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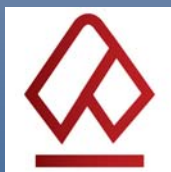
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Oliver & Weidner, LLC
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GSCCCA

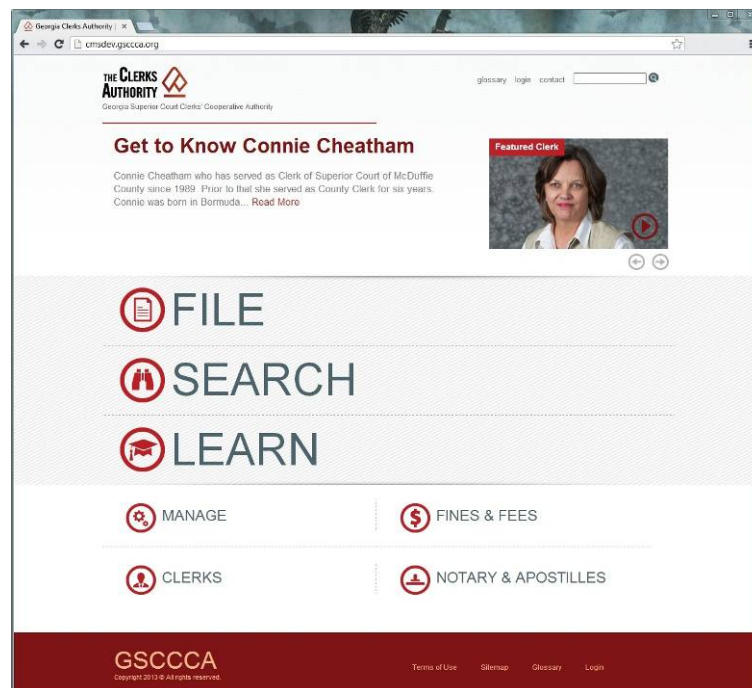
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Authority to launch redesigned website

After months of work, the Authority will soon launch a redesigned version of its website, www.gsccca.org, in an effort to better serve its customers, the thousands of users who access the site daily. Working with marketing agency What's Up Interactive, the Authority wanted to provide better access, clearer pathways, and improved navigation to information and resources it provides through its website. An intuitive and attractive design that better reflects the Authority's core values and personality was vitally important as well.

Through its one-of-a-kind, statewide systems, the Authority provides an online information resource for the legal, banking and real estate communities, and unprecedented, 24/7 access to valuable information for the public. From real estate records and

lending information to notary public registration and court fines and fees, the Authority enables convenient access to invaluable information through its website, www.gsccca.org.



web users evolve and their needs and devices change, it becomes more important than ever for online services to grow and expand their online presence. And with 300,000+ average daily visits to www.gsccca.org, the Authority felt it was critical for its site to be clear, responsive, and easy to use for its customers.

With the volume and diversity of information contained within the website and the variety of audiences that it serves, the Authority believed a website redesign was necessary to offer clearer, streamlined pathways to information. As

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January Board Meeting Review

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

General Business:

The minutes of the October 17, 2012 board meeting were approved. Greg Morgan, with accounting firm Mauldin & Jenkins, presented the Accountant's Review of the Financials. He reported that the cash account is up, which is significant in light of the economy, and real estate revenue is slowly recovering. The balance sheet reveals that the Authority is on sound financial ground. A motion to accept the Accountant's Report as presented was approved.

UCC Project:

It was reported that, for the most recent reporting period, UCC filings are slightly down compared to the same period for FY 2012. If the number of filings for FY 2013 is extrapolated, filings would be approximately 4K less than FY 2012, statistically



Authority Secretary/Treasurer Cindy Mason and Board member Dan Massey listen to a report on the Authority's eFiling Project.

insignificant. Certified Search requests continue to fall. If numbers hold for the second half of FY 2013, requests will be 19% lower than FY 2012.

Fines & Fees Division:

It was reported that approximately \$51M has been collected through the latest reporting period of 12/31/2012. If the numbers are extrapolated through the end of FY 2013, collections would be slightly less than FY 2012.

Training Update:

It was reported that the Authority's 2013 training schedule has been published. (See more information on training on Page 5.) Topic-specific webinars lasting one hour will be new to the Authority's training program for 2013.

Historical Deed Project:

An update on the Historical Deed Project was given and the following statistics were provided:

- ❖ From January 1, 1993, all historical deed data has been collected from all counties.
- ❖ From 1992, 87% of all deed data has been collected.
- ❖ From 1990-1991, 57% of all deed data has been collected.

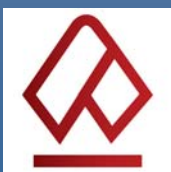
Historical deed data must be re-indexed to meet current indexing standards. The project has been suspended since April 2009 due to budgetary constraints. Authority staff recommended that the project remain suspended until review at the next Board meeting. The cost to take all counties back to January 1, 1990 is estimated to be \$4.1 million. A motion to continue the suspension of the Historical Deed Project due to budgetary constraints was approved.

Chairman Wilkes proposed that clerks be allowed the opportunity to voluntarily transmit historical plats to the search system. There would be no cost to the Authority. Mr. Wilkes will work with Gary Yates and Andy Wightwick to develop such a process.

eFiling Project:

An update was given on the eFiling Project and the following was reported:

- ❖ **Child Support eFiling** – 56 courts are participating in Child Support eFiling with 6 more in the cue.
- ❖ **UCC eFile** – 65 clerks' offices are processing eFiled UCCs. December 2012 saw a significant increase in UCC eFilings statewide to approximately 3,000 for the month.
- ❖ **Real Estate eFile** – Seven clerks' offices are participating in Real Estate eFiling. Six of the seven are accepting all types of real estate documents. The Authority has devel-



Board Meeting Review — Cont. from Page 2

oped its own portal but it is not finalized yet. The ACH payment process is being fully vetted before implementation and some logistical issues must still be decided. The Board will decide whether a convenience fee will be charged. The Authority staff will present a consolidated plan of implementation to the Board. Mr. Wilkes stated that he believes that implementation can take place after staff presents solutions to the outstanding issues and the Board will be able to approve through a teleconference meeting.

- ❖ **Plat eFile** – See update below.

Premium Subscriber Account:

An update was given on the Premium Subscriber Account and it was reported that the accounts upgraded from regular to premium have steadily increased since the Premium Account was first introduced in early 2012. At this time, the system is not able to track from which industries the upgrades are coming; however, the tools implemented with the search engine optimization in the website redesign will increase the Authority's ability to track that information.

Notary Division:

In an update on the Notary Division, it was reported that the number of notary commissions is trending back up after the recession and the removal of the \$125 civil fee from the notary application fee. It was also reported that the Notary Division issues approximately 32 thousand apostilles per year and anticipates that number will continue to grow.

Imaging Standards for Plat eFiling:

An update was given on the imaging standards for Plat eFiling. It was reported that, from a technological standpoint, there is a conflict over what the Authority portal will accept. Staff suggested that the best option for resolving the conflict

would be for the Authority to accept plat images that do not comply with the guidelines and then convert them to a format that complies.

A motion by Dan Massey was then approved that would allow plats to be e-Filed through the Authority portal, where the filer would be a trusted user and file the plat in accordance with state statute in a format acceptable to the Au-



Board members Connie Cheatham (on right) and Charles Baker review the Authority's financial reports.

thority, and then the Authority would transmit the eFiling to the designated county in a format that conforms to statewide imaging standards adopted by the Authority.

Statewide Trade Name Registry:

A motion to conceptually support trade name legislation was approved by the Board.

Other Business:

- ❖ **2013 Board Meetings** – The regularly scheduled, quarterly Board meetings for 2013 will be: April 9-10, July 9-10, and October 22-23 (by vote).
- ❖ **Authority Legislative Issues** – An update was given on the Revised Uniform Law on Notarial Acts.
- ❖ **Next Board Meeting** – April 10, 2013

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. ■



Adams awarded 2012 ÉCLAT

The Superior Court Clerks' Association of Georgia recently presented the 2012 ÉCLAT award to **Dena M. Adams**, Clerk of Superior Court of White County. The ÉCLAT was created to recognize superior court clerks for exceptional commitment, leadership, accomplishment and teamwork.

"There is no one more deserving of the ÉCLAT award than the Honorable Dena Adams. I have been involved in most spheres of activity affecting superior court clerks' offices and the court system in Georgia during the past 30 years and, without a doubt, I am convinced that no other clerk elected to leadership of our respective organizations has ever been called upon to tackle as many issues and projects of the scope, importance, or magnitude that Dena has. She has not only provided outstanding leadership but, without her extraordinary vision and initiative, most of the advances within the state judiciary would never have come to fruition," said F. Barry Wilkes, Clerk of Superior Court of Liberty County and chairperson of the ÉCLAT Trust.

Wilkes cited Adams' numerous achievements and contributions since she was elected to office in 1998. "During her two-year tenure as president of

the Council, she led us through some of the most profound and politically sensitive projects and issues facing the Council since its creation in 1990.

Foremost among her achievements is implementation of the *Jury Composition Reform Act of 2011*, one of the most sweeping pieces of legislation in the state's 280-year history. The bill designated the Council as the agency responsible for creating jury lists for Georgia's 159 counties," Wilkes said (pictured above with Adams).

Adams also laid the foundation for a statewide e-Filing system, Wilkes said, when, as president of the Council, she organized a committee and invited judiciary stakeholders to participate in the preliminary design of a framework necessary for creating a statewide e-Filing system for superior courts.

Accepting the award, Adams credited her colleagues saying: "Everything we've achieved has been because of a team effort and the hard work of everyone involved." ■



Authority helps train new clerks



Authority Software Manager Richard McPhaul (pictured to the left) leads a class on Protective Orders during the New Clerk Training program.



The Authority extends a warm welcome to Georgia's new Clerks of Superior Court (pictured to the right) who recently took office.



Let Authority help train your staff

The Authority's 2013 training program is underway and offers three convenient training formats: classroom, webinars and online. See the details below.

Classroom Training:

These programs are three hours in length, hosted by a Superior Court Clerk, and offered free-of-charge. Training on the **R.E. Indexing Standards** will be offered four times. (See the dates and locations below.)

Suitable for new and experienced indexers, this course includes a review of the GSCCCA Standards for indexing real estate, lien and plat records with an emphasis on the reasoning behind the Standards; a review of the latest changes to the Standards; a review of various deed and lien instrument types and their purpose; indexing difficult instruments such as those from securitization trusts; and a review of the Authority's online Indexing Standards course.

Webinars:

Webinars are remote training conducted via the internet and phone and allow a clerk to have as many staff members as they wish participate. Webinars will be offered on the following topics:

Fines & Fees — This two-hour webinar will cover many facets of the court fee system including the proper assessment, collection and distribution of state and local surcharges and deductions relative to fines, court costs and bond forfeitures; an overview of the Georgia statutes and the GSCCCA Rules and Regulations; and GSCCCA web-based tools available to aid in the calculation of all applicable surcharges and deductions, as well as base fine amounts.

Protective Order Registry — Designed for both new employees and those who need a refresher, this two-hour webinar will cover how to scan and index Protective Orders and verify reports.

Indexing Pooling & Servicing Trust Names — This one-hour webinar focuses on indexing pooling and servicing trust names in conformance with the Real Estate Indexing Standards.

UCC Training — This two-hour webinar will provide an overview of Georgia's Uniform Commercial Code; a discussion on Revised Article 9 and how it relates to the processing and indexing of UCCs; information on UCC forms, administrative procedures and minimum filing requirements; and reasons for rejecting a filing.

Need to train multiple staff members at one time? Give webinars a

try and efficiently train your staff in a couple hours. See the listing of dates and topics below.

Online Training

The Authority also offers a wide variety of online training opportunities. Courses include:

- ❖ Introduction to GSCCCA Indexing Standards
- ❖ Extended Real Estate Indexing Standards
- ❖ Fines & Fees Training
- ❖ Notary Public Training
- ❖ UCC Training

Courses are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, making training completely flexible. ■

Need more information?

Contact Rachel Rice at 404-327-7322 (800-304-5175 x1010) or rachel.rice@gsccca.org with training questions or to inquire about remote training. Go to www.gsccca.org/training to access and register for all training courses.

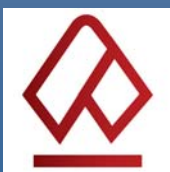
2013 Schedule

Classroom Training on Real Estate Indexing Standards:

March 21	Eastman
May 22	Dawsonville
August 7	Blackshear
October 24	Thomaston

Webinars:

February 26	Fines & Fees
March 12	Protective Order Registry
April 17	Pooling & Servicing
June 4	Protective Order Registry
June 11	UCC Training
July 11	Fines & Fees
August 21	Pooling & Servicing
September 10	Protective Order Registry
September 26	UCC Training
October 30	Fines & Fees



Notary Division plays vital role

The Authority's Notary Division plays a vital role in international commerce as the only legal entity within the state of Georgia authorized to issue apostilles. The Apostille Treaty is an international treaty (of which the U.S. is a signatory member) that provides for a simplified method of authenticating documents for use in other countries. It certifies the origin (i.e. country) of the public document by authenticating the signature and seal of the issuing public official. Public documents include notarized documents and documents issued by state/county officials (vital records, court documents, corporation documents).

Currently, 104 countries participate in the Apostille Treaty with Oman, Uzbekistan and Uruguay added in 2012. Approximately 4 million apostilles are issued worldwide on an annual basis. During the past twelve months, Georgia issued 32,500 apostilles going to 82 different countries. These documents originated in 134 different Georgia counties.

The Notary Division was created in 1997 when the Authority was asked by the Georgia Secretary of State to begin maintaining the central database of notaries public. Notary appointments have recently been trending upward, recovering from the economic downturn and consequences of the Judicial Operations Fund fee. This fee, as applied to notaries public, was in place between May 2010 and March 2011 and raised the application fee from \$30 to \$162.

At present, 112 clerks' offices are participating in the Authority's Notary Online system. The system was developed in 2004 to make the processing of notary applications more efficient in clerks' offices, to allow counties immediate access to their notary filings and images, and to simplify the notary application process for the public. Approximately 80% of all notary applications are electronically transmitted to the Authority via the Notary Online application system. ■

Redesigned Website — Cont. from Page 1

As part of the redesign goals, the Authority wants each visitor to be able to quickly access the information related to his or her profession and overall information needs. So whether a visitor is a clerk of court, a real estate professional, a notary public, or a property lawyer, the Authority wants to ensure that he or she is provided a user-centric experience that is tailored to his or her needs.

The Authority also implemented responsive web design (RWD) as part of the redesign process. This allows visitors to use a wide range of devices (desktops, tablets, smart phones) to access the site and have an optimal viewing experience with each. RWD enables easy reading and navigation regardless of the device being used.

GSCCCA Software Manager Richard McPhaul oversaw the redesign initiative. His understanding of the audiences that utilize the site was instrumental in guiding the project. As Richard says, "It was

time to take our organization's presence to the next level. With each year, our website continues to grow. Last year alone, we had over 2.1 billion hits and over 760,000 visitors. More importantly, our website continues to grow in its value to our customers. For these reasons, we wanted to ensure that we were providing our

users a productive and efficient experience each time they visited our site. We not only wanted an appealing, intuitive design, but also improved navigation and a clean user interface."

Additionally, the Authority's new site has been specifically designed using search engine optimization (SEO) best practices and includes SEO strategy to ensure high page rankings and a competitive presence on search engines.

The Authority is working through the final details of the testing phase and plans to launch the redesigned site to the public within the next month. ■

