



# Council REPORT

Alberta Land Surveyors' Association

January 27, 2005

*The Council of the Alberta Land Surveyors' Association met on January 27, 2005. Here is a summary of their discussions.*

## 2005-2006 Budget Approved

Council approved the Association budget for 2005-2006.

The budget includes an increase in surveyor's corporation and partnership dues from \$300 to \$500. All other membership dues remain the same. The increase in surveyor's corporation dues is the first since 1993 and the maximum allowed under the by-laws.

In accordance with Council policy, Council budgeted iron post and marker post sales to be the average of post sales over the last four years. Council conservatively budgeted a modest investment income.

On the expenditure side of the budget, office rent has increased reflecting the expiry of the rent-free period in the Phipps-McKinnon building. The former office space in the CN Tower has been sublet until the lease there expires on June 30, 2005. Staff salaries were adjusted to be competitive with industry.

Council held the line on most other expense items; adjusting line items slightly up or down based on recent trends and experience. Most committees received the budget amounts they requested. However, no committee's budget was cut significantly.

## From the Registrar

Council approved the following applications for surveyor's corporations (name of the Alberta Land Surveyor responsible for the supervision, direction and control of the practice):

- Delta Engineering Services Inc. (John Sung)
- IBI Geomatics Inc. (John Byrne)
- Point Geomatics Ltd. (Chris Tucker)
- Pro-Site Surveys Inc. (D. Rae Sutherland)
- Theriault Consulting Ltd. (Allan Theriault)

Council approved a request to cancel the registration of Global Surveys Corp. subject to clarification on one matter. Global Surveys Group Inc. remains registered as a surveyor's corporation.

Council directed the registrar to cancel the registration of any surveyor's corporation or partnership after the expiration of 30 days written notice if they fail to renew their permit to practice by January 31.

## Bylaw Amendment to the AGM

Council approved sending a proposed bylaw amendment to create a student member category to the annual general meeting for consideration by the membership. This serves as notice from the Registrar to amend the by-laws in accordance with section 68(3) of the bylaws.

*...that Student Member be added to the list in Section 51*

*...and that a new section be added as Section 51(7) as follows:*

### (7) Student Member

*(a) Council may upon application, confer membership in the Association as a Student Member to any individual who is enrolled as a full time student and who currently complies with one or more of the following criteria:*

- (i) enrolled in a geomatics program or a related academic program;*
- (ii) enrolled in a high school with the intentions of entering a*

*geomatics program or related academic program;*

*(iii) has an interest in the field of geomatics and is enrolled in a related program.*

*(b) A Student Member is not required to pay an annual fee*

*(c) A Student Member may attend any annual general meeting, special meeting or regional meeting of the Association and is entitled to discuss any motion or resolution before the meeting, but may not vote and may not propose any motion or resolution to the meeting.*

*(d) A student Member may sit as a member on any non-statutory committee of the Association.*

*(e) A Student Member may use the designation "Student Member/Alberta Land Surveyors' Association" (Student Member/ALSA)*

*(f) Membership may be cancelled by Council*

*...and that a new Section 52(5) be added to read as follows:*

*Student memberships are valid for one year and applications become due on October 31. Students must reapply annually.*

Discussion on creating a student membership category came from a presentation by a geomatics student to the Geomatics Engineering Liaison Committee. The student outlined the lack of connection between ALSA and students and how students have many questions about land surveying but do not know where to get the answers.

A trial membership drive was conducted at the U of C, NAIT, SAIT and through the ALSA website. As of January 11, 2005, 63 students have applied for student membership.



The overall intent of the recommendation is to make high school students aware of geomatics as a profession and to make post-secondary geomatics students aware of land surveying and the process to become a commissioned land surveyor.

The cost to the Association of having a student member category is expected to be minimal.

### **Curve Information to AGM**

The Standards Committee is recommending that “when a circular curve boundary is non-tangential to an adjoining line segment boundary, radial bearings or a chord bearing and distance must also be shown” be added to the end of the first paragraph of Part D, Section 1.4 of the Manual of Standard Practice. Council approved forwarding the recommendation to the AGM for consideration by the membership.

This issue arose from a letter sent by Mr. Brian Minto to Mr. Pratt, which was published in *ALS News* in the June 2004 issue. In this letter Mr. Minto pointed out that there may be situations where survey plans create non-tangential curve boundaries and there appears to be no explicit requirement for these curves being labeled as such and no requirement for their respective radial or chord bearings be shown. At the September 9<sup>th</sup> 2004 Standards Committee meeting, this issue was discussed and as a result, this motion was drafted.

The problem that this motion is trying to solve is that Part D, Section 1.4 of the Manual of Standard Practice appears to be adequate for tangential curve but inadequate for some non-tangential curves. However, it should be noted that when a curve on a survey plan is non-tangential as a result of a retracement of an existing boundary, Part E, Section 3.11 requires either the chord or radial bearing be shown. Therefore, this proposed additional requirement should pertain to new boundaries that are non-tangential as a result of unique circumstances.

### **Grid Coordinates**

The Standards Committee recommended that “Grid [NAD83 (adopted)] co-ordinates must be shown on the plan or on a separate document registered along with the plan” be added as Part D, Section 2.2.4 of the Manual of Standard Practice. Council, however, referred the recommendation back to the Standards Committee for a definition or clarification of NAD 83 (adopted).

### **Separating the MSP into Two**

Council referred the Standards Committee recommendation to split the Manual of Standard Practice into two parts (a manual of standard practice and a compendium) back to the Standards Committee to reconsider the items that would be included in the compendium.

In January 2003, Council passed a motion that the Standards Committee review the concept of restructuring the manual of Standard Practice into two separate volumes.

In February 2004, the Standards Committee recommended to Council that the MSP be restructured into a single volume with two parts with one part containing standards governing field and office procedures and the other part being a compendium of information referred to on the ALSA website. In February 2004, Council endorsed the Standards Committee recommendation.

### **Boundary Resolution Pilot Project**

Council approved the boundary resolution process as developed by the Section 9 Ad Hoc Committee as a pilot project for a period of one year with a budget of \$10,000.

The Boundary Resolution Process has been developed to help Alberta Land Surveyors address boundary uncertainties and alleged errors in surveys that have been identified through their daily activities. There are two components to the Boundary Resolution Process. First, if the involved Alberta Land Surveyors cannot coop-

eratively resolve the situation themselves, the Alberta Land Surveyors’ Association may assist with mediation. Second, if mediation has failed or does not apply, there is a referral from the Executive Director to the Boundary Panel who would convene to determine if the boundary uncertainty is best resolved by Section 9 of the Surveys Act or some other means.

A complete outline of the boundary resolution process and the rationale for it is included with this issue of *Council Report*. It will also be discussed at the AGM if time permits although it will not be a formal recommendation.

If you are interested in serving on the Boundary Panel, please contact Executive Director Brian Munday.

Council also approved a motion from the Section 9 Ad Hoc Committee to recommend that the Director of Surveys adopt a revised Intent and Application document and definition of “alleged error in survey” as developed by the Ad Hoc Committee. The Director of Surveys uses the Intent and Application document as a guideline to determine if a case is a candidate for a Section 9 Board of Investigation.

### **Calgary EDM Baseline**

The Geodetic Control Unit of the Government of Alberta will no longer accept EDM calibration survey results. Users will be required to calibrate at one of the other three EDM baselines in Alberta (Lethbridge, Edmonton or Grande Prairie), which are considered to be stable.

Council received a letter from Geoff Banham, Project Leader, Geodetic Control Unit, with the Director of Surveys office updating the Association on the latest round of re-observations taken at the Calgary EDM baseline to determine the baseline lengths.

In 2000, Council was informed that it was the intention of Geodetic Survey Division (GSD -NRCan) to scale back the number of official EDM calibration baselines in Canada from 44



to 10 (one per province/ region) and that re-observation of any non-official baselines would only be done at the request of the province on a cost-shared basis. At that time, it was also recommended by the Director of Surveys office not to re-observe the Calgary EDM baseline due to instability of the pillars. Discussion ensued with the ALSA regarding the usefulness of the Calgary baseline and its inherent instability as well as other observational issues (off-line alignment of Pillar 8, visibility problems with Pillar 7 due to changes in elevation, and measurement influences (fences and high voltage electrical boxes).

The ALSA recognized that the Calgary baseline is unstable. However, as long as Alberta Land Surveyors knew the magnitude of the errors in the baseline, the Association would be satisfied. The ALSA recommended that it would be practical to explore the possibility of the Calgary baseline being re-measured annually at a relatively reasonable cost. With the level of activity taking place then in 2000 and the legislated requirement to calibrate all electronic linear measuring devices, the ALSA felt it was important to have a baseline in the Calgary area.

In 2003, the Government of Alberta contracted GSD to re-observe the Lethbridge, Calgary, and Grande Prairie EDM Calibration Baselines. Subsequent analysis by GSD of the Calgary baseline data shows continued movement of one to five millimeters at four of the seven on-line pillars (ASCMs 151894, 149203, 249060, and 189506). Also, no scale analysis was done as too many pillars are moving to derive a reliable answer.

Based on the 2003 re-observations, GSD has further stated that the derived baseline lengths are "... *provisional*... and... *only reliable for the epoch of the survey*." A notice has been included with the Calgary baseline lengths information published on the Director of Surveys website. Due to these latest results, the Geodetic

Control Unit of the Government of Alberta will no longer accept EDM calibration survey results from the Calgary baseline. Users will be required to calibrate at one of the other three EDM baselines in Alberta (Lethbridge, Edmonton or Grande Prairie), which are considered to be stable.

Mr. Banham has asked if the ALSA wishes to explore the long-term option of establishing a new baseline for Calgary and Council will arrange a meeting with Mr. Banham to discuss this issue further.

### **Five Year Public Relations Plan Approved**

Council gave second and final reading to a recommendation from the Public Relations Committee to retain Rose Country Communications to develop a new five-year public relations plan for the Association at a cost of \$15,000. The intent of the recommendation is to develop a new plan based on the polling results of the membership, the general public and client groups.

### **Current State Assessment**

Council gave second and final reading to a recommendation from the Future of the Association Ad Hoc Committee to hire a consultant to do a current state assessment of the Association at a cost of \$27,440. Council thanks those members who took the time to express their opinion on the issue.

The consultant, Strategy Summit of Edmonton, will address the following questions:

1. Do membership demographics indicate a broad retirement is coming in the profession?
2. What is the current and future market for land surveyors?
3. Will membership have the ability to serve the ALSA's market?
4. What challenges exist to marketing the profession and attracting new entrants?
5. What bottlenecks exist to entry into the profession that ALSA can help to address?

6. At the current level of education and training standards, will the trends and the availability of technical staff affect the ALSA's membership?
7. What concerns do members have about the profession's long-term viability?
8. What strategies and roles can the ALSA pursue to meet the long-term interests of the profession?

### **Dispositions**

Council recognized that public land dispositions will continue to be a vital issue for the ALSA as it liaises with government on this issue. Therefore, it is important that the ALSA have strong representation on its own Public Land Dispositions Subcommittee – a subcommittee under the Standards Committee.

### **Western Torrens/Title Insurance Position Papers**

Council referred the title insurance and Western Torrens position papers back to the RPR Ad Hoc Committee again for further editing. Council felt that the position papers needed to be edited some more to strike the right tone. Making the RPR Ad Hoc Committee a standing committee was tabled pending receipt of the position papers.

In related RPR matters, members of the RPR Ad Hoc Committee will be meeting with the City of Calgary to discuss an article on the use of RPRs prepared by the City's Development & Building Approvals department and published in the Calgary Regional Home Builders' Association magazine, *Profile*.

Council learned that the RPR Ad Hoc Committee will be moving [www.rprindex.ab.ca](http://www.rprindex.ab.ca) to a new server once some new search engine, upload and submit features have been developed.



## Content

### Management System

Council gave second and final reading again to a proposal to hire a firm to develop a content management system which would allow for the elimination of duplicate processes by the ALSA staff.

Once in effect, the content management system would allow members to update their member profile and change their addresses, phone numbers and so on. Members could only change specific designated fields. Once in effect, the content management system would also allow members to register for seminars and regional meetings online and order posts online. Members can do this now,

however, the Association would add the ability for members to pay online with a Visa card using secured means. When members register online, the Association's seminar or regional meeting or post order database would be automatically updated. This would eliminate routine processing of information.

*It was MOVED by Mr. Green, seconded by Mr. Frederick, that the Content Management Proposal by Paribus Corporation be approved at a cost of a maximum of \$23,000 with an annual cost of \$1,000, funds to come from the Technology Transfer & Education Fund.*

*Motion Carried*

## Awards and Honours

Council approved two nominations for awards and honours this year. They will be presented at the annual general meeting on Thursday April 21 during the Awards Lunch.

## Leasehold Allowance Fund

Council gave second and final reading to the establishment of a leasehold allowance fund. The purpose of the fund is to give the executive director the discretion to use the fund to update or maintain the Association's office space. The ALSA did not use all of the leasehold allowance provided by the landlord when it moved into the Phipps-McKinnon building and this money (\$5,357.10) will be put into the Leasehold Allowance Fund.

# Alberta Land Surveyors' Association Annual General Meeting and Convention

April 21 to 23, 2005  
Fairmont Jasper Park Lodge

Deadline for hotel registration: *March 20th*  
Early Bird Draw: *April 1st*