



Register of Deeds

2012 Highlighted Accomplishments

February 2012- The Register of Deeds served as representative on National Panel on Future of Land Records with local and state jurisdictions, federal regulators and lender agencies at PRIA

March 13, 2012- Filed lawsuit against 32 Financial Institutions including DocX for fraudulent documents submitted to ROD.

July 1, 2012 -New Indexing Standards "Key It As You See it" implemented across North Carolina. We completed the transition with indexing staff with minimal problems.

July 1 2012 -New Software Look Up System Because of Indexing Standards. We participated in a time consuming process with our software provider and Secretary of State. BIS is now in compliance.

July 4, 2012 -Register of Deeds, along with 5 other Registers, wrote Attorney General Roy Cooper for a legal opinion regarding Fannie Mae Freddie Mac tax exempt status regarding the payment of excise taxes.

August 8, 2012 -Moved main Greensboro office into BB&T Building. This was a major effort and this office was closed four days. High Point continued to serve customers. This transition was not easy but successful.

December 1 2012 -Implemented a new statute regarding fraudulent liens/encumbrances NCGS 14-118.6. The Register of Deeds has worked with Judges, Guilford County DA, and GCPD surrounding these issues.

December 2012-Began hiring process for 3 Deputy ROD positions as a result of retirements and elevating two Deputy ROD to Assistants to better manage the office.

December 2012- Served as mediator for employee dispute in Department of Social Services.

December 2012-Increased Land Record eRecording by close to 10% this year.



Register of Deeds 2011 Highlighted Accomplishments

January 1, 2011 All ROD Staff Certified thru School of Government

April 7, 2011 Completed double index births project

May 5, 2011- Completed an internal investigation that produced 4500 robo-signed documents in ROD office and forwarded them to Federal Regulators and 50 State Attorney General Investigation.

May23, 2011 Completed the assumed name project

May 31, 2011 completed the condo plats

June 9, 2011 Completed Duplicate Index Marriages

July 2011 completed the preservation of all vital records books

September- attended 2011 Property Records Industry Association (PRIA) in San Antonio Texas and participated on national panel related to the Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems (MERS) Inc.

- Major front line staff reorganization and business processing model change contributes to major morale boost.

--Implemented weekly front line staff meetings with rotating staff conveners attended by Register of Deeds focusing on customer service, teamwork, and workflow.

-Up to date on indexing audits for 2011 to ensure high quality indexes for public search users.

-Created and convened the Alamo Emerging Issues Forum for Register of Deeds focusing on improving communication and action among Recorders on issues such as mortgage fraud, robo-signing, and land records. Over 225 Registers of Deeds have participated in the two Alamo Forums on Mortgage Assignments and MERS. (Big thanks to Guilford County Public Health Dept. for collaboration using ATT Connect Software for Web Conferences.)

December- Responded to and joined a number of citizens with multiple impediments and constitutional issues surrounding marriage licensing in North Carolina.

-Completed second term as the District IV NCARD President.

-Completed presentation on Conflict Transformation for Guilford County Health Department's Farm Team.

-Up to date on all benchmarks related to the implementation of new North Carolina Indexing Standards through NC Sec. of State.



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2010 Highlighted Accomplishments

Jeff Thigpen and the Register of Deeds office received the Local Government Federal Credit Union County Employee Productivity Award by the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners. The total savings to Guilford County from these budget reductions are over \$400,000.

The Register of Deeds office reorganized reducing staff, administrators and supervisors and reengineered our front line business practices with an emphasis on quality, floor management and supervision.

The Register of Deeds partnered with NC Vital Records to increase access to certified birth records to Guilford County Citizens born after 1971.

The Register of Deeds has reduced its staff levels from 33 to 25 over the past two fiscal years and decreased its budget 25%.

Jeff Thigpen was re-elected District IV Chairman of NC Register of Deeds Association. (NCARD)

Jeff Thigpen served as Facilitator of the Human Services Improvement Task Force.

Jeff Thigpen has served as the Appointing Authority for three severe disciplinary proceedings the Guilford County.

The Register of Deeds Deputy Directors and Assistant ROD Managers completed basic mediation training through Human Resources.

The Register of Deeds has partnered with the Board of Elections to update their voter files through death information.

Jeff Thigpen has served on a Fee Restructuring Task Force through the NC Register of Deeds Association making recommendations of a one price per document fee structure. This could ultimately result in more revenue to Counties.

Jeff Thigpen has served on the Salute to Heroes Selection Committee through the American Red Cross.

The High Point Register of Deeds office successfully moved out of the Guilford County Courthouse in High Point and into the DSS Building.

Jeff Thigpen worked with State Senator Don Vaughan to exempt the elected official signature from the notary application form for Guilford County. That is a tremendous convenience to notary applicants.

Jeff Thigpen led a Conflict Transformation workshop attended by over 50 young elected officials from across the country.

Register of Deeds office using Record Import Manager Software in partnering with Tax Department.



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2009 Highlighted Accomplishments

Jeff Thigpen is re-elected without opposition to serve as Register of Deeds in November 2008.

Jeff Thigpen named one of the Triad's 40 Leaders Under 40 by Triad Business Journal and UNC-Greensboro Bryan School of Business.

Register of Deeds office completes an Audit Checklist sent to NC Secretary of State's office to validate standard operating procedures for office operation.

Restored Marriage Books given new shelving for public use.

Register of Deeds forms partnership with DSS to mail out food stamp packets from January through March 2009.

Redaction of separation agreements completed. This project redacted account, pin numbers and NCDL numbers from online public records.

Register of Deeds forms partnership with Tax Department and completes tax card update project saving Tax an estimated \$7000.

Register of Deeds forms partnership with Health Department to scan medical records in July.

Register of Deeds reduces its budget 18% for FY 09-10. This 18% reduction is larger than reductions in many ROD offices in North Carolina.

Register of Deeds staff is reduced from 33 to 27 over last two fiscal years. In addition, our office completes a significant reorganization which reduces our administrative structure and increases day to day capacity.

Register of Deeds received NCACC Productivity Award in September 2009.

Jeff Thigpen elected District IV Chairman of NC Register of Deeds Association. (NCARD)

Jeff Thigpen appointed to subcommittee on Indexing Software Standards on NC Secretary of State Land Records Advisory Board. In addition, the Register is the Vice-Chairman of the Automation and Technology Committee of NCARD

Register of Deeds obtains software certification through NC Secretary of State. Two additional ROD employees received their certification awards through NCARD.

Register of Deeds served on the County's Efficiency Committee.



Register of Deeds 2008 Highlighted Accomplishments

- 1) Register of Deeds held e-Recording Kickoff in Guilford County in June 2008. Over 175 customers attended the largest kickoff in North Carolina.
- 2) Electronic Recording was initiated in March 2008. To date, 1257 documents have been filed.
- 3) All ROD staff completed the Register of Deeds School through the UNC Institute of Government. This goal was completed by the end of my first term.
- 4) The social security redaction project was completed in November 2008. Over 40,000 social security numbers have been redacted from online images to safeguard personal information from public records.
- 5) Returned two positions to Guilford County government through cross training and commitment to efficiencies through technology and staff development.
- 6) Vital Records survey was completed in December 2007/January 2008.
- 7) Comprehensive review of Indexing rules for Register of Deeds office was completed January 22, 2008. Rex Minneman with NC Secretary of State participated in this effort. This was the 1st review of Indexing rules since 1997.
- 8) The Register of Deeds presented our computer software system to the Greensboro Regional Realtors Association (GRRRA) on March 2008.
- 9) The Register of Deeds presented our computer software system to the High Point Realtors Association (HPRA) on April 16, 2008. This was the first meeting with the HPRA.
- 10) Reorganization effort was initiated with Fred Starling, HR Group to promote efficiencies and work design for move to BB and T building

- 11) Reduced document return for customers from 7-10 days to 2-4 days in January 2008.
- 12) The Register of Deeds preservation initiative through Brown's River and Marotti, Inc. completed the following: 29,306 pages of Old Index Books; 14,292 Plat Maps; 73,620 marriages.
- 13) The Register of Deeds presented on topic of electronic recording to the following groups: **125** attorneys at the NC Bar Association in Cary in November 2008; **60** title searchers and paralegals at CLE seminar hosted by BB and T of Boone and Parker Title of Winston-Salem in August 2008; **75** title searchers and paralegals for BB and T and First American Title of the Piedmont.
- 14) The Register of Deeds presented an update on BB and T building purchase and Internet Security to the Real Property Section of Greensboro Bar Association in November 2008.
- 15) Registration and Identity Verification for Vital Records abstract access was implemented in November 2007. 7400 are registered and 665 have completed identity verification.
- 16) Vitals area in Greensboro office was renovated in May 2008 to better facilitate customer service.
- 17) Audit software program was created for Indexing that allows the Register of Deeds to audit the permanent index to find and correct errors in spelling, etc that might create liability issues. The results for January to July 2008 are as follows: 57,249 documents audited; 827 documents corrected (1.47%); 98.53 percent accuracy rate.
- 18) The Register of Deeds assisted Internal Revenue Service officers in criminal investigations using public records that have led to at least three arrests.
- 19) The Register of Deeds met with the NC Association of Register of Deeds Vital Records Committee to discuss the need to strengthen identification requirements for certified and uncertified copies of vital records and to change GS 130A-93b to prevent or limit availability of that data in February 2008.
- 20) A power point is published at www.guilforddeeds.com to explain NC General Statutes regarding access to public records laws and access to online documents.

- 21) The Register of Deeds made specific recommendations to the Board of Commissioners regarding issues related to internet safety and public records laws in October 2008.



Register of Deeds 2007 Highlighted Accomplishments

1. Guilford County Register of Deeds staff received more certifications through the UNC Institute of Government in 2007 than any other county in North Carolina. Thirty (30) of Thirty-Three (33) staff will have completed Register of Deeds School. The final three (3) will complete the School in 2008.
2. Property Records Education Partners (PREP) held its first historic meeting at the Greensboro Regional Realtors Association in February 2007. Over 120 attended with equal representation from the public and private sectors to discuss e-recording in North Carolina. Guilford County Register of Deeds planned and hosted the meeting.
3. New carpeting installed in the Vault area of the Greensboro office in April 2007.
4. Directional signs added to the Recording, Vault, and Vital Records in Greensboro.
5. Jeff Thigpen and David Smith completed the Advanced Register of Deeds School through the NC Institute of Government. The training is an intensive 3 month commitment that focused on land records, human resources, and administrative law.
6. RFP for land records and vital record book restoration was completed and bids awarded to Joseph Marrotti, Inc., and Brown's River Restoration Company. This \$1.6 million restoration project over the next five years will preserve marriage and land records for the next 50 to 75 years.
7. Performance reports through crystal reports initiated for Administration and Supervisory Teams. Individual, area, scan, temp to perm, and perm times are monitored for high efficiency.
8. A Spanish version Marriage Kiosk will be available for customers in the Greensboro and High Point offices and online by mid-November.
9. A comprehensive cross-training program for ROD front line staff implemented in July 2007. The goal is to training as many staff as possible in Recording, Vitals, Vault, and Indexing areas.

10. Redaction of Social Security numbers on Land Records from 1982-forward began in September 2007. This project will run 8 million images through OCR technology and ROD staff will verify images to be redacted.
11. Electronic Recording Testing is complete and ROD to begin taking cancellations in December 2007.
12. Security cameras installed in Greensboro and High Point offices.
13. A comprehensive study was done regarding public records laws in North Carolina relating to land and vital records and online access of records. This study concluded in the Register of Deeds taking significant actions to enhance data security procedures.
14. Registration and Authentication for online access of Vital Records Abstracts initiated in November 2007. This will provide additional access and secured access for online vital abstracts.
15. Notary, plat, and assumed name books were scanned, edited, and are now searchable in the land records search.
16. Individual scanners installed in High Point to reduce the amount of time between recordation and scanning of land record documents.
17. All ROD staff participated in conflict resolution training in the Spring 2007. The training goals have been to enhance problem solving and interpersonal skills among staff as performance and cross training are increasingly emphasized.
18. Audit software program created for Indexing that allows the Register of Deeds office to audit the permanent index to find and correct errors in spelling, etc that might create liability issues.
19. Comprehensive review of Indexing rules for Register of Deeds office has been initiated. Rex Minneman with NC Secretary of State will participate as an advisory resource for the review. This is the 1st review of Indexing rules since 1997.
20. The Register of Deeds is an active participant in the Guilford Strategic Alliance and has helped organize five focus groups- Immigrants; Education, Foundations, News and Record and Judicial groups.



Register of Deeds 2006 Highlighted Accomplishments

- 1) Guilford County citizen's accessibility of land records has increased dramatically. The Register of Deeds enhanced its technology capabilities through a new computer hardware and software system on July 17, 2006. Prior to July 17th, images and indexes of land records were available and searchable online from 1982- forward. With the new computer system, indexes and images of land records are available and searchable from county's original document in 1771-forward.
- 2) The county was saved at least \$250,000 as a result of the RFP process for a new computer system. The RFP committee consisted of 18 representatives including ROD staff, Finance, Tax, GIS, IS and was co-chaired by two local attorneys, Alan Ferguson and Beth Koonce. BIS was selected in February 2006.
- 3) Completed digitization of index book project in February 2006 that allowed documents to be searched back to 1771.
- 4) Over 200 citizens have been trained on the new computer system via office training, online demo, and CD. Presentations were given to the Greensboro Bar Association. New computer hardware was purchased and installed in Greensboro and High Point.
- 5) Register of Deeds office collaborated with GIS, Tax, Planning, and Community Development to upgrade Guilford County's GIS data viewer which will provide a central platform for public records availability from each department for citizens and the business community.
- 6) The Register of Deeds is a lead organizer in creating a local Property Records Education Partners (PREP) chapter in North Carolina through the Property Records Industry Association (PRIA). PREP is a partnership between Register of Deeds, NC Secretary of State, Title Companies, Appraisers, Tax Assessors, Lenders and members of the real estate industry. Their common goals are to improve local industry relationships and work together on issues such as electronic recording. The first PREP meeting was held in Fayetteville on September 26, 2006. The meeting was co-facilitated by the Guilford County Register of Deeds. Guilford County will host the next PREP meeting in February 2007.
- 7) Guilford County Property Records Advisory Council (PRAC) was officially convened in October 2006. This council is composed of the Register, ROD staff, and attorneys, title searchers, paralegals, and users of the office. GIS presented a demo of the new data
- 8) All Register of Deeds employees completed Customer service training through Human Resources by December 2006. In addition, all staff attended Outlook and received training on the Business Information Systems (BIS) computer system.

- 9) Want to save time in applying for a marriage license? Try the Guilford County Register of Deeds new online marriage application! The goal of this new online service is to expedite the processing of your application and reduce your time in our office. The first marriage license application was submitted October 30, 2006. Over 100 applications have been submitted in the last six weeks!
- 10) Recording area in Greensboro and High Point were renovated with new workstations, carpeting in lieu of a new computer hardware and software system.
- 11) Register of Deeds Goals and Objectives for FY 2005-06 achieved.
- 12) Performance Management reports established in October 2006.
- 13) The number of Register of Deeds staff certifications through the NC Institute of Government has increased from 3 in 2004 to 17 through the end of 2006.
- 14) The Register of Deeds completed 34 individual meetings with staff in 2006. In addition, organizational communication has improved through the establishment of monthly Administrative, Supervisory, Staff Team, and Area Meetings. Administrative Guidelines have been reviewed by Administration and Supervisory staff, and are being reviewed by front line staff. These internal procedures should be approved by end of 2006.
- 15) Supervisors and Administrators went through training on Performance Ratings to improve supervisory effectiveness in employee evaluations in June 2006.
- 16) Internal personnel file content and procedures were changed in November 2006 to be more in line with Guilford County best practices.
- 17) A new telephone system has been implemented in the Greensboro office. The public receives a staff person for over 85% of phone calls during normal business hours. Calls to High Point will be routed to our office specialist by December 15th 2006. Call productivity reports have been established for efficiency and accountability.
- 18) FY 2005-06 Year End showed the Register of Deeds office expended 97% of the requested budget and brought in an additional \$1.8 million in revenue to the County.
- 19) Over 500 email requests for information from the Register of Deeds have been submitted online and responded to by staff as result of enhancing our web presence with IS webmaster.
- 20) In addition to land records, DOT, Roadway Corridor and Plat maps, Notary Index books, and Assumed name books were scanned, indexed and searchable by December 1, 2006.
- 21) High Point Register of Deeds office will scan documents at time of recordation by the end of December 2006.
- 22) Digitized "ins and outs" microfilm roll of titles searched from 1940's to mid 1960's in the Jamestown area accumulated from the HP Bar Association. This information was made searchable in October 2006. This saves search time when searching selected properties.
- 23) Installed additional counters and a "take a number" system in the Vital Records division in Greensboro to help customers and staff facilitate work flow.