

BUFFALO COUNTY MINUTES

Committee of the Board: Land Information Committee
Date of the Meeting: July 13, 2018
Electronic and Hard Copy Filing Date: July 25, 2018

Chair Mr. Barry Drazkowski called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. in the third floor County Board meeting room, Buffalo County Courthouse, Alma, Wisconsin.

Board Members Present: Mr. Barry Drazkowski, Mr. David Danzinger, Mr. Max Weiss, Mr. Dennis Bork and Mr. John Ebert.

Others Present for All or Parts of the Meeting: Ms. Sonya Hansen, Ms. Tina Anibas, Ms. Carol Burmeister and Mr. Joe Nelsen.

Public Comments Regarding Agenda Items: There were no public comments. A motion was made by Mr. Max Weiss seconded by Mr. John Ebert to approve the agenda as prepared. Motion Carried.

Review/Discussion/Action Regarding Minutes of the Previous Meeting: A motion was made by Mr. Dennis Bork seconded by Mr. Max Weiss to approve the minutes of the prior meeting of June 1, 2018 as sent. Motion Carried.

Review/Discussion/Action Regarding Remonumentation:

Mr. Joe Nelsen reviewed the estimated cost per PLSS corner based on the final costs for the Townships of Cross, Modena and Naples (adjusted for 2018 rates) at approximately \$1,590 per corner. This amount includes the research, GPS traversing, PLSS corner search computations and searching, setting and referencing the monuments, and paperwork that is created for the file and final recording. This amount would be less for corners that have a “chain of history” from the original government survey to the present monument.

Mr. Joe Nelsen reviewed the estimated cost for the remaining corners for the townships that have not been completed at the end of 2017. There are approximately 985 corners remaining to be remonumented at an approximate cost of \$1,460,000. He proposed an annual budget with office hours, surveying services, telephone, photocopies, monuments and other operating expenses at \$250,000. This would complete the remonumentation project within an approximate six-year timeframe.

Mr. Joe Nelsen informed the Committee that under the current program, the County is working with two townships that have agreed to match county funding with each paying

\$5,000.00 annually. He stated that land records grants have also contributed to the overall remonumentation at varying amounts.

The Committee discussed adverse possession laws and the process to protect boundaries through this statutory process and the misconception that people believe that restoring the corners will move boundaries. Mr. Joe Nelsen explained that boundaries within a plat remain the same but that the references to a given PLSS corner may change.

The Committee discussed the fact that title insurance insures the title to a property and does not insure the boundaries or guarantee acreage.

Mr. Joe Nelsen explained that a surveyor could use the brass corners established by the Corp of Engineers and Davy Engineering if they can verify it accurately identifies the corner using the supporting documentation or field notes from the Corp of Engineers and Davy Engineering.

The Committee discussed the benefit of remonumentation lowering surveying costs to the citizens because corners are established.

Ms. Tina Anibas informed the Committee that their office deals with residents that believe the on-line parcel maps are their property lines. She gave an example of a legal description that was accurately mapped and that their house was on another piece of land. She reminded the Committee that the parcel maps are just a representation of the land and not the boundary lines. She indicated that when a section is remonumented that her office has to re-mapped the property in the parcel mapping system as it does not automatically make the adjustments.

Ms. Tina Anibas informed the Committee that there are 900 parcels that still need to be mapped, survey maps are 25% completed, Certified Survey Maps are 65% completed, roads and right-of-ways still need to be done. She indicated that land is constantly being sold or split and that there are gaps and overlaps.

The Committee discussed that parcel mapping will have on-going maintenance as land ownership changes and as remonumentation is completed.

Mr. Joe Nelsen explained the difference between PLSS remonumentation and PLSS monument maintenance. He explained the current PLSS remonumentation process and the duty of the County Surveyor's Office as dictated by State Statutes. He has concerns about the loss of evidence each year and that the cost increases each year.

The Committee discussed the liability shift to the County if the County just accepts the corner of a current surveyor without verifying the monument. The Committee agreed that this project needs to move forward, a time frame established and that this Committee is responsible for making a recommendation to the County Board.

The Committee reviewed the prior presentation notes from the meeting when remonumentation was discussed and other surveyors had addressed the Board.

The Committee discussed in length whether or not a Request for Proposal for remonumentation should be sought to complete this project.

The Committee discussed whether or not the Wisconsin Land Information grant funds could be used to expedite this project and that we delay putting funds towards the Lidar project. Ms. Hansen indicated that this would be a question for the Land Information Officer.

The Committee suggested meeting with the Town Boards that are not completed to discuss a plan to move forward. The Committee discussed their options as follows:

1. Continue on the current schedule;
2. Hire a full-time surveyor, purchase equipment and complete the project;
3. Complete an RFP, manage the contract and have project reviewed by a surveyor; or
4. Use the County Surveyor, set a budget to complete the project in 5-7 years, use the Land Information grant funds and continue to share costs with the Townships.

It was the consensus of the Committee to draft a resolution for the next meeting that would support using the County Surveyor for consistency and continuity, setting an annual budget to complete the project within 7 years, using as much of the State grant funding as possible and continue cost sharing with the township to be presented to the Finance Committee and then the County Board. The Chair will work with the County Administrative Coordinator to draft this resolution.

Review/Discussion/Action Regarding Land Information Officer Monthly Report:
The Committee reviewed the monthly report prepared by the Land Information Officer.

Public Comments: There were no public comments.

Next Meeting: The next meeting of the Land Information Committee is scheduled for August 10, 2018 at 9:00 a.m.

Adjourned: Mr. Dennis Bork made a motion to adjourn at 11:37 a.m., seconded by Mr. David Danzinger. Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Sonya J. Hansen
Recording Secretary