- SCO has a new project funded by the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) to develop a "business plan" for statewide aerial photography. Work began in September.
- In the early stages of developing an all-new "Wisconsin" application for data cataloging.
- Also in the early discussion stages of creating a Public Land Survey System pilot project that will look at issues surrounding the development of a new statewide PLSS GIS dataset.

Land Title Association (Craig Haskins)

- Craig discussed the upcoming sunset of the social security number redaction fee. His organization strongly feels the fee should remain set at \$30. Banks and title companies have already made the transition to the new fee, and he would hate to see it change again.
- Most counties are expected to file for an extension that would allow them to continue charging the full \$30 until December 31, 2014.
- However, some counties have already stated they will not apply for extensions, leading to a situation where there are two different fees for lenders and title companies to work with. LTA is concerned about the confusion this will cause.
- The issue of QR codes on recorded documents led to some discussion. RODs have been somewhat uncomfortable thus far when they find QR codes on documents because they may not know what they link to. Sounds like further education is needed so that QR codes are more widely understood.

(Note: Craig provided this very useful link after the meeting:
<http://www.knightbarry.com/wisconsin-recording-fees.aspx>)

Society of Land Surveyors (Frank Thousand)

- WSLs is once again working on revision the statute that governs land surveyors in Wisconsin. Bill failed to make it through the process last session. Jimmy Rein has been doing the bulk of the work on this issue.
- In making recent revisions, the LRB accidentally reverted to old Ch 236 language; they are in the process on fixing that along with making some needed updates.
- Frank said it appears most people are happy with the revision this time around.
- They are getting set to meet with Photogrammetry firms to discuss their past concerns.
- Looking for co-sponsors; they want to introduce to both assembly and senate at the same time. Clark and Risser have expressed interest in co-sponsoring, but WSLs feels it would be best to have it introduced by a republican. They are still working on this.
- In other news, Frank reported WSLs now has about 900 members. This is great news, since many association memberships are down 20-30% nationally. He thinks Wisconsin has held steady because of continuing education requirements.
- The National Society for Professional Surveyors is looking at changing their membership criteria to reach a broader audience beyond land surveyors. WSLs will likely follow suit and offer a broader membership category at some point in the future.
- Frank will be soon starting a term on the Board of Directors for NSPS.

Action: Frank said they will share a draft of their surveying modernization bill with the group as soon as it is available.

County Surveyors Association (Emily Pierce)

- Lack of funding for County Surveyors and their projects continues to be a big issue for them.
- They are finding that county boards, and others, don't understand what county surveyors do. In her county, they went through a ranking process for important services. Surveying ended up last.
- As a result, WCSA is working harder on getting out an educating folks on what county surveyors do.
- They have a new brochure that explains what they do, and a new travelling booth. Also have a Web site that is currently hosted by the SCO.
- They are trying to actively promote the SCO's PLSSFinder and ControlFinder applications, and are encouraging everyone to put their data out there. They've found these applications to be great reporting tools, and a way to keep tabs on what other people in the state are doing.

Geographic Information Officer (Curtis Pulford)

- Curt noted this has been a "transitional year" for his office. He is down to 2.5 staff, and working on restoring a third position.

- He has spent a lot of time over the past year listening and supporting activities, but hasn't been able to fulfill many of the goals of the GIO.
- The new administration seems to recognize the value looking for opportunities and efficiencies related to geographic information.
- Curt remains interested in developing a data repository for the delivery of spatial information, and enterprise geocoding services.

Land Information Association (AJ Wortley, Kelly Felton)

- WLIA is holding steady with around 490-500 members, continue holding three major meetings per year.
- They are considering the idea of co-locating the WLIA Fall regional meeting with the annual EWUG conference.
- WLIA has been watching the activities of URISA related to their GIS Professional certification. URISA is looking at revamping their process to become an exam-based certification that is based on the geospatial competency model.
- WLIA is developing an advocacy agenda that will be voted on by members at their fall meeting.
- Legislatively, WLIA has been tracking a number of items
 - Land Surveyors Bill
 - Smart Growth (current proposal to lapse funds set aside for comp planning into the general fund). WLIA wants this to be recognized as a policy bill, not a cost savings bill
 - Working with LION on proposing legislation that would prevent future lapse from the WLIP. AJ and Kelly noted the current administration generally looks favorably upon protecting funds for their true and designated purpose.

Land Information Officers Network (Fred lausly)

- LION is working towards introducing legislation that would protect WLIP funds from future lapses into the state general fund. In early discussions, Senators Olsen and Lassa have been very supportive.
- Goal is see 90% of funds collected re-distributed to counties. Would set base funding to \$100,000 per year.
- Fred cited survey re-monumentation as a program that desperately needs funding to get moving in many counties.
- They are hoping to get this introduced to the Legislative Reference Bureau in the next couple of weeks.
- Fred said a few words on the current \$30 redaction fee. General feeling in LION is that the fee should remain at \$30. They feel the \$5 fee set to sunset could be beneficial to counties if it remains intact.

Geographic Information Coordination Council (Jon Schwichtenberg)

- WIGICC has had some turnover in the past year, but they recently completed elections to fill some empty spots
- They have established two subcommittees to deal with statewide elevation data, and economic development.

- WIGICC recently sent a letter to the FCC stating concern over the LightSquared proposal that many argue will cause devastating interference with GPS devices.
- WIGICC's efforts to establish themselves permanently via legislation has been moving slowly. In recent weeks they have had some discussions about whether WIGICC could be somehow tie into the UW System. UW connection could allow them to acquire grants, be viewed as politically neutral. Jon expects this activity to ramp up in the coming weeks.
- WIGICC is holding their next quarterly (in-person) meeting the day prior to the EWUG conference in Green Bay.
- Biggest thing WIGICC does is looking at things going on, take action for or against issues that affect members of the network. Not tied into any one constituency.
- Curt mentioned WIGICC is also participating in his efforts to secure a grant that would give K-12 schools access to Esri software.

Dept of Transportation (Glen Schaefer)

- Glen gave a quick review and status of the height modernization project, and distributed some maps. Most of the southern 1/3 to 1/2 of Wisconsin is now complete.
- Monument maintenance is a significant issue for DOT. Approximately 8,000 monuments out there now, they need to replace about 20 per year due to damage.
- Glen also updated the group on the status of WISCORS (WI Continuously Operating Reference Stations). WISCORS provides real-time correctors to mobile GPS users, resulting in 2cm accuracy when using the proper equipment.
- DOT is working with adjoining states to make sure they don't have CORS stations placed right next to each other across the border.
- Precision Ag users have been big users of WISCORS thus far.
- Questions still remain about who to charge for the service, how much, and whether the fees should go into a segregated fund designed to cover ongoing maintenance.
- Glenn was asked if there is a conflict charging for a system that was created with federal funds. Although federal funds were used to setup the system, ongoing maintenance is not covered. Any fees collected would go to maintenance.

Summary of Action Items

1. All should send your presentation notes to Jim for inclusion in the minutes.
2. If you have ideas for additional organizations that should be invited to our annual meeting, send them to Jim.
3. Jim will create a simple page on the SCO's Web site to hold basic information about the Presidents Council.
4. Jim will setup an e-mail listserv through UW-Madison. [done: presidents-council@lists.wisc.edu]
5. WLIA, LION, and ROD will get together to discuss redaction fee sunset.
6. Frank will share a copy of the land surveying modernization bill when it is ready.
7. Jim will organize the October 2012 meeting.

Next Meeting

October 2012, specific date and place to be determined.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.