

MAINE MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION

**POLICY DEFINING RESPECTIVE ROLES OF
MMA LEGISLATIVE POLICY COMMITTEE &
MMA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Role of the MMA Legislative Policy Committee – MMA's 12-member Executive Committee is the Board of Directors of the Association and is responsible for its control and management. In the 1970's, the Executive Committee created the Legislative Policy Committee (LPC). The LPC serves a critical function as the advocacy arm of the Maine Municipal Association. The purpose of the LPC is to define municipal interests and to maximize those interests through effective participation in the legislative process. Specifically, in consultation with the Executive Committee, the LPC is responsible for:

- Developing and coordinating MMA's legislative policy process;
- Identifying MMA's advocacy priorities and developing a legislative program;
- Providing direction on legislative strategy to achieve these objectives; and
- Taking positions on legislative proposals affecting municipalities.

In addition, LPC representatives are expected to assist MMA staff by acting as municipal advocates at the local level. LPC members are expected to:

- Develop open communication with legislators in their Senate districts and inform those legislators about LPC positions;
- Act as liaisons with municipal officials in their districts; and
- Keep MMA staff informed of issues of concern.

Relationship of the Legislative Policy Committee to the Executive Committee – Historically, the Executive Committee has deferred to the LPC with respect to the Association's position on specific legislative proposals, but the Executive Committee has continued to assume a policy-making role with respect to federal issues, citizen petitions and ballot issues of statewide importance, and advocacy initiatives the Association undertakes that involve the appropriation or reallocation of resources.

Given this background, it is evident that an effective communication system needs to be employed so that the Executive Committee and LPC can easily converse, both as LPC develops and advances the Association's legislative proposals and as the Executive Committee undertakes its various functions in the area of public policy. With the proper communication network in place, the enormous resources that exist in the energy, experience, and expertise of the Legislative Policy Committee can be fully utilized without infringing upon the Executive Committee's overarching responsibility to govern the Association.

To be effective, the communication system needs to operate in both directions.

Before the Executive Committee formalizes its position on ballot issues of statewide importance, it should seek the advice of the Legislative Policy Committee. Before the Executive Committee undertakes a new initiative that might conflict with or otherwise impact significantly on the Association's legislative policy strategy, or the capacity of the Association to undertake other legislative initiatives, it should seek the advice of the Legislative Policy Committee.

The Legislative Policy Committee, similarly, must be cognizant of the needs of the Executive Committee to remain informed of the LPC's policy development initiatives and the authority of the Executive Committee to modify those policy initiatives in those circumstances where the advancement of the initiative would, by the determination of the Executive Committee, be disadvantageous to the Association.

Therefore, as part of the process of developing any legislative initiative, program, or platform, the LPC shall communicate that initiative, program or platform to the Executive Committee in writing with enough advance notice so that the Executive Committee may, through the LPC Chair, or otherwise, provide its comments to the LPC prior to final adoption.

I, Theresa A. Chavarie, of the Maine Municipal Association do hereby certify that the foregoing Discussion Paper was adopted by the Maine Municipal Association Executive Committee at a regular meeting thereof on the 23rd day of January 1998, by unanimous vote. The Discussion Paper was made a formal Policy of the Executive Committee on the 22nd day of September, 2011 by unanimous vote.