



COUNCIL REPORT

March 10, 2008

The Council of the Alberta Land Surveyors' Association met on March 10, 2008. Here is a summary of their discussions.

WELCOME

Council welcomed the candidates running for Council to the meeting.

FROM THE REGISTRAR

Council approved applications from **Ambi Wrzosek** and **Allan Nielsen** to be placed on the register of retired members.

Council approved an application from **Challenger Geomatics Ltd.** for a branch office in Fort McMurray. **Connie Hanrahan** will be the Alberta Land Surveyor responsible for the branch office.

Council approved **Blackstone Geomatics Inc.** as a surveyor's corporation. **Pat Moloney** will be the Alberta Land Surveyor responsible for the supervision, direction and control of the corporation.

Council was pleased to welcome **Alejandro Caldera, Eric Collins and Sarah Cornett** as the Association's newest associate members.

Mr. Caldera is originally from Mexico and enjoys reading, hiking and soccer.

Mr. Collins is a geomatics instructor at SAIT and a member of ASET.

Ms. Cornett is the executive director of the Canadian Council of Land Surveyors and an Ontario Land Surveyor.

2008-2009

BUDGET APPROVED

Council approved the 2008-2009 budget.

Of significant note in the budget:

- Alberta Land Surveyor fees will be increased to \$700 per member from \$600.
- A new CBEPS levy of \$15 will be added to the dues of each active member and articulated pupil. The ALSA had previously paid this levy out of general revenues.
- The CCLS levy has increased from \$65 to \$71.50.
- Iron posts are projected to decrease 35% from the 2007-2008 and marker posts are projected to fall

30% from the 2007-2008 budget.

- The price to attend regional meetings will have to increase and/or new venues will have to be found in order for the meetings to break-even.
- A number of non-statutory committees have had their budgets reduced.
- Administration expenses have been cut back in specific targeted areas.
- Clerical staffing has been reduced by one from May 1, 2007.
- Money is allocated to hire a new Director of Practice Review.
- \$260,000 will be transferred from the Financial Stabilization Fund in order to balance the budget.

AGM RECOMMENDATIONS

Council approved sending four more recommendations from the Standards Committee to the annual general meeting for consideration by the membership.

The recommendations are:

**Remote Sensing for
Wellsites on Private Land**

The intent of this recommendation is to add standards for wellsites prepared using remotely-sensed data on private land. The recommendation would provide clarity to the public and the approving authorities indicating how the survey was done.

**GNSS Measurements for
Cadastral Surveys**

The intent of this recommendation is to add some items that specifically address issues relating to the use of GPS. This addition will provide a framework allowing SPR to evaluate practitioners in their use of GPS.

**Registering Plans at Both
Land Titles and Public
Lands**

The intent of this recommendation is to eliminate on, on public land, the extra cost for registering a second plan at Land Titles. Council had a question about whether the proposed amendment to the Manual of Standard Practice would contravene existing legislation and requested a legal opinion.

**Digital Submissions to
Land Titles and Public
Lands**

CAD files which are currently submitted to Land Titles and Public Lands through the LTO DIPS and Public Lands DDIPS systems may be in any map projection or may be skewed, scaled and rotated to no system. The intent of this recommendation is to improve the level of mapping precision and accuracy in Alberta.

Council had previously approved two recommendations for the annual general meeting: (1) an amendment to the bylaws concerning fees, dues and levies and (2) an amendment to the Manual of Standard Practice concerning wellsite disposition plan amendments.

PRB POLLING

Thank you to all of the members who participated in the polling to evaluate the current SPR process and to determine the future direction of the program.

The poll was completed by 288 members.

Council approved the Practice Review Board presenting the polling results to the membership at the 2008 AGM.

**IRON POST/MARKER POST
SURCHARGE**

The Association had requested an increase in the surcharge for iron posts and marker posts. One part of the increase was to cover the cost of inflation from 1988 to 2008 and the second part of the increase was to allow the Association to investigate alleged or suspected survey errors.

The Deputy Minister responded to the Association's request by approving the surcharge for boundary investigations. The Deputy Minister has asked the Association to track and ensure compliance with Section 47 of the *Surveys Act* and establish and maintain a field note and dormant plan repository for retired, deceased or other members of the Association.

The proposed amendment to the Ministerial Order would create a more formal reporting mechanism back to the government. A clause has been added stipulating that at the conclusion of every second year, any unused monies, at the discretion of the Minister, pay those unexpended monies to the Government of Alberta.

The Association has replied to the Deputy Minister stating that the Association is not necessarily opposed to the amendments to the agreement but the additional responsibilities and costs relating to tracking and ensuring compliance with Section 47 plans and establishing a field note and dormant plan repository were not contemplated when the Association put forward its recommendation.

The Association has proposed that representatives from the Association and the Government of Alberta meet face-to-face to consider all of the activities undertaken by the Director of Surveys and which ones, if any, the Association could undertake.

DIRECTOR OF SURVEYS REPORT

Council welcomed the Director of Surveys to the meeting and discussed the following items.

Council has asked the Standards Committee to work with the ERCB, the Director of Surveys and others to investigate the possible establishment of a system to map private land dispositions.

Council has also asked the Standards Committee to investigate amending the Manual of Standard Practice

to allow the use of NAD83 or NAD83 (CSRS).

The Director of Surveys had raised a concern about a standard procedure for correcting plans and Council has referred the discussion to the Association's liaison meeting with the Director of Surveys, Land Titles and the Metis Settlements Land Registry.

The Director of Surveys reported that the Alberta Law Reform Institute is prepared to research the Association's recommendation that the Surveys Act be amended by adding Section 39.1 to give governing status to Part 3 monuments placed at non-monumented Part 2 positions.

A Section 9 of the *Surveys Act* hearing was held recently and the Director of Surveys reported that a report on the hearing could be published in an upcoming issue of *ALS News*.

The Director discussed the benefits of approving company base stations as official ASCMs.

THE GPS GUIDELINES WORKING GROUP

Council approved the establishment of a GPS Guidelines Working Group with a budget of \$0.

The purpose of the working group will be to create or establish a set of guidelines that will assist practitioners in better understanding how to take advantage of the technology while meeting any accuracy and redundancy requirements.

The working group will have no budget because meetings and discussions will take place using web-based conference calls and the Sarwiki website for collaborative discussions.

If you are interested in being a member of the working group, please email the Association at info@alsa.ab.ca.

NEW WAYS OF MEETING

Council directed the Professional Development Committee to promote and develop the Sarwiki website as a means to promote learning amongst the membership. Council also directed the Professional Development Committee to hold meetings and seminars using low-cost web-based communications programs.

SUBDIVISION & DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

Council, upon the recommendation of the Legislation Ad Hoc Committee, sent a letter to the Minister of Municipal

Affairs, concerning the application of the Subdivision & Development Regulations under the *Municipal Government Act*.

The Deputy Minister replied that there is no plan to withdraw subdivision authority from municipalities and establish regional planning authorities. It is also stated that municipal actions can be challenged through the courts.

Council has asked the Legislation Ad Hoc Committee to review the Deputy Minister's letter and comment.

BURIED FACILITIES

Council also approved a recommendation from the Safety Committee to take a more proactive approach with government and agencies to promote the recommendations in the Association's buried facilities position paper.

The recommendations in the position paper include:

1. Lobby the government, regulatory bodies and facility owners to develop a system to record the position of facilities as they are constructed.
2. Educate the government, regulatory bodies and facility owners as to the legislative

requirement of the establishment and preservation of survey monuments.

3. Develop a recommended method of practice for Alberta Land Surveyors and their staff.
4. If there is a case of small survey companies or small clients with no ground disturbance policy developed, then it would be wise and recommended to adopt OH&S procedures as a default, or if safety programs are available, those of your colleagues in the same business.
5. The ALSA would consider it standard practice that a land surveyor in the resource sector develop or adopt/adhere to ground disturbance policies in regards to planting survey posts as set forth and agreed to by their clients (oil and gas companies) and the applicable legislation.
6. It should be recommended practice that surface locates for buried facilities be done first and confirmed and that no survey post be placed closer than one metre for most buried facilities and five metres for high-pressure oil and gas lines. The licensee of the pipeline and Alberta One-Call need to be

contacted for any ground disturbance within 30 metres on the buried pipe in accordance with the Pipeline Regulation.

CORNER RECORDATION

The Corner Recordation Index remains down due to hackers corrupting the database.

Council has received two proposals to upgrade the security of the Corner Recordation Index but has tabled discussion on the proposals until the next Council meeting.

Do not use the Corner Recordation Index until further notice.

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANT

Council tabled discussion concerning a recommendation from the Professional Development Committee to hire a professional educational consultant.

The intent of the recommendation was to review goals and objectives of the Professional Development Committee and identify core components and priorities within a three-year time frame.

Council gave unanimous approval to increasing the Professional Development

Committee budget by \$1,100 for the balance of the budget year for a total budget of \$6,100.

CENTENNIAL AGM CELEBRATIONS

Council gave first reading to a proposal from the Historical & Biographical Committee outlining a plan to celebrate the Association's centennial AGM in 2008.

The main component of the plan is a travelling museum exhibit promoting the history of land surveying in Alberta. The exhibit would be used at the ALSA centennial AGM, local museums, student presentations, and other public displays such as the Calgary Stampede and Capital Ex.

The projected cost of the travelling display is \$35,000 with funds coming from the ALSA 100th Anniversary Project Fund.

As the motion did not receive unanimous approval, it will come back to the next meeting of Council for second and final reading.

Please contact any Council member with any comments you may have.

RATIONALE

DOCUMENT REVISIONS

Council gave first reading to revise the rationale document used when presenting

recommendations to Council and the annual general meeting.

The revisions include: (1) a reordering of the questions to be addressed, (2) an updated question to ask what the cost of the recommendation will be to both the ALSA and Alberta Land Surveyors, and (3) a revised question to ask how the recommendation will affect the public interest – both pro and con.

As the rationale document is a Council policy, it will come back to the May Council meeting for second and final reading. The revised rationale document will not be used for the 2008 AGM recommendations.

The rationale document would now read:

1. What is the genesis for the recommendation? (Did it arise from a new business recommendation? Or was it something that came out of committee discussions?)
2. What problem is trying to be solved? How does the recommendation solve the problem?
3. What is the overall intent of the recommendation?
4. Was anyone outside of the Association membership

consulted? What was their reaction?

5. How will this recommendation affect the public interest (pro and con)?
6. What are the financial costs of the recommendation to both the Alberta Land Surveyors' Association and Alberta Land Surveyors? Are there any ongoing financial commitments required?

SHORT CUTS

Council discussed the possibility of holding a joint Council meeting with the Association of British Columbia Land Surveyors.

IMPORTANT DATES TO BE AWARE OF

Getting It Right Seminar
Calgary
March 20 - 21

Exam Preparation Seminar
Red Deer
March 22

Professional Exams
April 8 - 9

Annual General Meeting
Lake Louise
April 24 - 26