

**ESS Coordinating Meeting  
March 11, 2026**

**Attendance**

**ESS Coordinating Committee Members**

Jamie Stargell, Adams County Recorder  
Kisha Martin, Ringgold County Recorder  
Travis Case, Grundy County Recorder  
Denise Baker, Wright County Recorder  
Jolynn Goodchild, Plymouth County Recorder

Natalie Steffener, Des Moines County Recorder  
Julie Haggerty, Polk County Recorder  
Melissa Bahnsen, Cedar County Recorder  
David Erickson, Dentons Davis Brown

**Other Participants**

Ann Ditsworth, Dickinson County Recorder  
ReNae Arnold, Dallas County Recorder  
Megan Clyman, Davis County Recorder  
Ann Sweeney, Dubuque County Recorder  
Nancy Booten, Lee County Recorder  
Stacie Herridge, Story County Recorder

Teresa Olson, Worth County Recorder  
Dawn Froese, Linn County Recorder Staff  
Patty Hanners, Scott County Recorder Staff  
Nick Lanning, Rafferty Group  
Brent Calvert, American Abstract & Title

Jammie Hoffman, Iowa Land Records  
Phil Dunshee, Iowa Land Records  
Lisa Long, Iowa Land Records

Samantha McMahon, Iowa Land Records  
Kristen Delaney-Cole, Iowa Land Records  
Corrie Strasser, Iowa Land Records

**Welcome**

A hybrid meeting of the ESS Coordinating Committee was held via web conference and at the ESS office in Johnston. Chair Jamie Stargell called the meeting to order. The Committee also welcomed Jammie Hoffman in her new role as the Executive Director.

**ESS Coordinating Committee Meeting Summary**

The meeting summary of the ESS Coordinating Committee meeting on February 19th was reviewed with a recommendation to amend the participation list.

Travis Case made a motion to approve the meeting summary with the amendment. Natalie Steffener seconded, and the motion was approved.

**Financial & Strategic Review**

**February Metrics**

E-Submission trends were above expectations once again, as February recorded the second-highest number of submissions for the month compared to previous years. It was reported that current projections are not expected to surpass the above-average activity levels observed in 2025. In consideration of possible recording fluctuations, the ESS budget was set conservatively if submission volumes do not continue at the current pace. ESS will continue to monitor these trends throughout the year and provide updates to the Committee.

**Contracts and Agreements**

**Notification System RFQ & Intent to Award**

The Project Manager provided an update on the Request for Quotes (RFQ) shared with various eligible development providers to assist with creating and implementing a notification system that would serve multiple counties through the Iowa Land Records infrastructure. The system is intended to provide a centralized notification service for users across participating counties.

Three qualifying vendors submitted proposals, which were evaluated based on qualifications, technical approach, expertise, and cost. The evaluation process included detailed proposal scoring and an interview process for the top two vendors. The interviews were conducted by an evaluation committee. A

memo from the Project Manager about the qualifying vendors was shared with the committee. The evaluation committee, comprised of County Recorders, the IT representative on the ESS Coordinating Committee, and the ILR Technical Lead, was created to help make an informed decision. It was also noted that the procurement process followed many procedures used by the state of Iowa.

The evaluation committee unanimously recommended designating Cott Systems as the selected development vendor. A Notice of Intent to Award presented for review and action. The Committee discussed project logistics, which included confirmation that the notification system would be developed as custom software, owned and maintained by Iowa Land Records. The RFQ and the proposed Notice were reviewed by legal counsel, Brick Gentry, prior to being presented to the Committee for consideration.

Melissa Bahnsen moved to approve the Notice of Intent to Award and authorized staff to prepare a contract amendment with Cott Systems. Denise Baker seconded the motion, and the motion approved.

### **ESS Office Space Lease**

Following a search for new office space, the Committee was presented with proposed lease terms for a new office location at 2910 Westown Parkway in West Des Moines. The office search process included the evaluation of multiple properties to identify a space that would meet the operational needs of the team.

The proposed lease includes a five-year term with options for early termination and renewal. Additional provisions include utilities being included in the lease and the landlord's commitment to complete updates to the space, including new carpet and paint, prior to occupancy.

Travis Case moved to approve the lease of the new office space at 2910 Westown Parkway. Julie Haggerty seconded. The motion was approved.

### **Linux Migration and 1099 Agreement Extension**

The Committee reviewed a proposed extension related to the ongoing Linux migration project. The project timeline has been impacted by development staff transitions, and continued collaboration with the former technical leader, Kelly Wallace, to support project continuity. The Committee was asked to approve a contract extension of the existing 1099 agreement with Kelly Wallace to continue working on the project. While the timeline has extended beyond initial expectations, contract hours utilized remain below projections and within the approved budget.

Melissa Bahnsen moved to approve the contract extension, and it was seconded by Natalie Steffener. The motion was approved.

### **Konica Minolta Lease Substitution**

In preparation for the office relocation, the Committee reviewed the existing copier lease and moving charges with Konica Minolta. A lease substitution agreement for a new machine was presented as an alternative to relocating the current copier. Konica Minolta has proposed an early termination of the existing contract that is in effect through January, 2027. A new three-year contract would be initiated. The Committee discussed the option to retain the current equipment and pay the moving fee. This approach would allow ESS to continue operating with the current machine while providing additional time for staff to research and evaluate alternative solutions.

Travis Case moved to continue the copier lease agreement, pay the moving fees and to consider other options. Julie Haggerty seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

### **Legislative Update**

Note: Due to time constraints, the legislative report was moved towards the beginning of the meeting. The summary of the update is included in the order of the agenda for continuity.

Nick Lanning of Rafferty Group provided an update on legislative activity impacting County Recorders and Iowa Land Records.

The Iowa Legislature is approaching its second funnel deadline, with increased floor debate and committee activity underway. Many of the bills relevant to County Recorders and ESS remain active beyond the funnel deadline due to fee-related provisions, which place them within the jurisdiction of the Ways and Means committees. Discussions surrounding property tax policy are expected to continue in the legislature.

Several bills related to recording and the office of County Recorder continue to be monitored. Discussion about HF1031 continues with legislators to determine the most effective path forward, particularly as attention remains focused on other legislation. The bill is currently under the purview of the Senate Ways and Means Committee.

### **Policies and Procedures**

The Project Manager confirmed that the ESS Policies and Procedures were updated as approved by the Committee in February and would be published on the ILR website. The policy update was originated by a working group established by the Iowa County Recorders Association to review the 28E Agreement and ESS Policy and Procedures. Discussions about these changes were conducted in 2025 by the Finance Subcommittee and the ESS Coordinating Committee. Committee members sought and gathered feedback from the recorders in their respective districts. The final recommended policy changes included refined definitions, the election of ESS officers in January of each year, designating the ESS Coordinating Committee Secretary/Treasurer and ICRA Treasurer as standing members of the Finance Subcommittee, setting term limits, the selection of a Finance Subcommittee Vice-Chair and other procedural changes.

### **WordPress Site Update**

The Committee received an update on the website refresh project, which is currently in the audit and planning phase. Initial insights were shared regarding how users access and utilize information on the Iowa Land Records public-facing website. The ESS admin team will continue reviewing detailed user behavior data to help inform future layout decisions and the overall presentation of information. This effort is focused on identifying the most valuable tools and resources for both registered users and the general public.

It was also noted that a survey will be distributed to County Recorders to gather feedback on the password-protected ICRA Resource Hub, with results intended to support future improvements and content organization.

### **CESAPI and CUAPI Update**

The Project Manager provided an update on current discussions and work on the county upload API project (CUAPI). While the project is ongoing, the importance of communication and relationships with the respective county service providers was emphasized to help keep the project moving forward, as the transition has been underway for over two years.

### **Additional Information**

Jammie Hoffman, the new Executive Director, shared brief remarks regarding her onboarding experience, including her transition into the role, and involvement in ongoing projects such as the notification system. The Committee also recognized and expressed appreciation for Phil Dunshee's more than 20 years of service and leadership in the development and growth of Iowa Land Records. Members acknowledged his longstanding contributions and institutional knowledge and offered their thanks as he prepares for his next opportunity.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting of the ESS Coordinating Committee is scheduled for May 14, 2026.