

Missouri Board on Geographic Names Meeting Minutes

November 2, 2017 at 10 a.m.

Conference Call

Voting Members Present: John Dougan (Chair Designee), Chris Barnett (Vice Chair), Joseph Carter, Bryan Chinn, Brett Chloupek, John Fisher, Alan Foreman, Lynn Morrow, David Nail, Tony Spicci and Henry Sweets

Voting Members Absent: Joseph Gillman, Debra Greene, Melanie Hans, Gary Kremer, Frank Nickell and Dwight Weaver

Non-Voting Members and Staff Present: Wayne Furr (Council of Geographic Names Authorities), Jane Messenger (Corresponding Secretary), Brian Rogers (Executive Secretary)

Call to Order

John Dougan called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. by welcoming everyone and asking if there were any additions to the agenda. No additions were necessary.

November 2017 Meeting Minutes

John Dougan asked if there were any changes or corrections to the meeting minutes from November 3, 2017. None were forthcoming. Henry Sweets moved the minutes be approved as presented. Lynn Morrow seconded the motion. All in favor. None opposed. Motion approved.

Name Designation Inquiries and Proposals

John Dougan reported that on February 9, 2017, the United States Board on Geographic Names (USBGN) approved the name designation of “Powder Creek,” a 2.3-mile-long stream in Jasper County. This course of action was recommended by the Missouri Board on Geographic Names (MOBGN) at their last meeting, held November 3, 2016. The stream was previously an unnamed tributary of Center Creek.

Dougan then indicated that a number of name designation inquiries and issues were discussed by the board via email since the MOBGN’s last meeting, but action was not taken on any of them for various reasons. In the first set of inquiries, involving Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge, no action was taken because any change falls under the purview of the federal government. No action was taken with the next inquiry, involving “Proffit” Mountain in Reynolds County, because research identified three spellings of the surname in the surrounding area, all of which are all still in use (Proffit/Proffet/Profitt), so there is no way to determine the correct spelling. After much research by Joseph Carter, the board also recommended that Nishnabotna Lake in Atchison County remain an active feature. The proponent of a potential “Lossner Lake” proposal was then discouraged from proceeding any farther because the name

originated with a living individual, thereby violating the USBGN's naming guidelines. The final naming issue discussed by the board outside of our last meeting involved a possible recommendation made by the board in 2010 regarding a "Huesgen Creek." After reviewing all board minutes and agendas from 2010, no mention was found of the recommendation or feature, so the proponent will likely be encouraged to proceed with an official proposal to name the feature.

Chris Barnett indicated that he did not know there had been any resolution surrounding "Huesgen Creek," but believes the board will need to pursue said proposal. He then asked Jane Messenger who the individual is that typically contacts proponents in situations such as these. Messenger replied that she has done this in the past, but is now unable to due to time restrictions with her position. Barnett then asked Dougan and Henry Sweets if the three of them could draft correspondence to proponents. Both answered in the affirmative and Dougan added that Executive Secretary Brian Rogers should be a part of this process.

Online Proposal/Inquiry Submission Update

John Dougan stated that there is confusion about the handling of incoming proposals. Specifically, whether they should be going to the board or the USBGN. He then indicated that the board is generally contacted for two purposes: inquiries into naming features and official proposals for naming features. Those contacting the board for the first purpose are generally interested in guidelines and the requirements for submitting an official proposal and, in his opinion, the board should help these individuals find the information necessary for a submission. Dougan then asked Jane Messenger if this is how inquiries have been handled in the past. Messenger responded no, indicating that most states do not want to be bothered with contacting counties and prefer to wait until a proposal comes to them from the USBGN. She went on to explain that USBGN staff receive many inquiries and have a standard form letter they send out in response that explains whether the case would qualify as a proposal. USBGN chief of staff Jennifer Runyon appreciates this approach because it lets her keep an eye on what proposals come to the various states, but it does not preclude submissions directly to the MOBGN. Messenger then opined that proposals should only go to the USBGN to avoid confusion. Additionally, the USBGN does much of the necessary background research, which would need to instead be done by the board if we were to receive inquiries directly. Dougan then agreed, but added that the board has to be willing to work with USBGN staff to do any research she is unable to do remotely.

Chris Barnett then asked Jane Messenger if the proponents of the Huesgen Creek proposal should then be referred to the USBGN. Messenger replied in the affirmative, because she will then be able to facilitate communications between the various necessary parties. Barnett stated that would be fine in this case, but that the MOBGN's website should still be updated to include naming guidelines and information on how to submit a formal proposal. Dougan interjected that it should also include an email address for visitors with additional questions, but that any actual

proposals should go to the USBGN. Barnett indicated that this seems appropriate. Executive Secretary Brian Rogers then stated that no “inquiry form” is needed on the site, but that we should be willing to communicate via email with potential proponents. Messenger then indicated that Runyon would like to be made aware of all inquiries, whether anything comes of them or not.

David Nail then stated that the Indiana board on geographic names is putting together a similar website or application to handle pre-proposal inquiries and that he will forward to the board any information that he can find on it. He indicated one difference between Indiana and Missouri is that in Indiana, each county has both a surveyor and GIS coordinator, and that these individuals are generally involved earlier in the process. Dougan stated that not all Missouri counties have a GIS specialist, but that involving county surveyors earlier in the process may something to investigate further. Joseph Carter indicated that he has access to a list of counties that do have said specialists and that he can provide it to the board if necessary.

Barnett then asked what steps should now be taken to update the website. Dougan replied that the executive committee should draft new language and that Rogers will look into adding links to the USBGN naming guidelines and proposal submission form, as well as adding an email address for those with further questions.

Board Member Replacements and Reappointments

John Dougan stated there are a number of citizen appointees up for reappointment in 2017, including Chris Barnett, John Fisher, Debra Greene, Lynn Morrow, Frank Nickell and Henry Sweets. He then asked that these individuals contact him if they are unwilling to serve another term.

Dougan then stated that the board had received word from Dwight Weaver that he is officially resigning his seat, citing age and health problems, so there are now two vacant citizen appointee positions (Jerry Vineyard’s seat is the other). He asked board members to contact him if they have any replacements in mind, reminding them that there is a need for individuals from the southwest part of the state.

Jane Messenger then asked if Greene and Nickell will be contacted about serving another citizen appointee term because they are not in attendance. Executive Secretary Brian Rogers indicated that he will reach out to them individually.

Sweets asked that the minutes officially reflect the board’s appreciation of Dwight Weaver’s service. He then asked if the board will be sending Weaver a thank you letter. Dougan replied that a letter signed by Secretary of State John Ashcroft will soon be sent and such a letter was already sent to Jerry Vineyard. Dougan also indicated that Weaver will remain on the board in an advisory capacity.

COGNA Conference Report

Wayne Furr stated that the 2017 Council of Geographic Names Authorities (COGNA) conference in Richmond, Virginia, had only 30 attendees, which is fewer than expected. Events included state SHRAB reports, a roundtable discussion, a full day of academic paper presentations and a field trip to historic Jamestown and the Yorktown battlefield. He then indicated that planning for the 2018 conference in Tacoma, Washington, is a little behind schedule, but the host chair, Mary Schaaf, is finalizing the contract for meeting and reception space on the University of Washington-Tacoma campus. The field trip is still to be determined.

Chris Barnett asked the dates of the 2018 conference. Furr replied it will be held June 23-27. Furr then stated that no hotel room block has been reserved this year, so attendees will be on their own for accommodations. Hotel suggestions will be forthcoming.

Jane Messenger indicated that she will not be able to attend the 2018 conference, either as a USGS employee or a representative of the MOBGN. Barnett then indicated that he is looking into the securing of funds for him to attend.

John Dougan thanked Furr for the report.

MOBGN Representation at 2018 COGNA Conference

John Dougan then stated that because Chris Barnett has a lead on funding for his attendance at the 2018 conference, the board should consider making him their official designee. Henry Sweets so moved. Tony Spicci seconded the motion. All in favor. None opposed. Motion approved.

Dougan then stated that he had planned on discussing the possibility of the MOBGN hosting the conference in 2021, coinciding with Missouri's bicentennial celebration. However, because Gary Kremer is not on the line, it would probably be better to wait until the next meeting. Since the state legislature has charged the Society with coordinating related events, Kremer's input is required before any decision can be made. Jane Messenger then asked how far out conference arrangements are generally made. Wayne Furr responded that it has taken up to two years in the past, but now that no room blocks are required, this much time is not required.

Discussion of Next Meeting

John Dougan stated that the MOBGN bylaws indicate the board will next meet in May 2018 and opined that the board should again consider using the Forest Service office in Rolla as a venue if the space is available. He then asked if there were any Thursdays in May 2018 that would not work. Joseph Carter indicated he would be out of the country the last Thursday. Executive Secretary Brian Rogers then asked if any board members were unavailable on May 17, 2018, at 10 a.m. and there were no replies.

The next MOBGN meeting date is scheduled for May 17, 2018, with the location and venue still to be determined.

Adjournment

John Dougan thanked everyone for participating and asked for a motion to adjourn. Chris Barnett moved to adjourn the meeting. Joseph Carter seconded the motion. All in favor. None opposed. Motion approved.

Meeting adjourned at 10:51 a.m.