



COUNCIL REPORT

August 26, 2008

The Council of the Alberta Land Surveyors' Association met on August 26, 2008. Here is a summary of their discussions.

FROM THE REGISTRAR

Council approved a branch office for **Interprovincial Surveys Ltd.** in Calgary. **Mark MacDonald** will be the Alberta Land Surveyor responsible for the supervision, direction and control of the branch office.

Council directed the Registrar to cancel the registration of a practitioner for not providing proof of professional liability insurance after the expiration of 30 days following the service of a written notice unless the practitioner complies with the notice.

The Alberta Land Surveyors' Association is pleased to welcome **Ben DeJong** as its newest associate member. Mr. DeJong works for Pals Surveys in Edmonton and is a 2002 graduate of the NAIT Geomatics Engineering Technology program.

REVIEW ENGAGEMENT

Council approved the April 30, 2008 review engagement report as prepared by the Association's accountant.

In 2007-2008, members' equity decreased by \$112,958

based on total revenue of \$2.76 million.

The loss was due not only to a decline in post sales but also to a change in accounting procedure for reporting investment income.

Balances were re-set in the Public Relations & Communications Fund and the Discipline Revolving Fund.

The review engagement report is online at www.alsa.ab.ca/Review_Engagement.htm. Contact any Council member or the Association office with any questions they may have.

ASSOCIATION INVESTMENTS

Council approved a recommendation from the Secretary-Treasurer and the Executive Director to change investment advisors from CIBC Private Investment to Morgan Meighen of Toronto.

In 2007-2008, the Executive Committee was concerned about its investments. In December 2007, the Executive Committee met with an independent

investment advisor and a number of issues were raised about the Association's investment strategy. That led to the Council passing an investment guideline in May 2008.

Morgan Meighen was recommended because

1. they are a smaller boutique firm with relatively fewer clients in order to provide a customized investment plan; and
2. they are an investment management firm and not a bank that has an investment management arm.

THE FUNDING OF THE ALSA

Council reviewed the latest draft of the amended ministerial order concerning the sale of iron posts and marker posts and agreed to accept it.

The amended ministerial order would allow the ALSA to add a surcharge of \$2.50 per iron post and marker post sold for the purpose of investigating boundary uncertainties and alleged survey errors.

There will be an additional \$1.50 surcharge on all posts for the purposes of maintaining and enhancing professional practice, public awareness and the technical capacity of land surveyors in Alberta. More specifically, the ALSA will be required to track and ensure compliance with Section 47 plans, establish and maintain a field note and unfinished plan repository for retired and deceased members and maintain the Corner Recordation Index.

The document will now be submitted to the Minister of Sustainable Resource Development for signing.

Russel Metals has informed the ALSA that steel costs have increased significantly since the start of 2008 and will be looking to pass along their increased raw material costs to the Association and its members.

PRACTICE REVIEW

The Association will hold a think-tank session to discuss the future of systematic practice review and how to create a sustainable peer review program.

The think-tank will be facilitated by an independent consultant and attendees will include 2-3 members from Council, 2-3 members from

the Practice Review Board and 2-3 members from the general membership.

As the ALSA has been unable to hire a Director of Practice Review to date but has an obligation to have some form of continuing competency program in order to protect the public, the think-tank is charged with developing a new sustainable program given the human and financial resources that will likely be available.

ALSA EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

Council gave first reading to a policy that clearly outlines the responsibilities and authorities associated with the hiring and dismissal of all ALSA staff.

As this is a draft policy, it will come back to the next Council meeting for second reading. Please contact any Council member with any concerns or questions you may have.

The Executive Director is responsible for administering written personnel policies which have been approved by Council. To handle situations not covered by written policies, the Executive Director may take problem solving action without Council approval, keeping the President and Council

informed of significant outcomes. At each Executive Committee meeting, the Executive Director shall report any staffing concerns or issues.

The Executive Director is responsible for informing all employees of the rules, regulations, policies and employee job responsibilities and performance expectations.

The Executive Director is responsible for the recruitment, hiring, morale and dismissal of Alberta Land Surveyors' Association staff.

The Alberta Land Surveyors' Association recognizes that the hiring and dismissal of staff in professional staff positions may require extra consideration.

The President and Executive Director shall make a recommendation to Council concerning the hiring and dismissal of the Registrar. Council appoints a Registrar in accordance with Section 10 of the Land Surveyors Act. The Registrar shall perform such duties as required under the Act, Regulations and bylaws. The Registrar reports to the Executive Director on administrative matters.

The Director of Practice Review reports to the Practice Review Board on professional and technical matters and the Executive Director on administrative matters. The Executive Director is responsible for the hiring and dismissal of the Director of Practice Review. The Executive Director shall consult with the Chairman of the Practice Review Board and the President of the Alberta Land Surveyors' Association before hiring or dismissing a Director of Practice Review. The Director of Practice Review is not appointed by Council or the Practice Review Board. However, according to Section 14(1) of the Land Surveyors Act, the Practice Review Board may, prior to an inquiry or review under Section 13(1), appoint a person to conduct a preliminary investigation.

The Assistant to the Director of Practice Review reports to the Director of Practice Review on professional and technical matters and the Executive Director on administrative matters. The Executive Director is responsible for the hiring and dismissal of the Assistant to the Director of Practice Review. The Executive Director shall consult with the Director of Practice Review before hiring or

dismissing an Assistant to the Director of Practice Review.

ALTERNATIVE POSTS

Council approved a request from the Standards Committee to investigate the possibility of an alternative post for urban subdivisions and the possibility of an alternative post for areas in muskeg or otherwise unsuited to establishing an iron post.

The Standards Committee discussed the matter as it relates to preventing damage to buried facilities.

Vice-President Don George is heading up a group that will be implementing the recommendations of the Association's buried facilities position paper and Mr. George's group will be working closely with the Standards Committee on this matter.

Council emphasized that the investigation should take place but is not necessarily advocating the use of an alternative post at this time.

PRB FUNDING REQUEST

Council gave first reading to a request from the Practice Review Board to increase its budget to \$26,880 for 2008-2009 from the current \$18,000.

The increase was requested due to the increased number of meetings and the greater number of PRB members from outside the Edmonton area.

As the Council motion was not unanimous, it will come back to the next meeting for second reading. Please contact any Council member with any concerns or questions you may have.

JOINT MEETING

Council gave approval to hold a joint meeting with the Board of Directors of the Association of British Columbia Land Surveyors.

The meeting is tentatively scheduled for November 2008 in British Columbia. The ALSA Council will combine its regularly scheduled November and December meetings with this joint meeting in order to reduce the costs.

Ten agenda items have been identified, include sharing information with respect to practice review, professional development and career awareness.

CENTENNIAL AGM PUBLICATION

Council gave first reading to a proposal that the ALSA celebrate its forthcoming 100th AGM with a 48-page

magazine that would be published alongside *Alberta Venture* and *Alberta Oil* magazines.

The centennial magazine would be financed by the sale of advertising space to members and suppliers. The Association would commit \$35,196 for the distribution of the magazine and guarantee the full cost of the magazine (\$95,708) if advertising support was not forthcoming.

The magazine would promote the history and career awareness of the profession.

As the Council motion was not unanimous, it will come back to the next meeting for second reading. Please contact any Council member with any concerns or questions you may have.

REINSTATEMENT REQUIREMENT FOR RETIRED ALSs

A member of the ALSA wrote to Council to recommend that a policy be created to allow a retired ALS who is presently still active in the survey profession the same

privileges as a BCLS with regard to writing the new ALSA jurisdictional examination.

Council carefully considered the recommendation and decided to leave it to the discretion of the Registration Committee what examinations, if any, a retired ALS may be required to write based on the member's recent experience.

The Registration Committee will have the option of requiring a retired ALS to write the new jurisdictional examination.

Council thanks the member for bringing this recommendation to its attention and encourages other members who have concerns or recommendations to do the same.

GOVERNMENT LIAISON

Council has recommended to the Minister of Employment Immigration and Industry that Russ Barnes be re-appointed public member on Council.

Since the last Council meeting, the Alberta Land Surveyors' Association has commented on the province's new draft land-use framework document, concerns about the Municipal Government Act and the Subdivision and Development Regulation, Land Titles' proposed amendments to the Use of Information Regulation and the automatic withdrawal of caveats, and the City of Edmonton's request for comment on the draft zoning bylaw enforcement initiative.

The Premier's office has been contacted about attending the 100th Annual General Meeting in Banff and they will be in touch with the ALSA early in the new year to advise of his availability.

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The Australia High Court has overturned a lower court decision that state governments had an implied license to use survey plans for free.

More information will be available in the next issue of *ALS News*.