



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

JANUARY 2025

If we act now, we can take a significant step forward in preserving the culture and identity of the Illini Valley REALTORS®

1. HOW DID THE ISSUE OF A MERGER COME TO US FOR A VOTE?

The Leadership's review of the Association after the AE departure indicated our Association had declining membership, reduced services and a difficult ability to recruit and fund the AE position. The Merger Task Force was established and after review, analysis and interviews of other Associations wanting to merge, it was determined for our best future a merger with a Chapter was the best alternative.

WHY IS A MERGER THE BEST ALTERNATIVE?

The merger option allows the best use of financial resources while increasing services. It removes the untenable position of having a shrinking membership base while needing to meet the NAR Core Standards for REALTOR® Associations.

2. WHAT IS THE MERGER/CHAPTER PLAN?

The Chapter option allows REALTORS® in the Illini Valley geographical jurisdiction area to continue to have services and involvement in the local communities of the Illini Valley. A Chapter is an agreement with the NorthWest Illinois Alliance of REALTORS® with which IVAR would merge but continue to have a local presence; local staff; reduced expenses and operating costs while preserving the culture and involvement in the communities that we have today.

3. WHO IS NWIAR?

It is the NorthWest Illinois Alliance of REALTORS® located in Rockford Illinois with 940 REALTOR® members and 150 Affiliate members. NWIAR was the result of the merger of Rockford Area Association of REALTORS® with the Belvidere Association of REALTORS® (200 members) and then the subsequent merger with the REALTOR® Association of Northwest Illinois (165 members).

4. WHY WAS NWIAR CHOSEN?

As noted, NWIAR has the history of completing successful mergers with smaller associations and forming a Chapter with each of those associations. NWIAR is the only REALTOR® Association in Illinois with Chapters. In the decision-making process the Task Force had the opportunity to hear from past local association leaders who are current Chapter members about the

experiences in merging with NWIAR and their Chapter's daily functioning. Their comments were very positive on the merger experience and the working Chapter relationships with NWIAR.

5. WHEN WOULD THE MERGER VOTE OCCUR AND WHEN WOULD THE MERGER BECOME EFFECTIVE?

The merger vote is scheduled February 28, 2025. The Membership meeting and voting will be held at the Community Building in Utica with registration beginning at 1:00 pm. The meeting will begin at 1:30 and will conclude at 2:30 pm. Voting will open immediately after the meeting and will conclude by 3:30 pm. All IVAR members are invited to a reception afterwards in Utica. The effective date would be a few weeks after the successful vote and when the required forms are filed with the Illinois Secretary of State.

6. WILL OUR MEMBERSHIP DUES INCREASE?

Yes, part of the issue facing IVAR's continuing as a stand-alone association was the fact that IVAR dues had not kept pace with the costs of services and staff.

The plan is for a three-year dues transition beginning in 2026. The dues will be increased \$88 per year in 2026, 2027, and 2028. Additionally, the MRED fees will be reduced to \$432 per year and the difference will be reclassified as dues. NWIAR annual dues is \$560 annually but has not increased in 20 years.

Additionally, NWIAR is providing each IVAR member at the time of the merger a \$100 account credit that may be used at the members discretion but may not be used for dues.

7. WHAT ADDITIONAL SERVICES WILL WE RECEIVE WITH THE MERGER?

The services can be listed in two categories, those operational services and costs that will be assumed by NWIAR and the value-added services that are provided due to have a vibrant member engaged association. Examples are:

Operational services and costs are: accounting, access to Legal Services for forms, contracts, and business practice advice, management of the building, payment of operating expenses and taxes, hiring, supervision of staff and payment of salaries, taxes, and travel, total Core Standards compliance responsibility, grant administration, increased member involvement in committees at the NIWAR, Illinois REALTORS, and NAR level, community and charitable involvement and funding.

Value-Added Services include: Forewarn without costs, member professional development; member networking opportunities, access to increased services on market conditions, increased local government involvement; broader education opportunities, top level public relations program for promoting value of a REALTOR®, member training, investment in economic development, internal and external communications, maintaining and increasing Illini Valley culture.

8. WHERE WILL THE CHAPTER OFFICE BE LOCATED?

The office location will be in the same building at 1125 Peoria Street in Peru. The building and land will transfer to NWIAR as a part of the merger. The expenses associated with the building will become those of NWIAR.

9. WHO WILL BE THE CHAPTER STAFF?

The staff and those expenses will also become expenses of NWIAR. NWIAR's CEO will have the supervisory responsibilities of the Chapter staff. The Illini Valley Chapter Council members will have input and participation in any staff retention or selection of Chapter employees.

10. WILL WE HAVE IVAR MEMBERS AS OUR CHAPTER LEADERSHIP?

Yes, the Illini Valley Chapter Council will be members from the Illini Valley geographical jurisdictional area. The Council leadership will be a Chair and Vice-Chair and the Council Board will consist of no less than seven (7) and no more than 15 members. Affiliate members are welcome to serve on the Council but at least 3/5s of the members must be REALTORS®.

11. WILL WE HAVE REPRESENTATION ON THE NWIAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS?

Yes, there will be three members appointed to the NWIAR Board of Directors for the initial transitional period. After those terms expire any Illini Valley Chapter member may apply under the NWIAR Board of Directors nominating process to seek election to the NWIAR Board. NWIAR is guaranteeing 3 Board of Director seats for the next 5 years.

12. WHAT HAPPENS IF WE REJECT THE MERGER AND VOTE NO?

A rejection of the merger and the Chapter would mean that IVAR continues to exist as it does today. IVAR in 2025 would be required to meet the NAR Core Standards and have at a minimum at full-time Association Executive and meet varying association performance and compliance standards. Due to the ongoing merger discussions, IVAR was given certain leniencies in meeting the 2024 Core Standards but that may not be the case in 2025. Financially IVAR dues would increase and with the membership base declining, and hiring an AE, the Merger Task Force estimate using existing Reserves in 2025 and individual dues increases beginning in 2026 in the range of \$500 added to the 2025 dues and fees. The likelihood of additional increases in 2026 and beyond would be driven by whether membership is stable or continues to decline. By way of example, given a membership base of 140 members only produces \$14,000 for every \$100 increase.

13. WILL WE CONTINUE TO HAVE MRED?

Yes, MRED is the optional MLS that will be made available as long as you request it. The NWIAR MLS will become available to you shortly after the merger date but there is no charge for 3 years or until January 1, 2028. Therefore, there will be 2 MLSs, MRED and NWIAR MLS (Paragon). This will require a dual entry of data. It should be noted, the Council beginning in 2028 will have a \$125,000 deposit from NWIAR available which could assist in part or total of the NWIAR Paragon annual fees of \$240 per member.

14. HOW WILL HAVING PARAGON MLS IMPACT OUR COSTS AND MLS SERVICES?

As noted in #13, NWIAR MLS (Paragon) begins with the effective date of the merger but without costs until January 1, 2028. MRED will continue at \$432 annually in 2026. Having Paragon will provide an additional 940 members with access to your listings beginning in 2025.

15. WHEN WILL WE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO HEAR MORE AND ASK QUESTIONS?

In addition to these FAQ's, there will be several documents filed and noticed on the IVAR Website. There will be an in-person Town Hall meeting to discuss the merger, chapter and the

voting process. The Town Hall meetings will be held at the Utica Community Building on February 11th beginning at 4 pm and February 12th beginning at 9 am.

The Illini Valley Merger Task Force and the Illini Valley Board of Directors request your approval of the merger!

MERGER TASK FORCE MEMBERS

Erin Karlosky, Chair

Beth Coleman

Katie Troccoli

Patrick Chismarick

Tom Guttilla

Andrea Greenwalt

Bev Malooley

Dee Barrera

Heidi Huber

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEMBERS

Beth Coleman, President

Katie Troccoli, President-Elect

Heidi Huber, Treasurer

Christine Schweickert

Bonnie Lester

Beth Mulcahy

Bob Huber

Angie Heckman

Erin Karlosky

IF NOT NOW, WHEN? IF NOT US, WHO?

VOTE YES!

