

Standards Subcommittee

Meeting Summary

April 21, 2022

Participants

Ashten Wittrock, Carroll County Recorder	Jolynn Goodchild, Plymouth County Recorder
Jayne Schultz, Winneshiek County Recorder	Nancy Booten, Lee County Recorder
Mindy Fitzgibbon, Henry County Recorder	Janelle Schneider, Adair County Recorder

Other Participants

Kelley Wallace, Iowa Land Records	Bob Rafferty, Rafferty Group
Leah Champion, Iowa Land Records	Nick Laning, Rafferty Group
Merna Addison, Iowa Land Records	Melissa Bahnsen, Cedar County Recorder
Mansi Agarwal, Iowa Land Records	Stacie Herridge, Story County Recorder
Lisa Long, Iowa Land Records	Sheri Jones, Jones County Recorder
Phil Dunshee, Iowa Land Records	Julie Haggerty, Polk County Recorder
Kati Ross, Iowa Land Records	

Welcome

A meeting of the ESS Standards Subcommittee was held in person at the Iowa Land Records office and via web conference.

January Meeting Summary

The Subcommittee reviewed the January 18, 2022, meeting summary. Janelle Schneider made a motion to approve the meeting summary. Jolynn Goodchild seconded, and the motion was approved.

ESS 28E Transition Update

The Project Manager provided an update regarding latest activity with the 28E transition. It was reported that the Brick Gentry team had helped prepare a packet to be sent to the Hamilton County Board of Supervisors to consider adopting the official 28E agreement. On April 12, 2022, the resolution was signed by the Hamilton County Board of Supervisors. The next step will be an action by the ESS Coordinating Committee to review and approve the agreement. It will then be recorded in Hamilton County and filed with the Office of the Iowa Secretary of State.

Legislative Update

Nick Laning with the Rafferty Group provided the Subcommittee with a legislative update. The update included a general overview of the current state of the legislature. It was explained that there were many bills still pending as the House and Senate negotiate over several issues. It was reported that the Groundwater Hazard Bill had passed both the House and Senate unanimously. It was expected that Governor Reynolds would sign off on the bill, but no official confirmation had yet been posted. A training webinar on the new Groundwater Hazard process is planned prior to July 1, 2022.

The report continued with an update regarding the Smart Contracts legislation. The Iowa State Bar Association brought the bill forward to request that the statute adopted in 2021 be moved to a new section of the Code. ESS had suggested that the legislation be clarified to ensure that real estate

transactions using distributed ledger technology doesn't bypass the official recording process. The bill had passed the House and was approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee. The bill was on the Senate Unfinished Business calendar at the time of the Standards Subcommittee meeting.

Software Development Update

E-Submission Image Management

Technical Lead Kelly Wallace provided an update on enhancements related to E-Submission Image Management. The E-Submission software was being updated to convert stamped documents (images) more effectively to black and white in a form suitable for archiving by county systems. Incoming images will also be programmatically analyzed to check for color or pages that may be too dark or too light for processing. When implemented, documents that deviate substantially from the formatting guidelines would not be presented to recorders. Instead, the documents would be returned to a status of "In Progress" with a notice to the submitter that a different image should be uploaded. Incoming images will be programmatically analyzed to classify images into three categories; those that contain significant color, which will be returned to web submitters for re-scanning in black/white; those that contain a minor amount of color or shades of gray, which will be converted via a new process; and those that are monochrome images, which will utilize the same method as is used by the legacy system. The Iowa Land Records team has been working to test over hundreds of sample documents provided by members of the Standards Subcommittee and other county recorders. ILR testing suggests that about 95% of all electronically submitted documents are of good quality and produce good, stamped images for archiving. About 5% of the time the submitted images have characteristics which produce legible, but lower quality images. In these cases, the text and signature can be "pixelated" or distorted. The new imaging service is expected to resolve most of these issues.

Pending Payment API Developments

The Project Manager reported that after the new imaging process is in production the focus will shift to moving the new payment API to staging for testing. Transactions will be tested from start to finish, and math will be checked on the back end for admin and reporting functions. It was explained that this enhancement to the Payment API is necessary for PCI compliance.

Subcommittee members were also informed that local service providers would be required to begin using a new E-Submission API, 2022. Service providers were made aware of this requirement in a recent web conference, and the requirement will be addressed in the fiscal year 2023 contract renewals.

Pending Payment Admin & E-Submission Admin Developments

The Project Manager explained that another focus of application development is the creation of a new administrative interface for Payment and E-Submission functions. It is necessary for these applications to be created before the legacy payment and E-Submission applications can be fully retired.

Policies & Procedures

Assignment of Contract

The Subcommittee was asked to review Section 3.6 of the Policies and Procedures concerning how an Assignment of Contract should be mapped to the ILR document type list. After review and discussion, it was determined that the best practice would be to map any Assignment of Contract to the document type "Contract or Contract Related."

Multiple Deed Scenario

The Subcommittee discussed a scenario brought forth by an attorney who was filing two deeds from two different grantors in different states - one a person and the other an LLC, which required two different deeds. The system forces the customer to have a transfer tax amount or an exemption. The Subcommittee discussed and determined that either an exemption should be specified, or a companion deed should be referenced on the first page.

Other Pending Application Developments

The Project Manager summarized other pending changes and improvements which are planned including further enhancements to the E-Submission recorder and submitter interfaces, and the creation of a new API for external submitter organizations.

PRIA Policy Discussion Update

The Project Manager provided the Subcommittee with a packet of PRIA materials for review. This included a memo from ESS to the PRIA Board of Directors, a draft paper on Discriminatory Restrictive Covenants, PRIA operating rules, a paper on eRecording Best Practices for Submitters, a paper on indexing best practices, and a paper regarding disaster preparedness. It also included information on PRIA's Strategic Plan for 2022-24. The Project Manager provided a high-level overview of each of these items and suggested that members of the Subcommittee take a closer look at these documents when they have time.

Search Engine Development Planning

The Subcommittee discussed the future design of the Iowa Land Records Portal website. The planning discussion covered data structure and transfer, the search engine, data display, redaction, security, user management and external integrations. It was noted that the current application is built on technology that is no longer supported. Security reviews have focused on the use of the unsupported platform, and it must be replaced. User management was also discussed as a security issue. The Subcommittee also discussed a possible future data structure and methods for transferring data from the counties to ILR. A series of focus groups and surveys will be conducted in the coming months to gather ideas and suggestions.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:20 PM.