

NCAZO Members & Friends,

I would like to say that it is a privilege to lead such a dynamic and growing professional association and I look forward to a productive presidential term! On behalf of the Board of Directors I want to thank you for taking the time to explore our modernized website. We are proud of the upgrade and are committed to using it to keep our membership updated on what we're working on behind the scenes.

At our annual conference in Cherokee I was struck by a powerful moment. As I was talking to first-time attendees, I thought back to when I was in their shoes, and focused momentarily on just how different things are now. I was really moved by just how much things can change in what seems like a blink.

Just over a decade ago, newsletters were mailed to you with a stamp, continuing education credits weren't "a thing," professional groups weren't held strictly accountable and event hosting cost about half of what it is today. We kept our photos in a book, our records on paper, and we never would have imagined the financial resources associated with satisfying modern-day electronic requirements. But today this is our reality.

I recognize that many of us are nostalgic for what was arguably a simpler time, but we can't ignore we're at a crossroads where preserving our traditions requires satisfying contemporary demands. We are welcoming new zoning officials into this association at the fastest pace ever. I am proud to say 65 new CZOs graduated in the spring, bringing our current active membership total to 458. We believe this is a testament to the fact the work we do is important, and employers value candidates with our credentials.

This Board of Directors realizes that the younger CZO graduates and increasing membership volume will present several challenges. The first is we will need more space to host events than we have traditionally required. The second is we may need to continue reorganizing how we offer our credits and operate our meetings moving forward. We are mindful of the changing circumstances as we forge ahead.

At our October Board of Director's Meeting we committed to the following goals:

- Modernization of the association while preserving tradition
- Improving speaker relevance at events
- Expanding committee participation
- Revamping our awards program
- Returning to a traditional election cycle now that the board has stabilized

We will reconvene in February to discuss progress, plan our summer event and tend to the regular business of the association. We appreciate your patience regarding information on the location of our annual conference, as the unprecedented damage caused by Hurricane Florence has forced us to explore new options. For your planning purposes, it is likely the conference will take place either August 18-21 or August 25-28.

I hope to see you at an event soon!

Warmest regards,

Jessica Fiester Rhue, President