



LION

The Wisconsin Land Information Officers Network

Legislative Summary

LION Legislative Proposal

February 12, 2013

On December 13, 2012 representatives from the Wisconsin Land Information Officers Network (LION) met with representatives from the Wisconsin Register of Deeds Association (WRDA), Wisconsin Realtors Association (WRA), Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) and Wisconsin Land Information Association (WLIA) to discuss the continued collection of the \$5 Social Security Transaction fee, due to sunset on January 1, 2015. From that meeting a refined draft of the LION Legislative Proposal was developed. In response, the WLIA and WRDA provided suggestions to that proposal. In addition, the Wisconsin Geographic Information Coordinating Council (WIGICC) provided comments on the LION proposal.

The following is a summary of the suggestions/comments that were provided by the following associations.

WI Land Information Association (WLIA):

- 1) Modify the split of the \$5 Redaction Fee to have the additional \$5 retained, \$2 to be kept at the county for the County Land Information Program, \$3 to be sent to the DOA for inclusion into the WLIP fund. The reasoning for this change is the disparity in fees dispersed to the Counties, based on their filings and retained fees. This disparity is a road block to the continued developmental needs for statewide geospatial data layers and systems.
- 2) Designate \$1 of the \$2 retained fee at the County level to be administered to the Register of Deeds Office, through the County Land Information Council, for projects within the County Land Records Modernization Plan.
- 3) Establish a data sharing process that any geospatial or related data created with, maintained with or linked to the WLIP funding (retained fees or distributed fees) must be shared, at no cost.

WI Register of Deeds Association (WRDA):

- 1) While we do think that IF the money does not sunset it should go to land related items & not to some of these other organizations, WRDA did vote to stay neutral at this time on the topic, we also voted to not support this proposal as it was written, but we did agree that we should work with Fred/LION on the proposal.
- 2) Remembering back to when the flat fee/redaction legislation was being discussed, the WRDA showed counties on a spreadsheet the differences to each fund that the flat fee alone would affect & every fund showed a gain. The redaction fee part of

that legislation did not & should not need to have taken into account the needs of the WLIP.

- 3) LION has repeatedly said that this is not a recording fee increase & we say that it is & WRDA does not support a recording fee increase. When WRDA first started the flat fee legislation for the recording fee to be set at \$25.00, that extra 5.00 was tacked on specific to the redaction fund for a specifically intended purpose by the legislators to protect the public. So if LION wants the recording fee to go to \$30.00 it should be acknowledged that it is a fee increase.
- 4) LIC's may have been established by the act for overseeing, however the implementation of setting up those councils, actually having meetings & counties following the council's suggestions are very different things in each county. We would "prefer" that the proposal push more towards the base budget grants than the education and other grants as we believe those are more important to the smaller counties at this time and for that grant funding to not lapse.

Wisconsin Geographic Information Coordinating Council (WIGICC):

- 1) WIGICC fully support the increases to the base budget and education grants.
- 2) Recommends adding language that requires that funds submitted to the Department of Administration (DOA) must be dispersed back through the appropriate WLIP grant processes at maximum funding levels, and must not be used for any purposes other than these grants as administered through DOA staff directly involved with implementing the WLIP.
- 3) Add language requiring intergovernmental sharing of any data created, acquired or maintained using WLIP funds.
- 4) Concerned that the LION proposal does not adequately address the discrepancy in WLIP funding between more and less funded counties which continues to hinder progress toward completing several critical statewide layers. Provide for additional grants:
 - To create statewide foundational data layers from distributed local foundational layers.
 - To create statewide foundational data layers from distributed regional or state sources.
 - To support business assessments for statewide foundational layers.
 - To support planning and implementation of a centralized system to support creation, maintenance, and access/distribution of statewide foundational layers.
 - To support software upgrades and functional modernization for Register of Deeds Offices.
 - To support regional mapping activities.

The LION Board and Legislative Committee (B&LG) reviewed the suggestions that were provided and developed a series of positions/comments in response.

Response to WLIA suggestions:

- 1) The LION proposal is that \$4/County and \$1/WLIP. If other association agreed with a change, LION would consider an additional dollar going to the WLIP (\$3/County and \$2/WLIP). This increase to the WLIP could provide additional dollars to ensure full funding of the base budget and education grant. However, the lapsing of WLIP funding is a concern and LION would want to see specific grants for the remaining money in the WLIP after the base budget and education grants are fully funded.
- 2) LION does not support the dividing of the money held by the county and managed by the LIC. LION does not want legislation to create any division within the Land Information Councils. In addition, LION would look to provide the LICs with flexibility to direct funding to initiatives outlined in the draft developed on December 13th meeting.
- 3) LION does not support including data sharing in the current proposal. LION understanding that data sharing is an issue but this should be a separate proposal that needs to look at in more detail with more thoughtful discussion. LION is open to discuss this issue with WLIA and others to develop a strategy that will benefit the entire land information program.

Response to WRDA comments:

- 1) LION thanks WRDA for working with the network to refine the proposal and looks forward to continued interaction with WRDA in the future.
- 2) LION is supportive of the efforts by WRDA to establish the flat fee legislation. LION understands the focus needed to secure the funding for the critical effort of redaction of social security numbers for document published on the web.
- 3) LION respects the position of the WRDA that the recording fee was set at \$25.00 with an extra \$5.00 specified for redaction of social security numbers. LION views this proposal as revenue neutral since the majority of counties will continue to collect the \$5.00 until the end of 2014.
- 4) LION is working with the Governor's Office to increase the base budget funding to \$100,000 and looks to the budget announcement on February 20th. LION shares the concern that past funding has been lapsed and is looking to secure future funding. LION also understands that structure and authority of the LICs varies widely across the state. LION hopes to work with the WRDA and others to make the LICs more effective for our mutual benefit.

Response to WIGICC comments:

- 1) LION thanks WIGICC for their support of the increases to the base budget and education grants.
- 2) To the language recommendation locking funding to WLIP grants and only thru DOA staff, LION questions the viability of adding this language. LION is very interested in securing WLIP funds for their intended purpose and will pursue stronger language to this end, based on legislative support.

- 3) LION does not support including data sharing in the current proposal. LION understanding that data sharing is an issue but this should be a separate proposal that needs to look at in more detail with more thoughtful discussion. LION is open to discuss this issue with WIGICC and others to develop a strategy that will benefit the entire land information program.
- 4) The proposal was developed with input from the LION membership and this does do a lot to help the smaller counties. Under the current structure there are no insurances that funding will be used for other grants, so the proposal points to initiatives that counties use with dollars retained. LION also needs to work with DOA on the administrative rules to determine eligibility for the base budget grants.

The positions that the LION B&LG took were developed over lengthy discussions that took into account the original intent of the legislative proposal, feedback provided from the other associations that attended the December 13th meeting, the impact the suggested amendments may have in advancing any legislation and response from other association that LION looks to for support. LION B&LG would look to its membership for feedback on the suggestions and comments to develop of a more finalized document. LION B&LG sees this as an evolving document as LION works with other groups and associations.