

MINUTES
PORTAGE COUNTY LAND RECORDS COMMITTEE
August 27, 2015 – 8:30 am, Conference Room 2, County Annex

Members Present: Glodowski, Hartman, Wisinski, Voelker, Rice, Patoka, Fuehrer, Stokes, Hawker, and Lane (who arrived at 8:50 am)

Members Excused: Doubek and Okray. Members Absent: B. Jacowski and Gifford.

Staff Present: Cummings and Sutter, Portage County Planning and Zoning Department

Rice called the Land Records Committee meeting to order at 8:35 am in Conference Room 2.

1. Members of the Public Who Wish to Address the Committee on Specific Agenda Items Must Register Their Request at This Time. With Such Comments Subject to the Reasonable Control of the Committee Chair as Set Forth in Robert's Rules of Order – No one present.

2. Discussion/Action on the February 25, 2015 Minutes

With no discussion necessary, Hartman moved approval of the February 25, 2015 minutes. Motion seconded by Wisinski and passed by voice vote.

3. Review of Proposed 2016 Land Records Modernization Budget

Cummings referred to the budget print out mailed to members and read through the proposed 2016 Land Records budget, which is a zero base budget in that revenues and expenses are equal. Cummings noted the 2016 proposed budget once again includes a Wisconsin Land Information Program (WLIP) base budget grant of \$20,000, in addition to a new WLIP State Strategic Initiative grant in the amount of \$50,000. The \$50,000 is to be utilized toward improving the Public Land Survey System (PLSS), but has been approved by the State to be utilized toward a County LiDAR project to be discussed later during this meeting. Cummings also noted recording fee revenue has a trend of decreasing; therefore, expected revenue has been cut by \$9,000 to \$90,000 for the year 2016. Expenses mainly involve salaries and benefits for the GIS/LIS Technician position supported by recording fees. The professional services line item is back down to \$10,000, which is the normal amount, but had been increased to cover expenses related to the 2015 aerial photo project. Cummings explained the Planning and Zoning Department experienced a large decrease in allocation for 2016; therefore, expenses related to training for the GIS/LIS Manager position, and operating supplies, have been moved to the Land Records Budget from the GIS Budget. These expenses are allowed in the Land Records Budget.

With no further discussion, Rice noted the 2016 budget has been reviewed by the Committee.

4. Land Information Program Updates (Peter Herreid, WI Land Information Grant Program Administrator)

- Statewide Parcel Map Initiative
- Portage County's Land Records Modernization Program:
 - Brief Status of County's Land Records Modernization Efforts, Such as Parcel Map Development
 - County's Ongoing and Future Land Information Projects
- 2016 Strategic Initiative Grant Funding
- County Land Information Plan Updates

Herreid provided a very complete update of the State WLIP beginning with the onset of retaining a portion of document recording fees for land records program development in 1989. He referred to the Statewide parcel layer, which has been "stitched together" from data collected from counties across Wisconsin. This Statewide parcel view/information has been used by various entities, including

Realtors, utility companies, etc. Seventy-two counties contributed parcel data and the State Cartographer's Office stitched them together using standardized attributes. This continues to be a work in progress, including annual updates using tax roll information. This fabric has a multitude of uses at the State level as well, including the managed forest and farmland preservation programs, animal disease outbreak tracking, etc. He provided an interim report for those present to look at today. Counties should be moving toward a searchable format over the next few years. The State is seeking input on how best to assist counties in developing a searchable format, including benchmarks for achievements. A searchable format should be available by 2018 with grant funding. Herreid noted the Portage County parcel fabric has been completed. In addition, the PLSS square mile grids with high level accuracy on corners must be completed. He noted some corner monuments date back to 1850. Herreid further noted the grant application information should be available on August 31. The application will detail benchmarks and should dovetail with the County's Land Information Plan Update.

Bowers asked the reason for the State collecting zoning data as it varies widely across the counties. Herreid replied it is a statutory requirement and they are only gathering County zoning ordinance information, not municipal ordinances. The State will not interpret or try to standardize zoning classifications across the State. The zoning database will be maintained separately. Hartman noted Realtors want that information and their work crosses county borders. He noted everyone has been working toward a Statewide parcel map since 1991 and what has happened is a good thing.

Rice asked whether the final report from the State will include technical details and Herreid replied yes. Rice noted 1/3 of counties are missing metadata and asked whether the State is pushing them to supply that data. Herreid replied they are receiving raw county datasets. Rice stated metadata is good for working on projects. Herreid stated counties update parcel information at different times and mismatch occurs between tax rolls and parcels. The data is worked on by the State Cartographers Office and shared with University of Madison staff and students; it does not go outside of that.

Bowers inquired about standardizing parcel numbers. Herreid replied they will not be doing that, but guidelines will be provided for those updating on their own; noting there are 3.4 million parcels Statewide. Rice felt having one unique number would be valuable. Herreid replied that is not critical to a Statewide parcel map and changing parcels numbers would be disruptive. He also noted that some counties keep legacy numbers. Rice felt unique numbers could be assigned by the State with counties keeping their own numbers.

Bowers noted one county charged a fee for parcel information, and felt the information is hugely beneficial and not charging represents openness to him. Herreid agreed; noting some counties may not have charged the State for parcel information, but do charge others.

Wisinski asked how the public is informed of a current parcel fabric becoming available. Herreid replied Version 1 has a disclaimer – 2013-14 collection. Version 2 will have all 2015 information using tax roll data. Wisinski asked the anticipated delivery date and Herreid replied it will be updated once and available next year, but when searchable format is available, the updates will be frequent and automatic.

5. Benefits of LiDAR Project in Portage County (Adam Derringer, Ayres Associates)

Hartman stated based on action by the Committee during agenda item 6, relative to a County LiDAR project, staff would propose a budget adjustment to reflect \$44,000 in County Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funding, \$43,000 from the Land Records budget non-lapsing account, applying for a grant to cover approximately 35% of a LiDAR project (approximately \$79,000), and utilizing the \$50,000 State Strategic Initiative Grant and \$10,000 from Professional Services, to cover the cost of a LiDAR project in 2016. Bowers inquired about the LiDAR project currently slated for the year 2020 in the County CIP. Hartman replied if the project were moved to 2016, it would not all be on the levy due to grant utilization, resulting in the need for only \$44,000 in CIP funding and being able to receive a better project.

Derringer provided an in-depth power point on LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) - original in meeting file.

Bowers asked if the LiDAR product can assist in groundwater management and Derringer replied yes, it is a strong tool. Lane asked the number of LiDAR users across the County and Derringer replied there are several. Hartman noted LiDAR is used to assist in precision farming as well, which is utilized by the farming community in Portage County. Bowers asked if there will be cost savings to County residents, if the product is available here. Derringer replied yes, with an accurate dataset many decisions can be made in-house rather than sending staff into the field; thereby saving staff time and mileage.

Rice asked about .7 [2 to 4 data points per meter (ppm)] versus 20 ppm. Derringer replied 20 ppm is better, but costs more. He indicated .7 is adequate. Rice asked the cost difference if 20 ppm were done at select sites during the proposed project. Derringer replied the same equipment is used during a different flight. He did think the cost difference would be nominal versus doing 20 ppm a different year; it is more cost effective to piggy-back now (similar to a consortium model). Derringer noted LiDAR training is included and available after the flight to show you how to use your LiDAR data.

Rice inquired about a three dimensional elevation program (3DEP) versus the Wisconsin Regional Orthophotography Consortium (WROC) in some areas. Derringer replied yes, that is possible and affords the ability to break out classifications, contours, etc. LiDAR will allow you to pick up on landscape changes, which will assist in decision-making. He further noted that 1-foot contours are possible in some counties and the associated cost is being looked at. Lane felt the question is WROC or 3DEP. Derringer replied he would recommend 3DEP; it is a great product. Rice felt it critical to have high density data.

6. Discussion/Possible Action on the Use of Carry-Over Funds for a Possible LiDAR Project

Hartman moved to utilize \$43,000 of the Land Records non-lapsing account to be put toward the LiDAR project and Lane seconded the motion. Bowers asked if there were additional projects to utilize non-lapsing funds. Hartman replied yes, but other revenue sources could be possible, and we could wait a year for the 2017 budget process. Rice felt with additional funding, University of WI-Stevens Point buildings at 20 ppm could be a small piece of the project. Wisinski asked if LiDAR will need to be updated every so many years. Hartman replied it could be used for change detection, but Portage County does not have a lot of urban change.

Motion passed by voice vote.

7. Adjournment

With no further business to come before the Committee, Hartman moved to adjourn and Wisinski seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 10:40 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Keith Rice, Chair

Paula Cummings, Rec. Secretary

Date

MINUTES
PORTAGE COUNTY LAND RECORDS COMMITTEE
February 25, 2015 – 7:30 am, Conference Room 2, County Annex

Members Present: Wisinski, Voelker, Patoka, B. Jacowski, Gifford, Rice, Hartman, Fuehrer, Lane, and Hawker

Members Excused: Doubek, Glodowski, Stokes, and Okray

Staff Present: Cummings and Sutter, Portage County Planning and Zoning Department

Rice called the Land Records Committee meeting to order at 7:35 am in Conference Room 5.

1. Members of the Public Who Wish to Address the Committee on Specific Agenda Items Must Register Their Request at This Time. With Such Comments Subject to the Reasonable Control of the Committee Chair as Set Forth in Robert's Rules of Order – No one present.

2. Discussion/Action on the September 4, 2014 Minutes

With no discussion necessary, B. Jacowski moved approval of the September 4, 2014 minutes. Motion seconded by Patoka and passed by voice vote.

3. Discussion/Action on Year 2020 Capital Improvements Project – Aerial Photography AND

4. Discussion/Action on Year 2020 Capital Improvements Project – LiDAR

Hartman stated the 2015 Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) included aerial photography that is being flown this spring during leaf-off. The 2015 aerial photo project is being paid with Land Records budget carryover funds, which are generated through document recording fees being receipted in excess of budget expenses. Hartman cautioned the 2020 aerial photo project may not be covered by carryover funds due to a decrease in document recordings, which results in a decrease in recording fees coming into the Land Records budget. As an example, the 2014 budget has only \$1,000 going into carryover. Hartman also noted recording fees cover the salary and benefits of the GIS/LIS Technician.

As relates to LiDAR, Hartman noted the County has an elevation model from the year 2000. LiDAR is used by staff and citizens seeking to utilize spatial infrastructure data. LiDAR can also be used as an economic development engine, flood risk mapping, precision farming, and to map the impact of conservation practices. Hartman noted this data is given to private citizens.

Lane stated the Real Estate community relies on aerial photos; they are not a luxury. It would be a step backward not to have new aerial photos at least every 5 years. B. Jacowski agreed that aerial photos are necessary and not a luxury. Wisinski noted that assessors rely on aerial photos as well. Hartman noted the County could be involved in assessing, if the proposed State budget passes. As proposed, assessing becomes a County process rather than each municipality contracting with its own assessor. Hartman also noted LiDAR can be used by citizens for land management/boundary disputes that could possibly be resolved before court action.

Gifford asked where the money for these projects will come from. He noted the CIP budget is cut every year. He also noted staff cannot be added to the levy. Hartman replied that not obtaining new aerial photography is always on the table. Also, there may possibly be grant money that could help bring the cost down. Gifford felt there could be fees charged for public use of this information, and there is no need to solve the possible problem today; this is planning for 2020. Hartman noted we can only charge individuals for reproduction. Gifford suggested the Committee could approve these items for the 2020 CIP budget to get them in the queue, and see what happens between now and then.

B. Jacowski questioned what grants may be available. He also asked, if there are grants, why they are not being applied for all the time. Hartman explained that in 2017, there may be \$50,000 grants available from the State. We could apply for that grant for the 2020 aerial flight. There are many unknowns about that grant process, but what is known is that you cannot carry those grant funds from year to year. Gifford asked why you would wait to apply, if you can receive funds in 2019. Have the CIP project moved up in the queue as money becomes available. Hartman felt you may be able to contract for aerial photos in one year, and pay for them over two years while utilizing two grant cycles. B. Jacowski noted that by 2020, drone technology may result in a decrease in cost for the aerial photos.

Gifford moved to add the aerial photography project to the 2020 CIP budget process, noting a projected cost at this time of \$80,000. Motion seconded by Hartman and passed by voice vote.

Hartman referred back to the year 2000 elevation model the County has, which is inadequate. Groundwater is on the forefront of the County's mind at this time, and LiDAR can be used to track groundwater related data; activity on the ground impacts groundwater. LiDAR, with 2 foot contours, has a current price of \$160,000. There are requests for this data from engineers and others. Hartman has resisted obtaining LiDAR; it is higher precision, but falls outside of Planning and Zoning's need, although Land Conservation would benefit the most.

Hartman described that LiDAR uses laser reflections on the ground, which results in building footprints/ built environment, tree canopy, etc. It is also useful for damage assessment. B. Jacowski asked to clarify that building environment can be determined under tree canopy, and Hartman replied yes, it can.

Rice explained LiDAR utilizes layers and can see multiple items to simulate height. This technology is used in forestry (timber wood) for site analysis, etc. Rice felt a cost benefit analysis should be conducted across multiple departments, including the Highway Department, etc. This will show various benefits; otherwise, people are likely to ask if this data is necessary. LiDAR helps with flood damage assessment – before and after. LiDAR is usually flown every 10 years, but only changed areas would need to be shot. Rice asked whether other funding sources could be found for this product. If direct benefits are listed, you may be able to sell the product's benefit to the Finance Committee and others involved in the budget process.

B. Jacowski asked how LiDAR determines the difference between buildings versus rock piles. Rice replied this is determined by the density based on rebound and bounce back. B. Jacowski asked if we currently know where all the buildings are in the County. Hartman replied only buildings with addresses are currently able to be mapped. LiDAR/elevation model will allow building information to be extracted. B. Jacowski asked the labor cost involved with going through aerials to mark/find all buildings. Hartman felt that could not be estimated at this time. Rice also noted there is a privacy issue; you cannot gain access to people's property, and B. Jacowski replied that assessor can do that. Patoka stated that is correct, unless an assessor is asked to leave the property.

Hartman stated the building layer is a secondary product of LiDAR. Gifford felt aerials are a convenience. The County pays for it and others gain significant benefit and cost savings. This bothers him; there should be a duplication fee. Hartman noted we do not charge; we post photos on an ftp site and anyone can get them. This data is useful for land management. Hartman stated he has yet to pull together stakeholders to discuss this product.

B. Jacowski referred to Hartman's statement about LiDAR helping the Highway Department, and he asked how; what is the benefit. Hartman replied that Highway's engineering work begins with the information LiDAR can provide. B. Jacowski stated the Highway Department no longer builds roads (they have gotten rid of road building equipment), rather they only maintain them, and so LiDAR information would not be utilized by Highway. The private road building contractor would utilize it and pay for it. Hartman felt engineering work is still needed in the Highway Department.

Gifford stated he hoped that firms having this information would not charge us for it. Gifford felt we could plan for LiDAR in the CIP process, and pay for it, if we can. B. Jacowski stated he would support it, if we can find the money, but he knows there are several other projects that will be in the queue. Rice stated that aerial photos should have a higher rank than LiDAR. B. Jacowski asked whether aeriels and LiDAR can be done at the same time; knowing LiDAR is a tighter pattern. Hartman replied yes, and the dollars reflect that cost savings in the estimates provided today.

B. Jacowski asked whether the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point would partner in the LiDAR project. Rice replied that is a possibility, and they can search for grants as well. In addition, the forestry community may be interested.

Lane asked why some areas of the State have LiDAR, but our area does not. Hartman replied that is the case because FEMA did a LiDAR project in parts of the State where flooding occurred at no cost to those counties. Flooding in Portage County was not a great as in other parts of the State.

Lane moved to add the LiDAR project to the 2020 CIP budget queue. Motion seconded by Voelker and passed by voice vote.

5. Land Information Program Updates

Hartman reported the 2014 Land Records budget suffered the worst recording fee revenue since 1999. We were able to cover costs; the program is stable.

Hartman stated a web-enabled tie-sheet finder was developed, which surveyors like so far. This program allows them to obtain the information in the field on their mobile device. Wisinski stated surveyors love the program. Hartman further stated a parcel finder being developed is at beta version and has good print facilities.

Sutter stated he is working on a parcel fabric – a new data model. The new format has everything tied together for better parcels, CSM's, plats, etc. If you move one item, they all move. This will be standardized so anyone can use it. B. Jacowski asked if this is Countywide or Statewide. Sutter replied even nationwide may be possible. Rice noted a push for Statewide is taking place. Hartman cautioned the land records community does not agree on a standard, but we do use what most others use, which is well documented.

6. Review of Vouchers

None presented.

7. Adjournment

With no further business to come before the Committee, B. Jacowski moved to adjourn and Hartman seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 8:25 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Keith Rice, Chair

Paula Cummings, Rec. Secretary

Date