

Standards Subcommittee Teleconference Meeting Summary January 23, 2025

Participants

Jayne Schultz, Winneshiek County Recorder
Carolyn Siebrecht, Linn County Recorder
Cathy Voith, Calhoun County Recorder

Naomi Ellis, Marion County Recorder
Katie Carlton, Union County Recorder

Other Participants

Nancy Booten, Lee County Recorder
Stacie Herridge, Story County Recorder
Deb McDonald, Greene County Recorder
Sheri Jones, Jones County Recorder

Lisa Kent, Wapello County Recorder
Ann Ditsworth, Dickinson County Recorder
Melissa Bahnsen, Cedar County Recorder
Jan Gemar, ILTA

Census Lo-Liyong, Iowa Land Records
Phil Dunshee, Iowa Land Records
Kristen Delany-Cole, Iowa Land Records

Lisa Long, Iowa Land Records
Samantha McMahon, Iowa Land Records

Welcome

The ESS Standards Subcommittee convened via web conference. Attendees included Subcommittee members and members of the Document Formatting Working Group.

October Meeting Summary

The Subcommittee reviewed the October 17, 2024, meeting summary. Cathy Voith made a motion to approve the meeting summary. Naomi Ellis seconded, and the motion was approved.

Iowa Recording Fee and Business Process Modernization Project

Status of Fee Policy Proposal

It was reported that the recording fee modernization bill draft was submitted to the Legislative Services Agency (LSA) in November 2024. Potential LSA edits are anticipated for style and legislative alignment. Participants looked forward to reviewing the officially drafted version.

The Subcommittee discussed stakeholder responses regarding the fee policy and observed that there was recognition that the fees had not changed in many years and that some adjustment might be appropriate. To address concerns from the Bar Association about documents with a large number of pages, a \$500 cap on recording fees for documents with 50 or more pages was included. It was also noted that there were concerns raised regarding recording fees for mortgages due to the typical number of pages in those documents.

Status of Statutory Policy Recommendations – Recent Developments

The Project Manager reported that the primary stakeholders had constructively engaged with the policy proposals, and as a result some substantive changes were made during the review process.

Legislative Process

It was reported that the proposed legislation would likely require review by both the Local Government and the Ways and Means committees. The legislative process is expected to continue throughout the full session, with final decisions anticipated later in the year. Legislators are particularly interested in how increased revenue from the new fees will benefit county recorder offices and property tax relief efforts.

The Subcommittee reviewed an updated handout which provided a comparison of recording fees, and fee estimates for 1, 2, 3 and 4 page documents. It was reported that 70% of all recorded documents in 2024 had 3 or fewer pages.

The Subcommittee reviewed a table showing a comparison of current law and the proposed amendments, a copy of the draft legislation that was submitted to legislators to initiate the official drafting of a bill, and supplemental amendments that had been developed by the joint working group of surveyors and recorders.

Special Project Updates – Recent Development

The Subcommittee received updates about various initiatives that were related to the proposed recording modernization policies.

County Upload API Workflow

This initiative aims to improve data transfers from counties to Iowa Land Records. A new application programming interface (API) has been developed using current technologies including REST and JSON.

Data Normalization

Data normalization efforts aim to parse some property location data into separate elements. Processes would also be developed to fill gaps in data from prior years. Both methods are intended to make it easier to search for land records in all counties.

Property Notification Service

An update was provided on the proposed statewide notification system. The goal is to enhance security and awareness of property transactions and to provide new monitoring tools for real estate professionals.

Back the Blue Reform

The recording modernization draft language included a possible amendment to the Back the Blue section. The proposed legislative language would transform the Back the Blue policy into a “shielding” strategy.

Beacon Integration

Efforts are underway to integrate the Iowa Land Records system with Beacon, a widely used GIS and property information system. Discussions with Beacon representatives are ongoing to determine the best method for implementing a seamless connection between systems.

Historic Surveys

Collaboration with the Society of Land Surveyors of Iowa (SLSI) is ongoing to develop a repository of unrecorded survey documents. Plans for a repository of unrecorded survey documents were discussed, with surveyors playing a key role in contributing data.

The technical feasibility and funding considerations for this project remain under evaluation.

Policies and Procedures

Terms of Service – Active and Inactive Accounts

A draft revision to the Terms of Service regarding the Central Authentication System (CAS) was provided for review in discussion. The policy changes would clarify what happens when a user account becomes inactive.

- Organization administrators would be able to reactivate accounts when necessary
- Individual users would be able to set up a new account. Keeping the same usernames would not be assured when an account is reactivated.

It is expected that this topic will be presented at the next meeting of the Standards Subcommittee.

The meeting was adjourned. The next Standards Subcommittee meeting will be held virtually on **Thursday, April 17, 2025.**