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S T A T E O F R H O D E I S L A N D

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

A N A C T

RELATING TO PROPERTY -- RHODE ISLAND COORDINATE SYSTEM

Introduced By: Senators Famiglietti, Thompson, Appollonio, and Dimitri

Date Introduced: March 04, 2026

Referred To: Senate Environment & Agriculture

(Dept, of Business Regulation)

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

SECTION 1. The title of Chapter 34-8 of the General Laws entitled "Rhode Island Coordinate System" is hereby amended to read as follows:

~~CHAPTER 34-8~~

~~Rhode Island Coordinate System~~

CHAPTER 34-8

RHODE ISLAND STATE PLANE COORDINATE SYSTEM

SECTION 2. Sections 34-8-1, 34-8-2, 34-8-3, 34-8-7, 34-8-9 and 34-8-10 of the General Laws in Chapter 34-8 entitled "Rhode Island Coordinate System" are hereby amended to read as follows:

34-8-1. ~~Adoption of ocean and geodetic survey systems.~~ Adoption of the national geodetic survey's state plane coordinate systems.

~~The two (2) systems~~ Rhode Island shall adopt the most recent system of plane coordinates ~~which have~~, known as the State Plane Coordinate System, that has been established by the ~~national ocean/~~national geodetic survey, or its successors, for defining and stating the geographic positions or locations of points on the surface of the earth within the state ~~are hereafter to be known and designated~~ State of Rhode Island as the "Rhode Island State Plane Coordinate System."

Previous versions of these systems include the "Rhode Island coordinate system of 1927" and the "Rhode Island coordinate system of 1983".

34-8-2. ~~Use of term in documents.~~ Definitions.

As used in this chapter, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

(1) "Board" means the board of registration for professional land surveyors as established by chapter 8.1 of title 5.

(2) "National Geodetic Survey" or "NGS" means the subdivision of NOAA's National Ocean Service, or its successors, which provides the framework for all positioning activities in the US.

(3) "NOAA" means the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration, of the US Department of Commerce.

(4) "National Spatial Reference System" or "NSRS" means a consistent coordinate system maintained by the NGS to determine latitude, longitude, height, scale, gravity, and orientation through the U.S.

(5) "Rhode Island state plane coordinate system" or "RISPCS" means the most recent system of plane coordinates known as the "State Plane Coordinate System" established by the National Geodetic Survey, based on the National Spatial Reference System, for defining and stating the geographic positions or locations of points within the State of Rhode Island. The terms "Rhode Island coordinate system" and "Rhode Island plane coordinate system" are synonymous with the term "Rhode Island state plane coordinate system."

(6) Prior versions of the "Rhode Island coordinate systems," collectively referred to as "legacy systems" are defined as:

(i) "The Rhode Island coordinate system of 1927" means a transverse Mercator projection of the Clarke spheroid of 1866, having a central meridian 71° 30′ west of Greenwich, on which meridian the scale is set at one part in one hundred sixty thousand (160,000) too small. The origin of coordinates is at the intersection of the meridian 71° 30′ west of Greenwich and the parallel 41° 05′ north latitude. This origin is given the coordinates: x = 500,000 feet and y = 0 feet.

(ii) "The Rhode Island coordinate system of 1983" means a transverse Mercator projection of the North American datum of 1983 having a central meridian 71° 30′ west of Greenwich, on which meridian the scale is set at one part in one hundred sixty thousand (160,000) too small. The origin of coordinates is at the intersection of the meridian 71° 30′ west of Greenwich and the parallel 41° 05′ north latitude. This origin is given the coordinates: x = 100,000 meters, and y = 0 meters.

(iii) The use of the term "Rhode Island coordinate system of 1927" or "Rhode Island coordinate system of 1983" on any map, report of survey, or other document, shall be limited to coordinates based on the Rhode Island coordinate system as defined in this chapter.

(7) "State plane coordinate system" means the most recent system of plane coordinates established by the National Geodetic Survey, based on the National Spatial Reference System, for

defining and stating the geographic positions or locations of points within the United States.

34-8-3. Location of point by coordinates.

(a) The plane ~~coordinate values for~~ coordinates of a point on the earth's surface, to be used ~~to express~~ in expressing the geographic position or location of ~~such~~ the point on the Rhode Island state plane coordinate system, shall consist of two (2) distances, expressed in:

(1) Meters and decimals of a meter, or international feet and decimals of an international foot when using the Rhode Island state plane coordinate system;

(2) Meters and decimals of a meter when using the Rhode Island coordinate system of 1983; or

(3) U. S. survey feet and decimals of a survey foot when using the Rhode Island coordinate system of 1927~~, and expressed in meters and decimals of a meter when using the Rhode Island coordinate system of 1983~~.

(b) One of ~~these~~ the distances described in subsection (a) of this section, to be known as the "east or x-coordinate", shall give the ~~position in an east and west direction~~ distance east of the y-axis; the other distance, to be known as the "north or y-coordinate", shall give the ~~position in a north and south direction~~ distance north of the x-axis. These coordinates shall be made to depend upon and conform to plane rectangular coordinate values for ~~the monumented~~ points ~~of the North American horizontal geodetic control network~~ tied to the NSRS as published by the ~~national ocean survey/~~national geodetic survey or its successors, and whose plane coordinates have been computed on the systems defined in this chapter. ~~Any such station may be used for establishing a survey connection to either Rhode Island coordinate system set forth in § 34-8-1 of this chapter.~~

34-8-7. Reliance on system not required — Describing location of survey system or land boundary corner.

(a) Nothing contained in this chapter shall require any purchaser or mortgagee of real property to rely wholly on a land description, any part of which depends exclusively upon either Rhode Island coordinate system.

(b) ~~For purposes of describing the location of any survey station or land boundary corner in the state it shall be considered a complete, legal, and satisfactory description of such location to give the position of the survey station or land boundary corner on the system of plane coordinates defined in this chapter.~~ Coordinates based on any Rhode Island coordinate system defined in § 34-8-2, purporting to define the position of a point on a land boundary, presented to be recorded in any public land records or deed records shall conform with current standards and guidelines published by NGS and shall be accompanied by a specific statement as to their basis and a description of the survey method used to determine them on the record plat or description of the survey. Such

coordinate values shall not supersede the board of registration for professional land surveyors' rules for procedural and technical standards, as promulgated by the board through regulation, for the actual establishment and location of the purported boundary.

34-8-9. Use of coordinate systems.

(a) The Rhode Island coordinate system of 1927 ~~may be~~ was used up to and including December 31, 1989, but ~~shall~~ not ~~be used~~ thereafter.

(b) The Rhode Island coordinate system of 1983 may be used up to ~~and including December 31, 1989, and shall be the exclusive Rhode Island coordinate system thereafter.~~ the official release of the State Plane Coordinate System 2022 by the National Geodetic Survey.

(c) The Rhode Island state plane coordinate system shall be used for projects commenced after the official release of the State Plane Coordinate System 2022 by the National Geodetic Survey.

34-8-10. Meter-to-foot conversion.

(a) The international foot shall be used for all foot distances and coordinates unless the distances or coordinates are tied to one of the legacy systems defined in § 34-8-2.

(1) One international foot equals .3048 meter exactly.

(b) For purposes of this chapter~~,~~ and for ~~purposes of~~ conversion between the ~~two (2) systems set forth in § 34-8-1 of this chapter~~ legacy systems defined in § 34-8-2, one meter equals 3.2808-⅓ survey feet.

SECTION 3. Sections 34-8-4 and 34-8-6 of the General Laws in Chapter 34-8 entitled "Rhode Island Coordinate System" are hereby repealed.

~~**34-8-4. Technical definition of systems -- Origin of coordinates.**~~

~~(a) For purposes of more precisely defining the Rhode Island coordinate system of 1927, the following definition by the national ocean survey/national geodetic survey is adopted:~~

~~The Rhode Island coordinate system of 1927 is a transverse Mercator projection of the Clarke spheroid of 1866, having a central meridian 71° 30′ west of Greenwich, on which meridian the scale is set at one part in one hundred sixty thousand (160,000) too small. The origin of coordinates is at the intersection of the meridian 71° 30′ west of Greenwich and the parallel 41° 05′ north latitude. This origin is given the coordinates: x = 500,000 feet and y = 0 feet.~~

~~(b) For the purposes of more precisely defining the Rhode Island coordinate system of 1983, the following definition by the national ocean survey/national geodetic survey is adopted:~~

~~The Rhode Island coordinate system of 1983 is a transverse Mercator projection of the North American datum of 1983 having a central meridian 71° 30′ west of Greenwich, on which meridian the scale is set at one part in one hundred sixty thousand (160,000) too small. The origin~~

~~of coordinates is at the intersection of the meridian 71° 30′ west of Greenwich and the parallel 41° 05′ north latitude. This origin is given the coordinates: x = 100,000 meters, and y = 100,000 meters, and y = 0 meters.~~

~~**34-8-6. Proximity to established station required for use of coordinates in public records.**~~

~~No coordinates based on either Rhode Island coordinate system, purporting to define the position of a point on land boundary, shall be presented to be recorded in any public land records or deed records unless such point is within one kilometer of a monumented horizontal control station and unless minimum THIRD ORDER — class II procedures are used in conformity with the standards of accuracy and specifications prepared and published by the federal geodetic control committee established in conformity with the standards of accuracy and specifications for first — or second order geodetic surveying as prepared and published by the federal geodetic control committee (FGCC) of the United States department of commerce. Standards and specifications of the FGCC or its successor in force on date of the survey shall apply. The publishing of the existing control stations, or the acceptance with intent to publish the newly established control stations, by the national ocean survey/national geodetic survey will constitute evidence of adherence to the FGCC specifications. Above limitations may be modified by the Rhode Island department of transportation land surveying section to meet local conditions.~~

SECTION 4. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION

BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

OF

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This act would update the Rhode Island coordinate system to adopt the most recent system of plane coordinates established by the National Geodetic Survey, a federal agency which is part of NOAA and the US Department of Commerce, and would modify the meter to foot conversion to adopt the international foot to provide national uniformity.

This act would take effect upon passage.

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