

**Standards Subcommittee
Teleconference Meeting
Summary
July 18, 2023**

Participants

Jayne Schultz, Winneshiek County Recorder
Joan McCalmant, Linn County Recorder

Jolynn Goodchild, Plymouth County Recorder
Katie Carlton, Union County Recorder

Other Participants

Nancy Booten, Lee County Recorder
Deb McDonald, Greene County Recorder
Melissa Bahnsen, Cedar County Recorder
Sheri Jones, Jones County Recorder

Sue Meyer, Clayton County Recorder
Jamie Stargell, Adams County Recorder
Sheri Jones, Jones County Recorder

Census Lo-Liyong, Iowa Land Records
Phil Dunshee, Iowa Land Records
Corrie Strasser, Iowa Land Records

Lisa Long, Iowa Land Records
Kristen Delany-Cole, Iowa Land Records

Welcome

A meeting of the ESS Standards Subcommittee was held via web conference. The participants included the regular ESS Standards Subcommittee members and other members of the Document Formatting working group.

February Meeting Summary

The Subcommittee reviewed the April 20, 2023, meeting summary. Jolynn Goodchild made a motion to approve the meeting summary. Katie Carlton seconded, and the motion was approved.

Software Development Updates

Search Application Transition - Submitters, Organization Searchers, Individual Searchers

The process of transitioning to the new Search application was completed by all counties except for one. Pottawattamie County was not able to transition due to a technical authentication issue, and this is being addressed. It was noted that a significant portion of E-submission organizations have been enabled for the search application. This means that these organizations can now log in and access the new search application and E-submission directly without needing a separate login, aligning with the goal of implementing single sign-on.

Communication Strategy

During the meeting, the following key points were discussed regarding the communication strategy moving forward:

Updated Terms of Service: An upcoming communication will be sent out to inform organizations that, even though the search application is optional, each organization should review and accept the updated “**Terms of Service**”. Further changes are being reviewed with legal counsel and will be discussed in this meeting and communicated with stakeholders.

Notice of Discontinuance: In August, applications will be opened for search-only users to access the new search application. Notice will be given that the legacy search application is expected to be discontinued by the end of the year due to support reasons and security concerns.

Registered search users: Communication efforts will prioritize registered search users who have logged into the search application within the last calendar year. Users who have not logged in for more than a year will not be actively contacted. Users associated with business domains, such as banks or law firms, will receive priority communication. Lower priority will be given to users with email domains such as gmail or hotmail. Additionally, individuals who are interested in their own records or family records will have an opportunity to sign up for the individual search application.

Stakeholder Communication: Stakeholder organizations, such as the Bankers Association and Bar Association, have been notified about the transition and updates to the Terms of Service. Stakeholder organizations are being encouraged to share this information with their members.

ESS Pay - Linn County Payment Project Update

The project manager provided an update concerning the agreement between Linn County and ESS. Linn County and ESS have finalized a 28E agreement which will govern these activities. ESS will be providing the payment component known as ESS Pay for the Linn County online registration renewal system. The application is expected to be rolled out in Linn County in September. Further testing will take place in July and August.

CESAPI Checklist

The service agreements with local service providers have been finalized with the exception of one provider. Discussions with that provider are ongoing, and an agreement is expected to be resolved soon. An important part of the agreements is the schedule of transition to a new API for E-Submission and County Upload activities. All service providers will be required to begin using the new E-Submission API by June 30, 2024, and the new County Upload API by September 30, 2024. The LCM interface for E-Submission will be discontinued effective September 30, 2023. The new APIs will streamline data transfer and improve integration between county systems and Iowa land records.

To aid local service providers and to ensure consistency, ESS/ILR internal developers have created instructions and checklists to guide local service providers in making the necessary changes.

ESS Development Phase 3

The Subcommittee received a summary report on reserve fund expenditures from June 2021 – June 2023. Over the past two years, significant software developments were undertaken by ESS using reserve funds. Two phases of development have been completed, focusing on rewriting the submitter interface, payment application, administrative interface and the search application. The goal of these development activities is to migrate users to the new systems and discontinue the legacy applications by the end of the year. The cost of Phase 1 and Phase 2 development exceeded \$800,000 and utilized funds from the reserve account.

Internal developers are working on updating the County Upload API, aiming for seamless integration with local service providers. Migration projects with Solutions and Tyler systems are underway, with the goal of transitioning to the new submission APIs. A small project with WinCommunications to update WordPress landing pages is also in progress. Reserve fund expenditure information has been shared with the auditor for reference when the 2023 audit is conducted.

Additional work is planned with external developers to address bug fixes and application improvements. Phase 3 is anticipated in the second half of 2023 with an estimated cost of \$54,000.00, subject to the

approval of the Finance Subcommittee and the ESS Coordinating Committee.

Fraud Notification Concept

During previous discussions, the ESS Coordinating Committee requested that ESS research and plan for the implementation of a fraud prevention notification system for all counties. The suggested concept would allow individuals to register for the new search application, providing some validation of their identity. Authorized users would be able to flag specific records they wish to monitor (such as deeds or contracts). The system could then notify them of any related activities or subsequent recordings. The implementation details and budget considerations are yet to be developed. The ILR team is seeking input from recorders and stakeholders. Subcommittee members inquired about whether a notification system based on name might also be possible. Further planning work will be conducted and then shared with the ESS committees.

Back File Survey Scanning Project Concept

ILR staff shared information about ongoing conversations with the Society of Land Surveyors of Iowa (SLSI). The surveyors are interested in getting more historical survey documents digitized and loaded into the Iowa Land Records system. Additionally, SLSI is interested in seeing greater user of associated references in recording indexes that would tie related survey documents together. To achieve this, the idea of setting up a joint working group with the surveyors' organization was discussed. The working group will explore ways to secure resources and establish standardized procedures for handling the documents in a safe and appropriate manner. Further planning work will be conducted and then shared with the ESS committees.

Policies and Procedures

Terms of Service Update – 7

The Standards Subcommittee was presented with a proposed amendment to Chapter 7 of the ESS Policies and Procedures concerning the Terms of Service. The proposed amendment addresses four topics.

- The authority of ESS to establish a Terms of Service
- Application Procedures for the ILR Search Service (Including Procedures for Denying Access)
- The Basis and Process for Revoking Access to Search Services
- Procedures for Allowing Access to Higher Image View Limits

Authority for Terms of Service. During the 2023 Iowa legislative session, a proposal was advanced provide explicit new authority to establish a Terms of Service for the Iowa Land Records system, but it did not pass due to time constraints. After further research it has been determined that this authority already existed in the Code of Iowa under Section 22.2, subsection 4a. This provision states that “a government body is not required to permit access to or use of the following: A geographic computer database by any person except upon terms and conditions acceptable to the governing body.” [Emphasis added] ESS is a government body and Iowa land records is a geographic (property) computer database. The proposed Terms of Service policy (Section 7.2) would now simply cite Section 22.2 (4a) as the authority for the policy.

Application Procedures. A new subsection 7.7 outlines the specific procedures and information organizations and individuals need to provide to gain access to the search application. The policy also states the reasons why an application may be denied and provides an appeal process if access is not granted.

Access Revocation Procedures. A new subsection 7.8 describes the basis for revoking an organization's or users access to Iowa Land Records services, the likely actions for revoking access, and a process for appealing a decision to revoke access. An enumerated list of reasons for revoking access is provided in subsection 7.8 (2).

Allowed Image Views. Current policy provides and an individual user may view up to 120 images a day (searches are unlimited). In the new search application this limitation is programmatically enforced. There is also a new "individual" search application designed to allow up to 10 image views per day. Again, searches are unlimited. A new subsection 7.9 establishes a process for allowing an organization user or an individual user to temporarily. The conditions for granting is temporary permission is specified in subsection 7.9(3).

The Subcommittee was asked to consider the proposed policy and to advance it to the ESS Coordinating Committee for further consideration. Jolynn Goodchild made a motion to approve the amendments to Chapter 7 and advance it to the ESS Coordinating committee. Jayne Shultz seconded, and the motion was approved.

Associated References

During previous meetings the Subcommittee was asked to review possible changes in policy that would expand the use of associated references in county land record management systems and in Iowa Land Records. For example, index references between conveyance documents, or index references between surveys and plats, would be more consistently used in county databases. The references would be bilateral, meaning that a reference would be entered for both a recently recorded document and a previously recorded document if they were associated. Further, references would be indexed if they were present in a document, i.e., the preparer of a document would include the reference in a document being recorded.

It was noted, for example, that recent discussions with surveyors indicated that they would be more likely to include references to previously recorded surveys if the associated references were indexed. Also, a new associated references feature in the new search application was being well-received. The Subcommittee was asked to give approval and advance this amendment to the ESS Coordinating Committee. Joan McCalmant made a motion to approve the amendment to Section 3.9 of the Policies and Procedures and advance it to the ESS Coordinating Committee. Katie Carlton seconded, and the motion was approved.

Parcel Identification Numbers

The Subcommittee discussed the inclusion of parcel identification numbers (PINs) in the recorders' index for real property conveyance documents as part of Chapter 3 in the ESS Policies and Procedures. The topic is addressed in the current Policies and Procedures (Section 3.10), but it is in the form of a recommendation rather than a requirement. The idea of incorporating PINs was raised as early as 2013, but it has not been consistently implemented across all counties. The proposal is to move from an optional approach to a requirement, making it mandatory for all counties to include PINs in their databases for conveyance documents from January 1, 2024 forward.

Comments from the Subcommittee indicated support for the idea that a PIN could be indexed if it was present on the document. Action on the draft amendment was deferred until the next meeting to allow for further work on the topic.

The committee was asked to give approval to the motion and advance the amendments to Chapter 3.10 to the Coordination committee. Jolynn Goodchild made a motion to approve the amendment to Chapter 3.10 and advance to the coordination committee. Jayne Shultz seconded, and the motion was approved.

Document Formatting Standards

Working Group Amendment

At the previous meeting of the Subcommittee, an amendment to 331.606B, subsection 1 was developed with the assistance of the document formatting working group. The amendment would make several changes to modernize the requirements (such as removing references to typewriting). Previous discussions indicated that there was a consensus of support for the changes among the Subcommittee and working group members. The Subcommittee was asked to take action to approve the amendments to this section and to advance them to the ESS Coordinating Committee for further consideration. Jolynn Goodchild made a motion to approve the amendment to 331.606B, subsection 1 and advance it to the ESS Coordinating Committee. Jayne Shultz seconded, and the motion was approved.

The Subcommittee and working group members were asked to review several other “discussion draft” documents distributed after their previous meeting in April. The review addressed other policy concepts including personally identifiable information (PII), index legends, stamp areas, the question of who is responsible for reviewing legal aspects of documents, and the concept of what is required for “recordability”. Due to time constraints, the Subcommittee’s discussion was focused on a suggested change to Section 331.606B, subsection 1(g) relating to PII, and Section 331.606B, subsection 2 relating to required information on the first page of a document. No action was taken. These topics will be considered further at a future meeting of the Standards Subcommittee and working group.

PRIA Update

Time limitations did not permit any discussion on this topic.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 PM.

Next Meeting: October 17, 2023 (Regular Meeting)