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Mark E. Chastain posts regarding: *BOR update*

I thought I'd try posting a brief update of the happenings of the State Board. This done in an effort to keep the surveying community better informed. Tommie Donaldson was present and represented SAMSOG at the meeting, but other things were discussed after lunch when the visitors had left.

1. A draft of a proposed course list was presented and is to be voted on at the September BOR meeting. This will be posted on the BOR web site as an official Board Policy after it is voted. The list will eliminate many questions that are frequently asked of the board staff and surveying board members. Probably the most notable item is that the full hydrology courses, with all prerequisites, will be required starting next year. I have proposed that previously taken "hydrology for surveyors" courses still count.
2. It was requested by John Sweitzer, PE that the board staff report at the next BOR meeting on the content of the Hydrology exam for surveyors. It was discussed that retention ponds should be on the exam, they currently are not.
3. Doris Wilmer, PE presented to the board a letter by the Georgia Engineering Alliance, Inc. that was written to the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District. The water district has prepared a model stormwater ordinance that is supposedly to be adopted by all north Georgia counties. I am not currently familiar with the water district or their model ordinance. The Landscape Architect's State Board wrote a letter to the water district. Apparently (according to the Landscape Architect Board's letter), their model ordinance provides only for PEs to do stormwater management plans. The Landscape Architects Board asked the water district to "correct this major oversight". Their letter states that Landscape Architects are allowed by law to do this sort of work and therefore shouldn't be prohibited from doing it. The Georgia Engineering Alliance, Inc.'s letter asks the water district to consider that only engineers perform this type of work. A motion was made for the PELS board to send a letter to the water district that supported the Georgia Engineering Alliance, Inc. letter. The motion passed, I voted against it. I don't know all of the facts in this matter, and am attempting to obtain copies of this ordinance that is soon to be required in many, if not all, counties.
4. Over the last few weeks, I have been asked for my interpretation of the law that states that we (surveyors) can perform "Storm water management plans and facilities, including hydrologic studies and temporary sediment basins, provided that the contributing drainage area shall not be larger than 100 acres". The question arose as to whether or not surveyors could do subdivisions larger than 100 acres, or size culverts that drain more than 100 acres, since the law

states that the contributing area shall not be larger than 100 acres. When I was working on this language as your SAMSOG Legislative Committee member in 2003, the understanding and agreement was that this would pertain only to the area that would drain into a retention pond. I told a few surveyors that I would pursue an interpretation of this and seek an official Board Policy of interpretation. In an informal conversation after the business session, I was informed that the stricter interpretation is going to be applied. This means that if a culvert drains 101 acres, surveyors "aren't qualified to design it". I did not get a clear answer to the project size of 100 acres, but that consideration is still on the table.

5. Also adopted was a better defined policy on retaking the exam after failing 4 offerings. Now an applicant will have to gain 2 additional years of experience and obtain 6 semester hours in approved land surveying courses before being admitted to any subsequent exams.

We spent the rest of the afternoon working on applications and complaints, and I headed for Ellijay a little after 5:00.

Mark

Posted From: 66.44.220.199

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