

July 2015

Presidents Message

First I would like to announce that “AIA KINETIC” produced by the National Small Firm Roundtable is available on both Apple and GooglePlay. Please download it and see the exciting and stimulating articles about our Profession.

On some days being President is like being Sisyphus, but enough whining for today. Last week I was in Denver for KLA (Knowledge Learning Assembly of the Knowledge Communities) for National. It's nice to see friends I meet from other regions again and catch up on what the rest of the country is doing over a meal or cocktail. Most of the regions are realigning and, like Michigan, many are having a difficult time. There is much mistrust that National has the right program in place. National's response is that they understand everything is not perfect but a work in progress. The idea is to get information out in the open and let members have a voice in development instead of taking years to perfect a plan that everyone wants to change.

We have taken the same approach getting information out in the open and let members have a voice in development here at AIA Michigan. National tasked us with complying with new minimum standards. We started realigning with a handful of people willing to take the extra time and effort to look at the minimum requirements and how some of the pioneering Regions handled it. We developed plans and took them to the members, and have been modifying them as we get input. As could be expected the plans morphed into a structure much more like we currently have than a super-efficient or radically different model. Change is hard.

In the last few weeks several chapters have asked Michigan to look at what we do and break it down into tasks and hours, A la carte so to speak. My question to the members is, "Is that how it should be?" We have never been that way, but that's not a good answer. Should a member service organization be, you only get what you pay for? Members typically say they want everything included and don't want to pay any extra. They want that intangible extra at no extra cost. How do we provide that, is the main question we have been trying to answer. Another question is, "Should a Chapter be penalized for being a Chapter?" The short answer is being a Chapter is a big responsibility and won't come without cost or effort. It's for many reasons like these that Denver chose to be a Section of Colorado instead of a Chapter. Chapters will have to provide some of the same services Michigan is already providing. An agreement with another Chapter/Component to provide services is allowable.

Several Chapters have expressed interest in not changing status to a Section. That is completely each individual Chapters decision, and AIA Michigan will support that decision. By December 31st, 2015 a State Wide Agreement on how every member will receive the minimum standards needs to be in place. Our goal was to complete this by October at the Annual Meeting, but we may have to settle for changing our by laws to allow sections and restructure the Michigan Board. We have asked National to send us a representative to help AIA Michigan with navigating the agreement. When a date is available we will be asking the Presidents/Ex Com of each Chapter to meet together to come up with that strategy.

YOLO, for those people who can't comprehend *Carpe Diem*.

Regards,
Jeff Ferweda, AIA