

## Minutes

Proofed by Gerald Smith:

Board of Directors Meeting  
Property Records Industry Association  
11 a.m., ET, Wednesday, March 18, 2020  
Via Conference Call

Present for the call:

Larry	Burtness	President	Yes
Jerry	Lewallen	Vice President	Yes
Annette	Hill	Treasurer	Yes
Gerald	Smith	Secretary	Yes
Joyce	Mascena	At-large Director	
Sharon	Martin	Director - Government	Yes
Diane	Swoboda Peterson	Director - Government	Yes
Chris	Walker	Director - Government	Yes
Elizabeth	Blosser	Director - Business	Yes
Dan	Shmukler	Director - Business	Yes
Jana	Miyasaki	Director - Business	Yes
Penny	Reed	Director - Business	Yes
Brian	Ernissee	At-large Director	Yes
Mark	Ladd	Immediate Past President	Yes
Charlie	Epperson	Advisory Council	No
Carol	Foglesong	Advisory Council	Yes
Steve	McDonald	Advisory Council	Yes
Marc	Aronson	Advisory Council	Yes
Kelly	Romeo	Advisory Council	Yes
Brent	Blankenship	Education	No
Dan	Crank	Education	No
Liz	Kelly	Membership	Yes
John	Murphy	Membership	No
David	Rooney	Standards/Practices	No
Nakia	McFarland	Standards/Practices	Yes
Kyle	Quackenbush	Governance	Yes
Ryan	Crowley	Governance	No
Christi	Adams	Communications	Yes
Michael	Miller	Communications	No
Carolyn	Ableman	PRIA Local Coordinator	No
Stevie	Kernick	Chief Staff Officer	Yes

## **Call to Order**

President Larry Burtness called the March 18, 2020, meeting of the PRIA Board of Directors to order at 11:03 a.m., ET, and declared a quorum present.

## **Coronavirus**

Burtness said that everyone in the industry is feeling the effects of the coronavirus both personally and professionally. He noted two calls yesterday that included PRIA members and other industry participants. The second call had over 140 participants and the first agenda item for the ALTA SLRAC was county office closings. Counties are handling the situation in different ways. ALTA members were reporting that county offices were closing although most were still accepting eRecording.

From ALTA perspective, how do submitters continue to facilitate transfers if county offices are closing. Do real estate closings need to stop altogether or is there a short-term fix. Can PRIA assist in providing short-term solutions to the industry? Many people are taking advantage of low lending rates to refinance.

ALTA has a spreadsheet that initially was a crowdsource solution but there is now a new solution with all the known closures.

Jerry Lewallan, who was also on yesterday's SLRAC call, said it was significant to him the questions coming from the submitters about the status of recorders' offices. The recorders play a significant part in the real estate transactions.

Penny Reed said a new issue is not being able to get lien releases. Jana Miyasaki said she is getting calls about compliance even beyond TRID. Brian Ernissee said that in Virginia and New York documents that go past the compliance date incur severe penalties. If a document is delivered to the county, is that compliance even though the county office might be closed?

Mark Ladd said Simplifile ran numbers and found that the counties that are completely shut down (no eRecording and no paper recording) represents a very small percentage (.02). Now counties are not following their own rules, i.e., saying the office is not open but local submitters are walking into the office and are submitting.

Annette Hill, NYC, said she is waiting to hear about penalties and she will pass that along. Most recording jurisdictions in NY are taking eRecordings. The state is mandating that staff in government offices be reduced by 50 percent.

Blosser said lawmakers are scrambling to do everything they can about compliance but are being hit from multiple industries. Even when the social distancing qualifiers are lifted, there will be a huge backlog of work to be done. How will the queue be managed once business as usual resumes? There are potential short-term and long-term goals to be addressed.

Sharon Martin reported that 11 or 12 counties in Wisconsin have closed to the public. Employees are expected to work. She said that some of her employees may be assigned to other offices. Traffic in her

office has slowed considerably. Although all counties are currently recording, that could change by the end of the day.

### PRIA's Role

Gerald Smith said that at the least PRIA could develop a continuity plan for recorders. There is a current (2011) disaster preparedness paper that could be a basis for a continuity plan. Ladd said eRecording is half the battle but being able to search online is a second piece.

Miyasaki said she spoke to a recorder who was considering what type of lock box they could use that would be safe and secure. Nakia McFarland said Kofile has heard from customers who have not previously had records online but now want to offer that service. Searching online reduces traffic in the recorder's office.

Ernissee suggested a communication to PRIA asking them not to close but to allow recordings to continue, both paper and electronic. Diane Swoboda Peterson said that frequently a higher authority makes the decision about whether a building housing the recorder's office stays open or not.

Christie Adams said recorders should be encouraged to use all eRecording vendors. Liz Kelly said many small counties don't have websites but if a county recorder does have a website, they should be encouraged to post information about status. Last week "closing" was the word but nothing specific about accepting recordings and eRecordings. In the future, emphasize the use of email to communicate with customers.

Stevie Kernick reported on the actions that PRIA has taken, to date. She recommended the board determine the immediate steps to help the submitters and lenders.

Blosser suggested a work group on how to handle business reactivation and queues once offices reopen.

Burtness stated that an ad hoc group would be formed to develop best practices for closures, partial closures and queues. He asked for volunteers from board, COA and committee chairs. A call will be scheduled for later this week.

### Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board of Directors will convene at 11 a.m., ET, Wednesday, April 15, 2020, via conference call. All agenda items from March will move to April except the strategic planning dates.

Kernick will check with the Sheraton Westgate about dates in November following the election and earlier dates in September.

### Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:07 p.m., ET.

Larry Burtness, president

Stevie Kernick, recording secretary