

Missouri Board on Geographic Names

November 19, 2020

Virtual Meeting

Voting Members Present: Chair Designee John Dougan, Vice Chair Chris Barnett, Joe Carter, Bryan Chinn, Brett Chloupek, John Fisher, Alan Foreman, Debra Greene, Melanie Hans, Ron Heimbaugh, Gary Kremer, David Nail, Tony Spicci, Henry Sweets.

Voting Members Absent: Joseph Gillman, Lynn Morrow and Frank Nickell.

Non-Voting Members Present: Secretary Brian Rogers.

Chair Designee John Dougan called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and thanked everyone for participating.

After calling roll, Dougan asked for additions to the agenda. There were none.

Approval of MOBGN Meeting Minutes from November 21, 2019

Henry Sweets moved to approve the minutes as presented. Motion seconded by Joe Carter. All in favor. None opposed. Motion approved.

COGNA Update

Vice Chair Chris Barnett reminded the board that the 2021 COGNA Conference that Missouri was to host has now been canceled because the conference Executive Committee felt uncomfortable spending money with the current COVID situation. He then stated that instead of the in-person report on MOBGN activities he would have normally presented at the annual conference, COGNA has, in 2020, requested information using a questionnaire. One section asks if the MOBGN would be more or less likely to attend a COGNA conference if it were held virtually. Barnett asked the board how they feel about virtual meetings/conferences.

John Fisher replied that he would definitely be interested in attending individual sessions in years the conference is not held in Missouri. Bryan Chinn and Henry Sweets agreed.

David Nail asked if registration and other associated costs would be lower if the conference were to move to a virtual format. Barnett replied that the COGNA Executive Committee has not yet made any decisions about pricing and is not yet sure what format future conferences may take. Nail and Melanie Hans then indicated that the lower associated costs of a virtual conference would make them more likely to attend because they typically do not have travel funds.

John Dougan added that a virtual conference has the added benefit of increasing the potential number of session proposals.

Joe Carter asked Barnett if COGNA or the US BGN will fail to accomplish important business if the conference moves online. Barnett replied that meeting in-person facilitates communication between state naming authorities and the US BGN, so moving online will have a negative effect in that regard. Carter followed up, asking if there is specific board business that will not be accomplished without an in-person conference. Barnett replied

that the COGNA Executive Committee does continue to routinely meet, so no essential business has been affected.

Barnett stated that it appears the board is supportive of moving at least a portion of the annual COGNA conference online. He then said COGNA Executive Secretary Wayne Furr has indicated in conversation that many other boards feel the same because they do not receive any funding.

Barnett then stated that the US BGN recently floated the idea of using USGS facilities, including the one in Rolla, for limited conferences. Any such conferences would likely just be a single day or two half days and include only a US BGN meeting, roundtable and reports from the various state naming authorities. If this occurred in Rolla, USGS would host the event and not the MOBGN. Barnett asked the board if this would be of interest. Henry Sweets indicated he would have less interest if all sessions based on local topics were omitted. Barnett agreed, adding that the technology involved might provide a significant hurdle unless the USGS brings in their greater expertise.

Carter asked what technology would be used to run a virtual conference. Barnett replied that he is uncertain and asked Nail if he had any insight. Nail indicated that he generally uses Microsoft Teams with his USGS colleagues, but he does not know if it would work for a virtual conference. Barnett agreed that meeting software, like Microsoft Teams or GoToMeeting, is insufficient for running an online conference.

Barnett asked Tony Spicci about his experience with conference software. Spicci replied that he has used several platforms that have worked well, but that well run Zoom meetings are equally effective. Dougan agreed, adding that an experienced moderator is needed when using meeting software.

Barnett thanked everyone for the feedback, stating he would let COGNA know that the board is supportive of moving the conference online if there is some way for attendees to interact with the presenters and each other. He then stated that because Oregon was to host the conference in 2020, COGNA will ask them first to host once in-person events are deemed safe, but that Missouri will be next in line if the board still has interest.

Board Appointments

John Dougan indicated that, in September 2019, citizen members Chris Barnett, Brett Chloupek and Debra Greene were all reappointed to terms ending in September 2023. In the coming months, Secretary Brian Rogers will contact citizen members with terms expiring in 2020 to gauge their interest in continuing on the board.

Discussion of Jones Branch Proposal

Chris Barnett began by summarizing the proposal, stating that the proposed “Jones Branch,” is a currently unnamed, 1.96-mile-long tributary of South Moreau Creek. The stream head is located in Moniteau County’s Burris Fork Township. It flows south, then southeast, flowing into South Moreau Creek in Cole County’s Moreau Township around the community of Enon. The name would commemorate several generations of the Jones family, who settled the region in the mid-1830s and who were major landowners in and around Enon. General Land Office records show that Samuel and Andrew Jones acquired

120 and 160 acres in the stream's vicinity in 1840 and 1855, respectively. Proponent, Christopher Jones of Boonville, states that his father, James Wyman Jones, who passed away in 2013, was the last remaining area landowner in the family.

Barnett asked for a motion to consider recommending the proposed name to the US BGN. So moved by Debra Greene. Motion seconded by Henry Sweets. Barnett then opened the floor for discussion.

Henry Sweets asked if any other Missouri waterways included the common name of "Jones." Brett Chloupek replied that, according to the GNIS database, there are eight other streams with the name "Jones Branch." Barnett asked if any are located in Moniteau or Cole County. Chloupek indicated that they are not. Barnett indicated that the US BGN does pay attention to proximity, but that it is generally only an issue if there is another feature with the name in the same county.

Joe Carter stated that he examined the Missouri Department of Transportation's maps of the area and could not find any that identified this stream with a name.

Barnett then stated that the US BGN does have a policy of not naming features after individuals unless they have been deceased for a minimum of five years, but that this should not apply in this instance because the proponent does not live in the area and his father, who did, passed away in 2013.

Melanie Hans asked if satellite imagery could confirm the presence of water in the stream. Barnett replied that he did look it up on Google Maps, but that he could not confirm the presence of water. He then reminded the board that water flowing in the feature is not a prerequisite for naming. Carter stated that he found imagery from 2015 that did show water in the feature. David Nail added that topographic maps identified it as an unnamed intermittent stream.

Barnett stated that there was some confusion about the coordinates of the headwater. John Dougan indicated the proponent likely entered general coordinates for the land his family historically owned in the area, instead of exact coordinates of the headwaters. Barnett then recommended that the board stick with the coordinates identified in the US BGN case brief.

Barnett asked if there were any other comments or questions regarding the proposal. There were none.

Barnett then asked for a vote on the motion to recommend the proposed name, "Jones Branch," to the US BGN. All in favor. None opposed. Motion approved.

Recognition of Joe Carter

John Dougan congratulated Joe Carter on his upcoming retirement and thanked him for his 10 years of service on the MOBGN. He then explained that the Missouri State Archives has imaged a historic state road map that will soon be printed and mailed to Carter as an expression of the board's gratitude.

Carter thanked the board, indicating that he plans to stay active in the state's geographic circles.

Other Proposal Inquiries

Chris Barnett stated that a legislative staffer recently submitted a proposal on behalf of a constituent to name a previously unnamed Franklin County stream near Sullivan as "Bandy Creek." However, per the bylaws, the board must wait to consider the proposal until the next meeting because it was received within 30 days of today's meeting. Barnett then indicated "Bandy" is the surname of a family that drowned in the stream during a 1957 flash flood.

John Dougan added that a naming ceremony would probably be appropriate if the proposal is recommended by the board and approved by the US BGN.

David Nail stated that his wife is from Sullivan and still has family in the area so he might have more insight about the proposal ahead of the board's next meeting.

Discussion of Next Meeting

Brian Rogers indicated possible dates for the board's next meeting include May 20 and May 27, 2021. John Dougan asked the board if either date provides a problem. No answers were forthcoming so Barnett suggested the meeting be scheduled on May 20, 2021, at a time TBD, indicating that it will again likely be held virtually.

Adjournment

Chris Barnett moved to adjourn. Motion seconded by Joe Carter. All in favor. None opposed. Motion approved.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.