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Authority mourns passing of David Williams

The Authority mourns the passing of long-time executive director **David R. Williams**, who lost his battle with a rare combination of Parkinson's Disease and ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease) on July 22, 2014. He is survived by his beloved family: wife, Sally, and two children, Cameron and Jackson.

David took the helm on July 1, 1995, and led the Authority through almost two decades of tremendous growth and innovation. As a result of his vision and leadership, the Clerks' Authority not only fulfilled its legislative mandate of establishing a statewide index for UCC financing statements, but successfully developed and implemented a variety of additional projects including the Real Estate Deed Project, the PT-61 Project, the MyVault Online Archive Service and the eFile Project, just to

name a few. During his tenure, the Authority also created the Notary Division and began maintaining the central database of notaries public for the State of

Georgia, and created and developed the Fines and Fees Division. The success of these and many other innovative programs would not have been possible without David's steady yet progressive leadership.

David grew up in Gainesville, Georgia, and graduated from the University of Georgia where he earned a bachelor's degree in agricultural economics. Prior to attending UGA, he attended the Univer-

sity of Tennessee and played football for the Volunteers his freshman year.

David began his professional career in the banking industry with Gainesville National Bank. Soon after, he was recruited to serve as field coordinator for



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April Board Meeting Review

The Authority board met on April 9 for its quarterly meeting. Following is a summary of the reports and actions of the meeting.

General Business

The minutes of the January 8, 2014 board meeting were approved. The current financials were presented and revealed that the financial health of the Authority is good, and financial indicators are positive. Until economic trends are more evident, it was suggested that the Authority should proceed with caution. The budget for FY 2015 was approved as presented.

UCC Project

A report on the UCC Project was provided and revealed that the total number of UCC filings continues on an upward trend. The projection through FYE June 30, 2014 anticipates about a 2% increase over last fiscal year.

Fines & Fees Division

An update on the Fines & Fees Division was provided and the following was reported. Approximately 1100 courts are reporting as required by law. Compliance rates are near 100% and collections are \$70.9M to date. Expected collections by fiscal year-end are \$91-92M. Those few courts not in compliance are sent letters indicating as much. Overall, collections are down slightly due to a reduction in the percentage calculation from 5% to 1.5% for the Driver Education Training Fund. Also, more civil cases continue to be filed in magistrate court to avoid the \$125 Judicial Operations Fee.

Historical Deed Re-Indexing Project

An update was provided on the 1992 Historical Deed Re-Indexing Project. The first of the 1992 data has been received from Crawford County and released.

Voluntary County-Funded Historical Deed Program

It was reported that 59,694 records related to the Voluntary County-Funded Historical Deed Re-Indexing Project have been released for production.

eFiling Project

Staff gave an update on the eFiling Project and reported that sign-ups for all eFiling projects seem to have plateaued. Real Estate eFile has 11 participating counties with Floyd County being the most recent participant. Staff will reach out to clerks at the spring conference in St. Simon's to encourage participation in all eFiling programs. ACH payment process will be promoted at the spring conference.

Notary Division

An update was given on the Notary Division and it was reported that although economic activity has been relatively flat since the last board meeting, notary handbook sales have increased, primarily due to the recent availability of purchasing the handbook online.

Premium Search Account

In an update on the Premium Search account, it was reported that the number of account conversions is trending up. The increase is attributed to continuing outreach efforts (training classes, appearances) by staff. The anticipated annual revenue for the Premium account is \$644,000.

Other Business

Trade Name Registry (HB 670) – It was reported that HB 670 had passed the House and Senate. The bill provides for the creation of a statewide registry of business trade names to be housed and maintained by the Authority. Clerks will have the option to use Scansend or their local vendor to index and transmit names. *(Editor's Note: HB 670 was vetoed by Gov. Perdue after the April board meeting.)*

IACA Conference – Staff provided a preview of the upcoming conference in May and reported that there will be many topical sessions on the agenda. The Authority will participate in the conference and has submitted an application for an IACA Merit Award. ■



July Board Meeting Review

The Authority board met on July 9 for its quarterly meeting. Following is a summary of the reports and actions of the meeting.

General Business

The minutes of the April 9, 2014 board meeting were approved.

The current financials were presented and revealed that the Authority continues to be in good financial health. Fines and Fees collections are down \$457,000 compared to the previous year primarily due to a reduction in



the Driver Education Training Fund from a 5% assessment to 1.5%. Current assets are down \$1.6M. Real estate deed revenue has been trending down for the last several months. The Authority's accountant, Greg Morgan, suggested that this trend be watched very carefully, and that the Authority should proceed with extra caution until all economic trends are more evident. A motion to accept the Auditor's Report as presented was approved by the board.

Policies Establishing Contracts with Clerks of Superior Court:

Information regarding the policies establishing contracts between the Authority and

clerks of Superior Court was presented, and the following resolution was made:

RESOLUTION OF THE GEORGIA SUPERIOR COURT CLERKS' COOPERATIVE AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, the Georgia Superior Court Clerks' Cooperative Authority ("GSCCCA") is established pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 15-6-94(a)(1) as an authority and instrumentality of the State of Georgia; and

WHEREAS, GSCCCA is charged "to provide a cooperative for the development, acquisition, and distribution of record management systems, information, services, supplies, and materials for superior court clerks of the state, on such terms as may be determined to be in the best interests of the operation of the office of the clerk of superior court, local government, and the state ..." under O.C.G.A. § 15-6-94(a)(3); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 15-6-97, GSCCCA implemented and operates an information system for real and personal property records; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 15-6-97, GSCCCA is empowered to contract with clerks of Superior Court in furtherance of the statewide uniform automated information system for real and personal property records;

WHEREAS, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 15-6-96, Clerks of Superior Court are em-

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former Sen. Sam Nunn. In 1985, he went to work for the Georgia Bankers Association and eventually became vice president of governmental relations. His lobbying efforts at GBA were instrumental in getting the legislation passed that created the Clerks' Authority. In 1995, he was named executive director of the Authority, a position he held for the next 19 years and often referred to as "the job of a lifetime spent with the best people in the world!"

David was a respected leader, a true friend, and a great man. In addition to his family and friends, he will be sorely missed by his



loyal staff and Superior Court clerk family. He had an unwavering commitment to the Authority and Georgia's Superior Court clerks and advocated tirelessly on their behalf for almost two decades.

When asked about David, Authority Chairman F. Barry Wilkes made the following heartfelt comments:

"I have always been blessed with angels sent by God to help me find my way as I sojourned through life, who seemingly appear out of nowhere but suddenly become my best friends, closest allies, and helpmates who help me circumscribe my desires and keep my passions within due bounds.

"David Williams was one of those angels. From the time I met him back in 1991 when fate and the statewide UCC project caused our paths to first cross, I realized that God put him in my life—and Superior Court clerks' lives—to help me—and us—find our way. David was as committed to clerks of Superior Court and our causes as has been any clerk of Superior Court or anyone else in our history. He loved us just like he loved his own family, which speaks to me because David was absolutely and completely committed to family.

"Aside from the time he always made sure to share with his wife, Sally, and children, Cameron and Jackson, the rest of his life was dedicated to the Authority. In the wee hours of the morning, I would receive e-mails and text messages from him about issues affecting the Authority and clerks of Superior Court. He was constantly working, always putting out fires and planning for the future. However, what made him so extraordinary was his ability to find brilliant and talented individuals to be a part of his Authority team—individuals who didn't just work at the

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Authority but who became a part of David's—and Superior Court clerks'—family and dedicated to his and our ideals. He led by example, didn't mind getting down in the trenches and doing whatever had to be done, treated everyone with dignity and respect, and, in the end, was loved and respected by all. He is the only person that I have ever known who I can honestly say I never heard anyone say anything bad about, which I believe is because he focused on issues and not personalities and never let business trump kindness.

“What he accomplished at the Authority will never be forgotten, but David will be remembered even more so by Superior Court clerks because he was family. The bond between us was not by blood but by the grace of God, which put us in each other's lives.”

In honor and memory of David, his daugh-

ter, Cameron, has organized a team called Williams' Warriors who will participate in the “Walk to Defeat ALS” on September 13 in Atlanta. If you would like to contribute, follow the link below to Cameron's team page:



[http://web.alsa.org/site/TR/Walks/Georgia?
px=3882271&pg=personal&fr_id=10136
#_U_PKFVYoods](http://web.alsa.org/site/TR/Walks/Georgia?px=3882271&pg=personal&fr_id=10136#_U_PKFVYoods)

John Myers and MIT will match all donations previously made by Superior Court clerks and any donations made through September 13, up to \$10,000, to help Cameron and ALS meet their goals. All support is greatly appreciated. ■

“He led by example, didn't mind getting down in the trenches and doing whatever had to be done, treated everyone with dignity and respect, and, in the end, was loved and respected by all.”



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powered to contract to distribute, sell, or otherwise market records of their offices;

WHEREAS, GSCCCA has adopted various policies in the past regarding compensating Clerks of Superior Court for making certain records of their offices available to GSCCCA for use-related to the statewide uniform automated information system for real and personal property records; and

WHEREAS, GSCCCA desires to revise and make uniform its policies regarding compensation of Clerks, including, but not limited to, revising the policies of GSCCCA set forth in the minutes of its meetings held on April 8, 1998 and July 14, 1999;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GEORGIA SUPERIOR COURT CLERKS' COOPERATIVE AUTHORITY:

The Georgia Superior Court Clerks' Cooperative Authority hereby adopts a policy that, beginning on January 1, 2015, all arrangements with Clerks of Superior Court for the provision of record images to GSCCCA shall be by way of standard written agreements developed by GSCCCA that shall expressly address all terms and conditions under which such images are made available to GSCCCA and shall expressly address the consideration to be provided to the Clerks of Superior Court for such record images.

The Executive Director or Deputy Executive Director of the Georgia Superior Court Clerks' Cooperative Authority is hereby authorized and empowered to do all acts and things necessary to implement this Resolution including, but not limited to, developing standard written agreements as contemplated herein in consultation with the Office of Attorney General.

A motion to accept the resolution as presented was passed unanimously by the board.

UCC Project:

An update on the UCC Project was given and it was reported that the total number of UCC filings continues on an upward trend. FY 2014 ending June 30, 2014 reflects that more than 227,000 UCCs were filed statewide for the fiscal year. That is 9,000 more than FY 2013 and continues an upward trend since 2010.

Fines & Fees Division:

Information was provided on the Fines & Fees Division and it was reported that approximately 1,100 courts are reporting as required by law and compliance rates are near 100%. The division collected \$95M for FY 2014. Those few courts not in compliance are sent letters indicating as much. Overall collections are down slightly due to a reduction in the percentage calculation from 5% to 1.5% for the Driver Education Training Fund. Additionally, more civil cases continue to be filed in Magistrate Court to avoid the \$125 Judicial Operations Fee.

Training Schedule:

An update was given on the Authority's training program. The Notary Public online training for the public has reached approximately 35,000 people, and the training classes for the general public utilizing county courthouses as venues has exceeded expectations. Multiple courses and webinars are available for clerks of Superior Court on topics such as fines and fees, UCC training, real estate indexing, and notary public training.

Historical Deed Re-Indexing Projects:

A report was given on the Authority's two main historical projects. The County-Funded Historical Deed Re-Indexing Project is progressing with 22 counties participating. 676,000 instruments have been added to the online database. Participation by counties in this project is completely voluntary. The Authority has re-opened the Historical Deed Re-Indexing Project to capture all of 1992 with 24 counties using certified indexing. Docket surveys are being conducted of every clerk's deed room to discover naming conflicts.



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August Called Board Meeting Review

The board convened for a special called board meeting on August 5, 2014. The topics of discussion included two draft agreements referenced in form as part of the board resolution relating to image contracts passed during the July 9, 2014 quarterly board meeting. The agreements discussed at the August 5, 2014 special called meeting are referred to as:

- Image Agreement (Cash Consideration) – Draft 3
- Image Agreement (Non-Cash Consideration) – Draft 4

Both agreements were reviewed in detail by the board and several changes were made. No board vote was required on either of the agreements per the July 9 board resolution, but the Authority staff, working in conjunction with the Office of the Attorney General, encouraged the board's input into the Image Agreements before finalizing. While there were no formal board votes taken during the meeting, board members were polled on the issue of whether to include "Conference Registration fees" and "Travel and other conference-related expenses" as part of the "Authorized Uses" as outlined in the Non-Cash Consideration Image Agreement. Following are the polling numbers:

- By a vote of 5-2, board members polled voted in favor of adding "Conference registration fees" to the list of "Authorized Uses."
- By a vote of 6-1, board members polled voted against adding "Travel and other conference-related expenses" to the list of "Authorized Uses."

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eFile Project:

An update on the eFile Project revealed that sign-ups for the Authority's various eFile programs have plateaued. Currently, there are 79 counties participating in UCC eFile, and 14 counties participating in Real Estate eFile. Seven more counties are in the process of getting started with Real Estate eFile.

Notary Division:

In an update on the Notary Division, it was reported that notary handbook sales have increased primarily due to the recent availability of purchasing the handbook online.

Premium Subscriber Account Update:

An update was provided on the Premium Subscriber account and it was reported that the number of account conversions from Regular to Premium is trending up. The recent increase

in conversions is due to continued outreach efforts (training classes, appearances) by staff and the enhanced search options available through the Premium Account. Google Analytics has proven to be a great tool. The Authority iPad app will be available soon.

Other Business:

2013-2014 Accomplishments & Year-end Report – Staff provided an overview of this annual publication which is an effort by the Authority to document all projects, processes and community outreach efforts in one, concise report. The document is available on the Authority website.

Next Scheduled Board Meeting – October 8, 2014 ■

