

May 2011

maine townsman

The Magazine of the Maine Municipal Association



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maine townsman

The Magazine of the Maine Municipal Association

In the Nation's Capital 5

MMA President Mark Green writes about a recent visit to Washington, D.C., where MMA leaders and other municipal officials attended a National League of Cities' meeting and met with all four members of the Maine Congressional delegation.

White Elephants or Local Treasures? 7

Old school buildings across Maine are being vacated as municipalities and school systems cut costs, deal with declining student enrollment and open energy-efficient buildings. For many citizens, the older buildings have great sentimental meaning, but there are challenges in upkeep and finding fruitful uses for old schools.

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The Maine Townsman and MMA's website offer the second in a series of profiles and oral histories that recognize long-time municipal officials who have served their communities with distinction. South Portland's Linda Boudreau, a long-time councilor and former mayor, is featured this month.

Use Care When Cutting Employee Benefits 15

No municipal official wants to hurt employees but tough financial times are causing many towns and cities to examine employee benefit costs – especially in health care – and make adjustments. Experts say the keys to maintaining decent morale are involving employees and being as open as possible.

Local Government's 'Mega Issues' 19

No secret here but municipal government is going through a phase of tremendous change, and much of it is driven by factors beyond anyone's control. This expert identifies five 'mega issues:' the economic outlook; strained relations with state government; demographic trends; resource challenges; and new media.

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Town meeting voters across the state are electing people to Select boards and other positions. Here's a roundup of the results.

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COVER PHOTO: Freelance photographer Jeff Pouland took this photo of children participating in a vacation week program in Old Town, where the former Herbert Sargent School was converted to a community center.



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A Message From MMA



by Mark Green, MMA President, Town Manager, Sanford

Sophie Wilson Goes to Washington

This past March Sophie Wilson, Chris Lockwood and I had the pleasure of attending the National League of Cities (NLC) meeting in Washington, D.C. with municipal officials from all over the country. It has been a tradition at MMA for the Vice President, President and Executive Director to attend this event, which culminates in individual meetings with the four members of our congressional delegation.

Unfortunately, over time, the number of municipal officials who attend this meeting has dwindled from as many 50 in past years to six this year. The only municipal officials from Maine in attendance other than Sophie, Chris and me were D'arcy Main-Boyington, economic development director with the City of Brewer, Mayor Nick Mavodones from the City of Portland and Portland City Councilor Dory-Anna Waxman. Undoubtedly, budget constraints are behind the low attendance but I hope that over time more municipal officials will be able to make this worthwhile trip.

There are really two parts to the conference. The first is the conference itself, which we attended on Monday and Tuesday. The keynote speakers were some of the best I have ever listened to, including: Erskine Bowles, Chief of Staff for former President Clinton; Deputy Secretary Ron Sims of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; and, First Lady Michelle Obama.

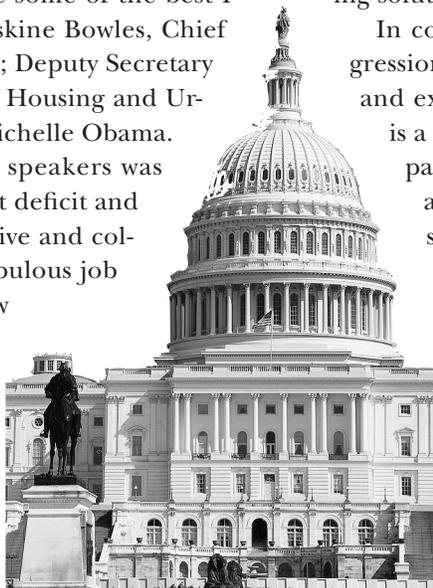
The message from the first two speakers was the seriousness of the current budget deficit and the need to address it in a constructive and collaborative manner. Mr.Sims did a fabulous job of describing the difference in how his father's generation viewed its responsibility to future generations compared to our generation. He described how his father worked as a janitor with the goal of getting his children through college and on to a better life.

He compared that to the legacy of debt and obligation that we appear to be leaving our children.

I must say that this fellow had me in tears as I thought about the sacrifices made by past generations and the apparent self-indulgence of ours. Although, as a conservative in fiscal matters, I have always been concerned with the deficit, no one had ever painted such a vivid picture of the problem for me. I left the conference truly concerned by the gravity of the problem and hoping that those chosen by us to lead this nation will in fact do just that – lead!

The second part of the conference included the meetings we held with our two U.S. Senators and two Representatives. All four took time to meet with us, even though it was obvious that their time is much in demand. They were attentive when we spoke and asked questions about the problems we were having back home. As a Mainer, I am proud to be represented by four individuals that obviously care a great deal about our State. I must also say that it is clearly evident as you wonder the halls of the Senate Office Building that our Senators are held in high regard in Washington. I am hopeful they will play key roles in finding solutions to the many problems facing our nation.

In conclusion, I feel the meetings with our congressional delegation are well worth the time, effort and expense of traveling to Washington. I hope it is a practice MMA continues well into the future, particularly given the difficulty individual towns and cities are having sending their own representatives. I think it is also important to note that during my time on the Executive Committee at MMA that we have been represented by people such as Nick Mavodones, Anne Swift-Kayatta, Galen Larrabee and John Sylvester – all very capable people from small towns and large cities. Maine just seems to have a knack for finding competent people to serve our citizens at all levels of government. 



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Converting Old Schools: Not Easy, Can Be Done

By Douglas Rooks

From the turn of the last century through the 1950s, thousands of public school buildings closed in Maine, as the state transitioned from rural one-room schoolhouses to contemporary multi-classroom facilities. Now, school closings are accelerating again, spurred by declining enrollment and plummeting state aid.

Twenty schools closed in 2010, by far the highest number since the state Department of Education began tracking the trend in 1996, according to Jim Rier, deputy Education Commissioner. More closings are on the way this year.

Already, Harpswell, Wales and Oakland have voted to close elementary schools, and Frankfort and Orland are expected to hold referendums. Under the 2007 school consolidation law, towns in regional districts can vote on whether to keep their schools open but must bear the additional costs. Many decline.

The Livermore Falls Middle School also may close, part of an agreement that merged Jay with SAD 36 (Livermore Falls and Livermore) into a new Regional School Unit. The plan also calls for closing Livermore Falls High School next year and moving all students to Jay.

School closings have long been complicated and emotional issues to handle. Particularly when the school involved is the last one in town, people feel a loss of connection and community. Some school buildings sit idle for years, with even demolition costs as impediments to moving ahead.

A survey of towns and cities around the state, however, shows that there is often new life for these old buildings,

and in many cases the sense of community is enhanced, not diminished, by the change.

Augusta, like many service-center communities, faced a steady loss of families with school-aged children during the 1980s and '90s, although its population has since stabilized. It closed both its junior high schools and Cony High School was relocated to the Capital Area Technical Center campus a mile away. City Manager Bill Bridgeo has wrestled with many issues concerning the old buildings.

BUKER SUCCESS

The most successful reuse has been the old Buker Junior High School, on Arsenal Street across from Shaw's Plaza. The old school, built in 1956 and closed in 2003, is now fully occupied.

The Maine National Guard rents one wing of the building, while Kennebec Valley Community College leases the other. The Guard uses its space as auxiliary offices for the Augusta

Armory nearby, while the college has a satellite campus for its main one in Fairfield.

The Augusta Recreation Department uses the center section, including the gym, with the Augusta Boys and Girls Club bringing in the largest number of kids. But the city also offers boxing, karate and bridge clubs, among a variety of other activities for adults and children.

"It's an ideal location for the recreation department, right in the middle of things," Bridgeo said.

The tenants bring in \$130,000 in annual rent, which comes within \$20,000 of \$30,000 of matching the city's expense of operating and maintaining the building. Augusta spent about \$250,000 to replace the roof, heating system and make other improvement after it assumed ownership from the school department.

When Cony High moved, the newer section of the high school was torn down and replaced by a Hannaford su-



Friendly sign welcomes visitors to the Old Town Rec Department, a recently converted school.

Douglas Rooks is a freelance writer from West Gardiner and regular contributor to the Townsman, drooks@tds.net

permarket, a transaction that brought the city \$2 million – and a lawsuit from neighbors, later settled.

'ICONIC' BUILDING

The Flatiron Building, the old section – “one of the capital’s iconic structures,” as Bridgeo put it – was spared the wrecking ball in 2006, but is used only for storage.

“We’ve had three rounds of RFPs (request for proposals) and only the third time did we get an offer,” he said. The city is discussing a possible deal with developer Gary Violette, who hasn’t announced plans but is considering a conversion to office space. The city has continued to heat and maintain the building – at an annual cost of \$70,000 – to make reuse attractive.

The city would like to keep the second-floor auditorium, but Bridgeo points out that Augusta already has performance spaces at the new Cony High School, the Augusta Civic Center, University of Maine at Augusta and nearby community performance space in Hallowell and Gardiner. There’s also a community group trying to revive the Colonial Theater on Water Street. A dinner theater is a possibility there.

The city hasn’t begun to plan for the Hodgkins Junior High School, which closed in 2009, with seventh and grade students moving to Cony. “We’ve just shut it down for now. I don’t think the school department has even deeded it over to us,” Bridgeo said.

When the state funded a consolidated K-8 school for Old Town, the city was left with major decisions about the four school buildings that had housed elementary and middle school students. The new school opened in 2004 and the four old schools, built in 1901, 1902, 1920 and 1961, have all had different fates.

The oldest, the Jefferson Street School, has been retained for special education classes, but there’s now a possibility students will be relocated to Brewer.

City Manager Peggy Daigle isn’t looking forward to that prospect. She inherited the vacant buildings when she became city manager and said it’s been “quite a headache” deciding what to do in the years since.

The newest school, Herbert Sargent Elementary on Stillwater Avenue, has become a lively recreation center,

with the gym used for city programs that didn’t have much space before. Daigle considers that the most successful reuse, and in keeping with the original use.

HEALTH CENTER

The Helen Hunt School on Brunswick Street was originally tabbed as a city hall – something Old Town lacked for 22 years – but voters rejected the idea. The school was subsequently sold to Penobscot Community Health Care, which invested \$6 million in renovations and now runs a full-service family health clinic, with programs from pediatric to geriatric care.

The building the community wrestled with longest was the Herbert Gray School, also on Stillwater Avenue, closer to town. No viable reuse was found, and the building was demolished after asbestos and hazardous materials were removed.

“It was difficult for a lot of our long-time citizens and even for me,”

Daigle said. “One day it was still there and the next day it was gone.”

Old Town did finally find a suitable space for city hall – a former bank building in the middle of downtown – moving in last October.

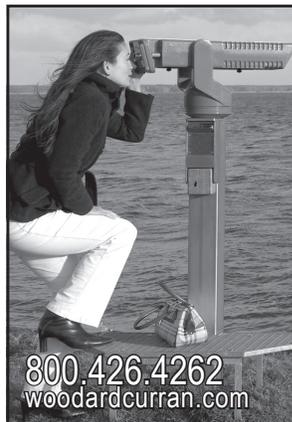
Residents in Brewer have participated in a lengthy series of community forums – five so far – to find uses for four schools that will close when the new citywide K-8 school opens in September.

City Manager Steve Bost said the forums “have provided lots of good ideas” and the city “wants to make sure we have all the old buildings accounted for” by the time heating season starts.

Brewer is moving toward reuse of at least one building, the soon-to-be-vacated middle school. It seems likely the superintendent’s office will be relocated there and the gym is coveted by the recreation program. With that exception, “the city doesn’t really need the space,” Bost said, so other uses will



Penobscot Community Health Care now runs a full-service health clinic in the former Helen Hunt School on Brunswick Street in Old Town.



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be considered.

Housing for the elderly is a high priority, and Bost said one school is “a great old three-story building” that could address that need. “Our process has been very positive and the community has turned out,” he said. A city councilor chairs the reuse committee; it’s staffed by the Economic Development Department. Bost said he’s confident a firm direction will be set by fall.

In Dover-Foxcroft, the town is nearing the end of efforts to reuse old school buildings that began in with the closing of the Morton Avenue Elementary School and its replacement by the Se Do Mo Cha Elementary School across the street. That school gets its unique name from the school district’s four towns: Sebec, Dover-Foxcroft, Monson and Charleston.

The town offices, previously packed into the 3,500-square-foot first floor of historic Center Hall, now occupy a third of the Morton Avenue school, joined by the water district that was once at a separate location.

MAYO HOSPITAL PURCHASE

A second building deeded to the town, the former superintendent’s office, was sold to Mayo Hospital for \$180,000. The proceeds, plus a \$65,000 town appropriation, were sufficient for all the renovations to the new municipal building.

The secret, said Town Manager Jack Clukey, was labor from inmates at the Charleston Correctional Center on work release. “We got a huge amount of labor that way, plus volunteers of our own.” The town offices moved in 2009.

The gym is used by the town recreational program and former classrooms are rented by Eastern Maine Development Corp., a Maine Career Center, and the local adult education program. Clukey said the tenant mix provides “good synergy,” since job seekers can sign up for education courses literally next door. The town has also retained a community room allowing free use. Rental income allows the town to operate the new building, four times the size of the old town hall, for about the same cost.

The old town hall will apparently get a new life as well. The Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society has temporarily taken ownership – under terms of a \$107,000 Environmental Protection

Agency “Brownfield” grant used for cleanup – and is seeking to locate a transitional care center for Alzheimer’s patients on the first floor.

MERCER MAKES A MOVE

Smaller towns have managed to successfully reuse buildings, too. Mercer (pop. 567) saw the closing of its only school in 2008, with students traveling to Farmington. Some residents feared the 11,700-square-foot, four-classroom school, built in 1959, would sit idle. Instead, town meeting approved a plan to move the town office and library there and to use the rest of the space for community events.

A key player, according to Town Clerk Yolanda Violette, is the Mercer Community Club, which has monthly fundraisers and contributes \$5,000 annually toward maintenance and operating costs. Along with rentals, which included birthday, anniversary and graduation parties, the center raises \$8,000 to \$10,000 to defray costs.

Violette said the Mercer Community Center is a bustling place, with events by the Mercer Old Home Days Association, yoga and Zumba dance classes, comedians and even a weekly Hula Hoop group. An after-school program brings back students and the “young at heart” group for seniors offers luncheon and bingo.

Perhaps the most ambitious school reuse project currently on the drawing board is headed to a June referendum

in Falmouth. Voters will be asked to approve a \$5.65 million project comprising two schools and three different buildings.

The complex proposal originally included moving the town hall in to the old Falmouth High School, built in 1930, and now known as the Plummer Building. It’s part of the Plummer-Motz School that, along with the Lunt School on the same 20-acre campus, will be replaced by a new K-8 school opening in September.

In the final version, the Falmouth Memorial Library would move to the Lunt School, while the gymnasium that connects the Plummer and Motz buildings, plus the Motz wing, will house the town’s recreation programs.

While the original plan, said Town Planner Theo Holtwijk, envisioned a “civic campus” to consolidate town functions, the council decided against moving the town office, “which will stay where it’s been for 100 years.” The Plummer building, “a classic old school building” should provide a good deal of leasable space and part of the 20-acre site will be sold.

“The promise was that no new property tax revenues would be used,” Holtwijk said, “and that was a struggle.” But if voters approve, the library will be able to double its space, and the recreation department will be able to greatly expand. “They told us they just need a bucket and a broom. The gym is in good shape,” he said. [\[m\]](#)



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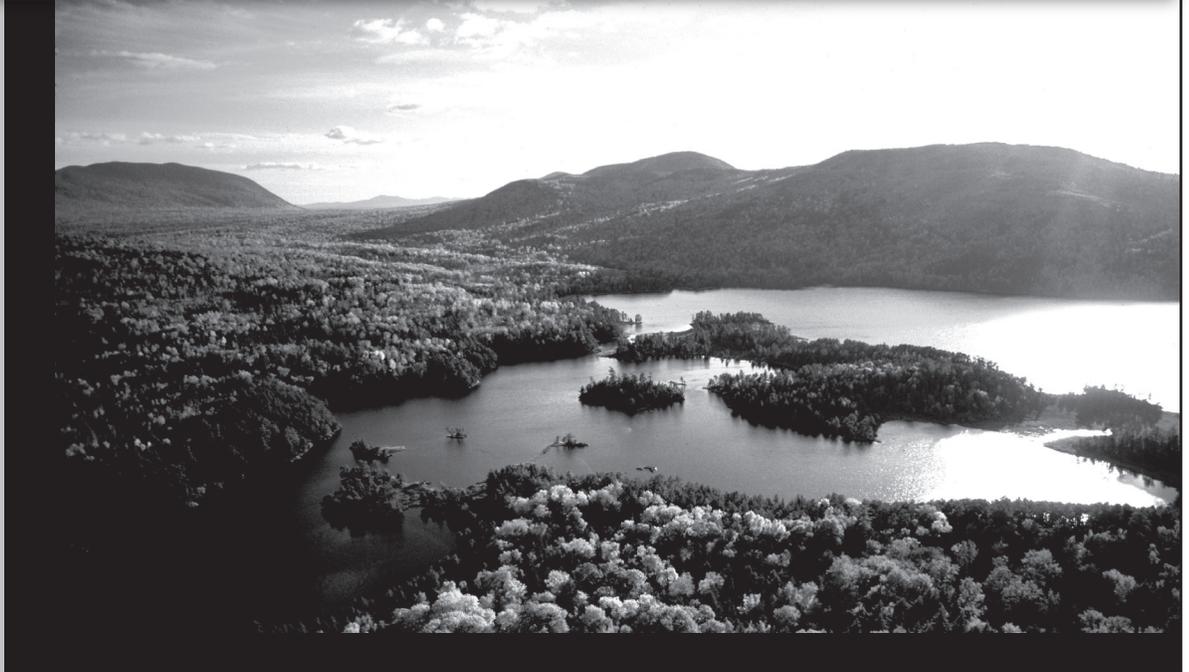
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Linda Boudreau: Wearing Many Hats

By Eric Conrad, Director of Communication
& Educational Services, MMA

Perhaps the simpler question for Linda Boudreau would be what civic role she has not held during her many years of public service.

But it's OK to ask the question the other way, too. The long-time South Portland leader happily runs down a considerable list: PTA activist; school committee member (six years); Planning Board member (two years); city councilor (18 years); mayor (three times); trustee, Cumberland County Civic Center; board member, Southern Maine Community College; director, ecomaine; and, much more.

Boudreau attributes part of her passion for public service to her late uncle, Paris Snow, who served as a state legislator from Caribou.

"I grew up knowing about politics, running for office and all of that stuff," said Boudreau, a native of Caribou herself and a graduate of Caribou High School and the University of Southern Maine.

"We moved to South Portland in 1975 and they were closing Willard School," recalled Boudreau. "Everyone was up in arms and I jumped on the bandwagon. I'm new in town and I remember the first time I ran (for school committee) I thought, 'Oh my god, I don't even know anyone.'"

She won anyway. And now, some 35 years later, everyone in South Portland knows her.

Boudreau's years of municipal service have been marked by many challenges: a devastating flood that left her city without water for three days; a tanker spill that sent 180,000 gallons of oil into the Fore River between Portland and South Portland; a propane explosion that claimed the life of a firefighter.

"We had those three events in three

months," Boudreau said.

Through it all, Boudreau has tried to approach things with a sense of calm and confidence. When issues arise, she said, you tackle them one at a time. Solutions generally present themselves if processes are followed and time is spent wisely.

"You always come out on the other side of an issue," she said. "You learn that with experience."

FIRST YEAR WAS HARDEST

Boudreau recalls her first year on the South Portland City Council as the most difficult one in her career. She came to the council well-prepared, after years as a school committee member and having served on the Planning Board.

Still, outspoken council critics were relentless at the time.

"You know how every council has people who come and torture their councilors," Boudreau said. "They would keep us there until 3 a.m. on some days. You were completely exhausted."

In the early and mid-1990s, property rights advocates in South Portland were active and vocal. The city still was able to pass a comprehensive plan, shoreland zoning and other important planning measures. But it wasn't easy.

There was also a fight during her first term as councilor surrounding the future of a composting facility near Highland Avenue, a neighborhood that is well-developed residentially today but in the 1990s was semi-rural in nature.

"We had to have police coming and sitting in on some of those meetings," Boudreau said.

Being a municipal leader in South Portland is no easy chore. The city



Linda Boudreau

of 23,746 people throws just about every issue at its leaders that one can imagine. It is home to the Maine Mall, the state's largest retail area. A few working farms remain in the city, but most residents live in dense and trendy neighborhoods with names like Meetinghouse Hill, Ferry Village and Willard Beach.

A major shipping port, it sees oil tankers come and go on a daily basis and is home to many oil holding facilities. Yet it also offers some of Maine's most beautiful ocean views from the pathways near Southern Maine Community College and a stone jetty connecting the mainland to the lighthouse at Spring Point.

VICTORY AT BUG LIGHT

Ask Boudreau what achievement makes her proudest, and she answers without hesitation – preserving open

space at what is now Bug Light Park, a remarkable spate of land that offers views of the Portland skyline, Fort Gorges and Peaks Island, among other destinations.

The park almost didn't happen. Controversy started when an oil company proposed putting an oil farm on vacant land – "abandoned property" – near the historic site where Liberty Ships were built during World War II.

Almost immediately, residents came together to oppose the project.

In some ways, that was the easy part. The hard part was finding \$2.5 million to protect the property and, eventually, turn it into the park that it is today. That effort included convincing voters to approve a \$1 million bond backed by the city, which they eventually did.

Today, kite flyers and bicyclists fre-

quent the park. It's an excellent place to take a lunch break. Older visitors just ease their cars into parking spaces at the park, turn off the ignitions and soak in the views, sometimes for hours.

"Bug Light Park worked out great," said Boudreau, 60, who married Guy Boudreau in 1969, when he was drafted into the Vietnam War. Together, they raised two children, a daughter who lives in South Portland and a son in Fort Worth, Texas. They have three grandchildren.

"Bug Light was also hard work," she said. "Sometimes you think, 'We're losing this. It's not going to make it.'"

Probably every long-serving mu-



SPECIAL PROJECT, SPECIAL YEAR

Maine Municipal Association turns 75 this year and to celebrate we are producing a series of oral histories at our website (www.memun.org) and profile articles such as this month's piece on Linda Boudreau in South Portland. **Hear her in her own words.** Go to the MMA website, click on the 75th Anniversary logo in the upper left corner and follow the directions from there.

Earlier, this year, MMA asked members to nominate people who served their communities in various municipal roles over a long period of time. The response was overwhelming! Dozens of suggestions came in and everyone who was nominated will be recognized at the MMA Annual Convention, Oct. 5-6.

Nine subjects have been chosen for the in-depth oral history and profile project that began in last month's Townsman and runs through December. We hope you enjoy the project.

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municipal official has at least one regret as well. Boudreau can see hers every day by looking out the front window of her home – a communication tower that was erected on Meetinghouse Hill. While she voted against the tower, South Portland zoning permitted its construction and most councilors backed it.

“From my neighbor’s kitchen window, you really feel like the thing is on top of you,” she said.

RESPECT FOR MANAGERS

Boudreau worked with three city managers during her years on the council – Jerre Bryant, Jeff Jordan and James Gailey – and she has great respect for the profession.

She was first tapped by her peers as mayor after five years on City Council. Almost right away, “Jerre Bryant announces he’s leaving for the Maine Mall (as manager),” she recalled. “Jeff Jordan stepped in as interim manager and then became manager. We had a fabulous year together.” Gailey is the manager now.

Boudreau described Bryant, Jordan and Gailey as having distinct personalities, with different approaches to managing the council and municipal employees. But all three showed deep commitment to the city that they served.

At this point, Boudreau has “termed out” as a City Councilor for the second time. She is taking some time off and is uncertain whether she will seek re-election in the future.

In the past, she has served both as a district councilor – representing her neighborhood on the council – and as an “at large” councilor, one who has citywide responsibilities. The two designations require different approaches to the post, Boudreau said.

The longer she served on the council, the more she was tapped for regional service, such as working with the ecomaine board and the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS). It would be hard to help those organizations and be a district councilor, she said.

“You’re doing regional work. You don’t have time to champion a walkway.”

One of the highest-profile issues in the city these days is whether dogs should be allowed on the city’s beach areas. That may seem trivial compared

to oil spills and propane explosions, but emotions run high on both sides of the dog issue in South Portland.

In terms of seeking office again, Boudreau sounds like a woman who is keeping her options open. Even at the municipal level, at least in South Portland, politics have taken on a more partisan tone in recent years, she said. That’s one factor in favor of not running again, at least not now.

But with all the experience she has accumulated, Boudreau has a lot to offer her city. “Sometimes, you have a lot of information and you have an obligation to share it,” she said.

Looking back on 35 years of public service, Boudreau recognizes that she has been involved with all kinds of issues and worked with many people, from very localized issues to a citywide planning effort known as “Project Plan.” That effort resulted in neighborhood-by-neighborhood strategic plans and a better understanding among residents that businesses in the city are actually run by real people, and companies fulfill many important functions.

“Maybe that’s what I like most about the council,” she said. “I know a little about an awful lot of things.” 

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Include Employees When Reducing Their Benefits

By Lee Burnett

Cutting employee benefits has become an unpleasant fact of life for decision makers in municipal government, but keeping faith with employees is still possible, say a range of folks with experience making and absorbing cuts.

The keys to maintaining morale through tough times appear to be early warning, transparency and employee involvement in decision-making, they say. Unionized employees are automatically involved through labor contract negotiations, but it's wise to include non-unionized employees as well, says a labor relations expert who advises local officials on behalf of Maine Municipal Association.

"On the morale side, you include the employee in the conversation," explained David Barrett, Director of Personnel & Labor Relations for Maine Municipal Association. "You explain the scope of the problem and present them with some choices."

Today, cutting benefits invariably involves changes to health insurance because it is by far the most expensive employee benefit. Health insurance became a popular compensation tool because it's less expensive than a wage increase for the employer (For every dollar of wage increase, an employer actually spends about \$1.25 to cover retirement, workers comp, unemployment, social security, etc.) and it's a better value for the employee. That's because, unlike wages, health benefits are not taxed as income.

But the cost of health insurance has more than tripled in the past 15 years and now stands anywhere from \$1,200 to \$1,500 a month per employee for a family plan. The cost dwarfs other offering in the typical benefit package,

such as vacation and holiday pay, sick leave, and various other insurances.

Employers have typically responded to the rapidly rising costs in three ways: Switching to plans with less coverage; keeping employees healthier; and, passing on a higher percentage of the premiums to employees. Employees now typically pay 10 to 25 percent of the cost of premiums.

The climate has put unions in a defensive mode.

"Employers are coming after health insurance benefits. We're dealing with it everywhere," explained Dan Walsh, a business agent for Teamsters Local 340, which represents 150 groups of municipal employees. "I don't see it getting better soon."

OPENNESS ON BOTH SIDES

Augusta's challenge is particularly difficult. The city has faced more than the usual double whammy of rising health insurance premiums and recession-driven revenue shortfalls. It also is shouldering pension obligations and debt payments on an earlier bond for other pension obligations.

In addition, Augusta is one of two communities – Millinocket being the other – grappling with the legacy of bearing the full cost of retirees' health

premiums. New hires were excluded from retirement health benefits beginning in the 1990s, but a few dozen grandfathered employees were still eligible for the benefit.

The cumulative effect of those obligations was projected to drive up the tax rate by three percent a year for the next eight years, said City Manager William Bridgeo. No one expected a drastic reduction, but as Bridgeo said, "We had to make progress and for that we needed the cooperation of employees." The city's 240 employees are 80 percent unionized by three separate unions and eight bargaining units.

Bridgeo said employees were conditioned by the recession to expect to make sacrifices, but the effort still took a "substantial education effort." The effort also required the city to be "completely candid" and credible in its financial projections, both of which Bridgeo said were ably handled by Finance Director Ralph St. Pierre.

"In this situation, you have to have access to very competent financial management. People need to have complete confidence in the numbers," he said.

Given an option, the majority of employees opted for a health plan with lower premiums but higher deductible.



Lee Burnett is a freelance writer from Sanford, leeburnett_maine@hotmail.com

"The best you can do is give them an option and be as transparent as possible," said Walsh, the Teamsters official. "We knew the city couldn't afford (the prior benefit plan). The best you can do is lay out all your cards."

The city also secured a 20 percent contribution from employees toward retirement health benefits. But the long-term savings came at a significant cost in experience and institutional memory within city government as dozens of veteran employees took early retirement and the more generous health plan.

Bridgeo said the future looks better for city employees. Furlough days are being scaled back, a two percent raise is planned and there are some opportunities for travel and training. He termed morale "pretty good."

Walsh said he thinks the city could have been "more sensitive to employees" and adds "change is scary and this is a lot of change."

WELLNESS IN FREEPORT

In Freeport, a painful situation was made less painful because of the town's aggressive wellness program and the initiative of town employees, accord-

ing to Town Manager Dale Olmstead. A planned one percent salary increase was on the chopping block because of the Town Council's decision to allow no increase in the tax rate for 2011. But the council was open to alternative suggestions and employees responded with a creative solution, he said.

Employees volunteered to take a reduction from Point of Service A to Point of Service C in the Maine Municipal Employees Health Trust insurance plan, which translated into higher deductible out of pocket expenses for the same coverage, said Olmstead.

"This is a decision employees came to," Olmstead said. "In a number of employee meetings, the idea surfaced and was thoroughly vetted."

The decision was made possible by the town's aggressive wellness program – which three quarters of employees participate in and which is partly responsible for the town's better than average claims experience rating. Here's how it works: Employees earn extra money depending on how much effort they put into their own health, said Assistant Town Planner Caroline Pelletier.

The minimum level of participation is to get blood pressure and weight

checked weekly. Higher levels of effort involve wellness classes, dental cleanings and workouts (four times a week for at least a half hour). Employees who complete everything (16 employees did so last year) earn an extra \$275 per year. "We have a lot of people in really good shape," she said.

Holding down insurance costs was a goal of the wellness program when it was launched three years ago, although no one expected immediate savings, Pelletier said.

"We've been looking at the cost of health insurance the last few years," she said. "The thought was to encourage people toward preventative care and ultimately reduce health care costs and thereby save taxpayers."

Olmstead credits employees for their public spiritedness, noting the less generous health insurance plan actually saves the town treasury more money than the \$45,000 slated to be saved had the salary increases been cancelled. Listening to employees made for a better outcome, he said.

"The worst mistake that can be made is to not involve employees in the process," said Olmstead. "An arbitrary decision usually creates a lot of unrec-

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essary turmoil.”

The Somerset County community of Jackman covers most of the \$11,000-plus annual health insurance premium for three of its six town employees. It's the only benefit the town provides. This year, the town increased its share of the yearly premium by \$100, but premiums increased by \$1,400 overall, which employees absorbed in smaller paychecks, said Town Manager Kathy MacKenzie. Options are limited for small towns, she said. The best approach is to be straightforward.

“We're very small,” said MacKenzie. “I think they (employees) understand... We're too small to sugarcoat this. It's an issue you can't sugarcoat. It hits the bottom line. How do you sugarcoat it when all sudden they have \$50 less in their paycheck?”

Cumulative benefit cuts eventually hurt morale, which in turn costs the town in lower productivity, customer service and employee turnover. Sometimes it takes the initiative of employees to change the situation, even if they're not represented by a union. In Turner, four years of flat-funded wages and benefits ended when town employees

organized themselves and got involved in the political process.

“It was very much a group effort,” said Sandra Philipon, an office assistant who works in the assessing department.

Last year, Philipon said employees were “very disappointed” by how they were dealt with at Town Meeting.

She said her co-workers “got over it” but decided to educate themselves about the town's budget process and got involved. She said employees came to meetings well prepared and mixed their opinions about their compensation level with gratitude for their jobs.

“We're happy to have a job” she said. “We're happy they haven't cut jobs... and we're happy they haven't cut hours.”

In the end, employees won a five percent raise, which was supported by the Town Manager, Selectmen and Budget Committee. “We were very careful in our approach,” said Philipon. “We did our homework and when they asked questions, we had answers.”

POSITIVE OUTCOMES

Turner Town Manager Eva Leavitt noted the percentage increase was sig-

nificantly higher than the 1.5 percent increases she's heard of elsewhere.

“I think because employees took initiative and came to meetings, they were listened to and respected,” said Leavitt. “It worked out very well. They had been patient and silent for a long time.”

Something similar happened in Albion, where eight town employees are paid part-time salaries and no benefits. Town Clerk Tax Collector Amana Dow said she gets by because of her husband's salary and benefits.

“Fortunately for me, my husband has a good job. I know clerk before me had to get out; they needed more. I'm just happy don't have to.”

She and her office colleagues have gone four years without a raise and this year, the deputy clerk's position was slated for a reduction in hours from 13 to 10 per week.

“I had to stand up at town meeting,” Dow said. “I said, ‘She's been here five years. She's all trained. I can trust that she can handle things if I'm not there. It's just not right.’” Town meeting restored the deputy clerk's hours to 13 per week. 

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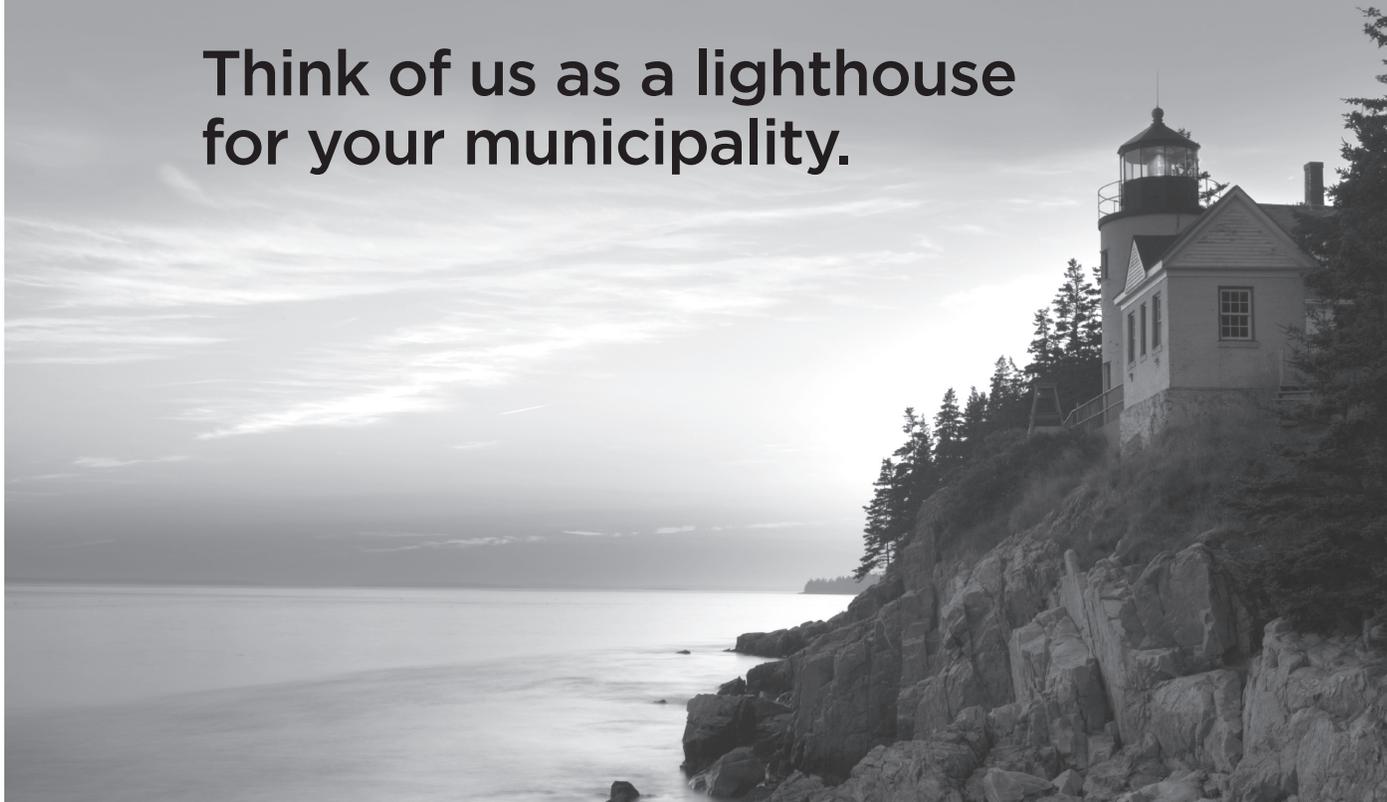
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'Mega Issues' Driving Local Government

By Elizabeth Kellar

What are some of the driving forces that are shaping local governments in the years ahead? Five mega issues emerge from conversations with national and local leaders:

- Long-term economic outlook.
- Strained relationships with state governments.
- Demographic changes.
- Resource challenges.
- New media and technology.

One might expect local government managers to be daunted by these issues. Instead managers interviewed for this article conveyed resolve and a sense of mission about what they can do to help their organizations and their communities adapt to these challenging times.

The economic recovery has been slow, and unemployment remains high. In 2009, most local governments adjusted to the downturn in revenues by imposing hiring freezes and holding the line on employee pay and benefit costs. During 2010, however, more local governments have had to lay off employees and make changes in benefit packages.

According to September 2010 data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, local government employment, excluding jobs in education, is down 167,000 jobs, or 2.6 percent, compared with November 2008. Analysts do not expect state and local revenues to return to 2008 levels until 2013.

In writing about the National League of Cities (NLC) annual survey, "City Fiscal Conditions in 2010," in October 2010, authors Christopher W.

Hoene and Michael A. Pagano found that "the declines in 2010 represent the largest downturn in revenues and cutbacks in spending in the history of NLC's survey, with revenues declining for the fourth year in a row."

Local governments also face serious challenges because of funding losses in pension plan assets. The downturn in the stock market in 2008 dramatically reduced the value of equities in public and private retirement plans alike. Aggregate funding of state and local pension funding levels has declined from a respectable level of 84 percent in 2008 to 78 percent in 2009.

Because public pensions typically "smooth" upturns and downturns over a period of three to five years, the full impact of the 2008 equity losses will not be evident until 2013. A recent study published by the Center for State and Local Government Excellence found that in the United States the ratio of pension assets will decline, on average, to between 66 and 76 percent of liabilities by 2013, depending on stock prices.

There is, of course, considerable variation in funding levels. Some plans have no financial issues at all while others have a major unfunded liability. In 2009, for example, 11 percent of the 126 pension plans studied were funded at the 40 to 59 percent level, and 10 percent of plans were 100 percent funded.

Future funding levels will depend on many factors, including increases in contributions and how well the stock market performs. The authors at the Center for Retirement Research at Boston College examined three scenarios for stock market returns to see what pension funding levels would be if stock prices are flat, grow modestly, or grow robustly. No one can predict

future stock returns, but most analysts urge governments to be conservative in their estimates.

Because of the funding issues and an intense media focus on employee benefits, many local and state plans are undergoing changes. Typically, there are reduced benefits for new employees and higher contributions from both employers and employees.

Michigan and Utah have replaced their defined-benefit plans with a hybrid plan for all public employees. The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) reports that more states have enacted significant retirement legislation in 2010 than in any other year in memory.

As Ronald K. Snell, director, State Services Division, National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), explains, "The economic recovery alone won't solve the funding issue. There are structural issues that have to be addressed that were adopted during more optimistic times." California's decision in 1999 to reduce the retirement age from age 60 to age 55 for general government employees and from age 55 to age 50 for public safety employees is often cited as a key factor for that state's large unfunded pension liability.

STRAIN WITH STATE GOVERNMENTS

Because of the loss of revenues, some state governments have looked to local governments as a place to shift responsibilities they struggle to pay for. But perhaps no state has as difficult a relationship with local governments these days as California.

Chris McKenzie, executive director, League of California Cities, wrote in Western City, September 2010, "How a state government can say on the one hand it is serious about job creation

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(and the attendant revenue benefits it brings to the state) and on the other hand kill jobs in the private and public sectors by raiding and borrowing local government funds is beyond local officials' comprehension." The voters in Calif. agreed. They passed Proposition 22 in November 2010, which prevents state lawmakers from tapping local fund to plug state budget holes.

Scott Hancock, executive director, Maryland Municipal League, said at the 2010 ICMA Annual Conference in San Jose that local governments "cannot count on states to be a benevolent parent anymore."

Leon Churchill, city manager, Tracy, California, noted that, although state government has lost considerable credibility, residents in Tracy recently approved a local sales tax increase as a vote of confidence in what the city is trying to do. Tracy's experience is not unique. From California to Oregon to Michigan, substantial majorities are voting to support local ballot measures.

Daniel Gilmartin, executive director, Michigan Municipal League, sees an opportunity for local governments to reinvent the way they do business. "There's sustainability about what local

governments do, he said. "Those cities and regions that focus on quality-of-life issues and have a strong education system and workforce will have the greatest opportunities."

Churchill and Gerald Newfarmer, president and CEO, Management Partners, Cincinnati, Ohio, have spearheaded a discussion of state-local relationships within ICMA's Government Affairs and Policy Committee.

They would like to see the state-local partnership restored with some core principles in mind, including a respect for local government autonomy. They also see opportunities for local governments to help shape the future by promoting shared services and more regional strategies.

OLDER, MORE DIVERSE

Our communities and our workforces are aging. The millennial generation, including those age 14 to 32, is larger and more diverse than the aging baby boomer population that is starting to retire. These realities are prompting many organizations to look at planning for succession, training to help retirees update their skills so they can return to work, and using technol-

ogy more creatively to improve productivity and increase flexibility.

James Ley, county manager, Sarasota County, Fla., says he has brought in retired managers as "roving resources" to tackle issues that need attention throughout the organization. Sarasota County has increased flexibility by creating a separate system for hiring employees for particular needs.

Kim Walesh, chief strategist, San Jose, says it is important to engage residents in their 20s and 30s as they often feel left out. Social media and wiki planning are good tools to reach them. She notes that younger residents are often more diverse than others and that this cohort includes entrepreneurs and immigrants, the "secret sauce to Silicon Valley's success." At the same time, she observes that immigration into the United States is expected to plateau.

An increasing number of local government employees are eligible to retire in the next five years—about 30 percent nationwide. What are managers doing to ensure that employees are ready and able to meet the needs of our communities in the future? Here is the landscape in three different com-

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munities, some of which are undergoing major change.

PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

“One of the best things for Elgin may have been the rising cost of energy,” muses Sean Stegall, city manager in Elgin, Ill. “During the housing boom years, the city acted more like a suburb and created developments with cul-de-sacs. The pain of the Great Recession changes behavior. In the past year, we’ve reached a consensus that we should act like who we are.”

Elgin is a city of 106,000 where many residents commute to jobs in Chicago. Its website boasts that it embraces newcomers and long-term residents alike. Among Elgin’s assets are three train stations, a bus station, a rural sector, and a historic downtown.

The city recently adopted a comprehensive plan that takes advantage of those assets and outlines a way forward. The plan seeks to connect all of the cul-de-sacs that sprang up with the housing boom with the city’s traditional urban street grid. To capture the city’s new direction, there’s even a slogan: “We are the city in the suburbs.”

Elgin strives for a balance of housing options and prices to meet the needs of residents at all stages of their

lives. Recreational facilities, commercial structures, and higher-density housing are planned around transportation corridors and located near employment centers. The downtown is viewed as the “heart of the community,” with plazas and parks and improved access to the riverfront.

The Congress of the New Urbanism (CNU), an organization that promotes walkable, mixed-use neighborhood development, sustainable communities, and healthier living conditions, has seized on Elgin’s initiative to make it a pilot for the nation. Working with city

leaders, CNU identified barriers to the city’s goal of strengthening a sense of place in neighborhoods.

The priorities of the Illinois Department of Transportation, for example, have been to improve vehicle flow and to build highways. The interests of local businesses and pedestrians have not been as important to the department. As a result, highway development blocked many residents from walking to parkland or other amenities that were just blocks away.

Even when Stegall contemplates the serious challenges ahead, he main-

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tains a positive attitude. "It's our job as managers to keep cities moving as our county goes through this transition." Like most cities, Elgin has been hard hit by the economic downturn.

The city had to lay off 80 employees and cut \$15 million from its general fund budget of \$70 million in the first year after the recession. Unions also have agreed to make concessions in their compensation and benefits.

Despite the cutbacks, Elgin has doubled its budget for employee education and training. With fewer employees, Stegall says, it is essential that they are well educated, well compensated, and well prepared. They also need good technology tools. Elgin has an in-house technology group that is supplemented by consultants. The group is using technology to help departments work together more seamlessly in the field. Instead of tweaking private sector software for their needs, they are examining work flow processes and writing their own code. The goal is to make it easy for any employee to use the software for required reports.

The aging of the community has not gone unnoticed, either. Stegall says that many retirees want to return to work to replenish their savings. Others

want to do something meaningful in retirement. Elgin is creating an office of volunteer services to leverage this untapped resource.

Elgin recognizes that competition for water will be a major issue in the decades ahead, not only for Elgin but also for surrounding communities. It draws water from the Fox River, a tributary of the Illinois River, a source that is reliable and less costly than either Lake Michigan or aquifers, the primary sources of water for most other Chicago area cities.

FLEXIBILITY TO EMPLOYEES

Like the community it serves, the Hennepin County, Minn., workforce is aging. Some 30 percent of its employ-

ees are eligible to retire in the next five years. County Administrator Richard Johnson says that the pace of retirements has slowed since the economic downturn. This gives the county some breathing room to focus on succession planning and to prepare the workforce that will be needed in the future.

One initiative that has worked well for Hennepin County's human services employees is the results-only work environment. Employees have laptops, control their own schedules, and come and go as they please, using a hotel or other office space as they need it. Because social workers and others need to be out in the community to do their jobs, it makes sense to provide this flexibility, Johnson says. The program may be ex-



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panded to other employees selectively.

While technology has driven some changes, Hennepin County anticipates that the state's continuing economic difficulties will be the dominant factor. As a new governor and several new state legislators take office, they face a state budget deficit of \$5-\$7 billion. Johnson says that a deficit of that size is unlikely to be closed without both tax increases and spending cuts.

Johnson reflected on the growing tensions between local and state governments over the past 10 years. Where there once was a partnership and a distinction of roles, it is now common for the state government to shift responsibility to local governments without providing a source of revenue to pay for the service. Local governments have been forced to squeeze operations and raise property taxes. Cutbacks have reached the point where residents will experience such service reductions as longer wait times and delays in processing applications.

Hennepin County continues to enjoy a relatively good relationship with its 1.2 million residents. Unlike some states, there has been little backlash against public employees in Minnesota. That may be because Minnesota has managed its pension funding issues in an assertive way, raising contributions for both employers and employees and reducing the cost-of-living adjustment for current retirees.

Water management is a significant issue for the county because there is fragmentation caused by many different water and soil conservation districts. Some of these entities can raise revenues while others cannot, so one part of the county will have costs and service levels different from another part. Hennepin County is large enough to bring the groups together to clarify who is in charge and to address issues of equity, stream management, and lake management.

NEW MEDIA IN CAPE ELIZ.

Michael McGovern, town manager in Cape Elizabeth, notes that community engagement has been affected by technology. Certain community groups use a software program that makes it easy to collect e-mail addresses. A taxpayer group made up of mostly wealthy individuals was established two years ago and more than once has spread false information.

Group members often apologize privately for spreading the false information but then they put out the same false information again. Some individuals have, for example, criticized Cape Elizabeth for having a generous pension plan when, in fact, 15 years ago it switched to a defined-contribution plan for all employees except police.

Four weekly newspapers and one daily cover the community, which has fewer than 9,000 residents. One of the weeklies signed on a blogger who writes negatively about the town. Most town staff members have stopped reading the blog as it was demoralizing to them.

Fortunately, Cape Elizabeth has an excellent town council that sorts through the issues thoughtfully. In one

case, some residents have called for a regional or consolidated fire service even though the change would actually increase costs in Cape Elizabeth as the neighboring community has higher costs for its fire service. Cape Elizabeth's current fire service consists of a call company with one full-time employee, the fire chief and a total budget of \$150,000.

State and local relationships are always challenging, particularly during times of economic constraints. The amount received through revenue sharing from the state of Maine is exactly what it was 10 years ago because there is less money in the pool and the state has changed the formula. What this means is that revenue from property taxes increased 70 percent during

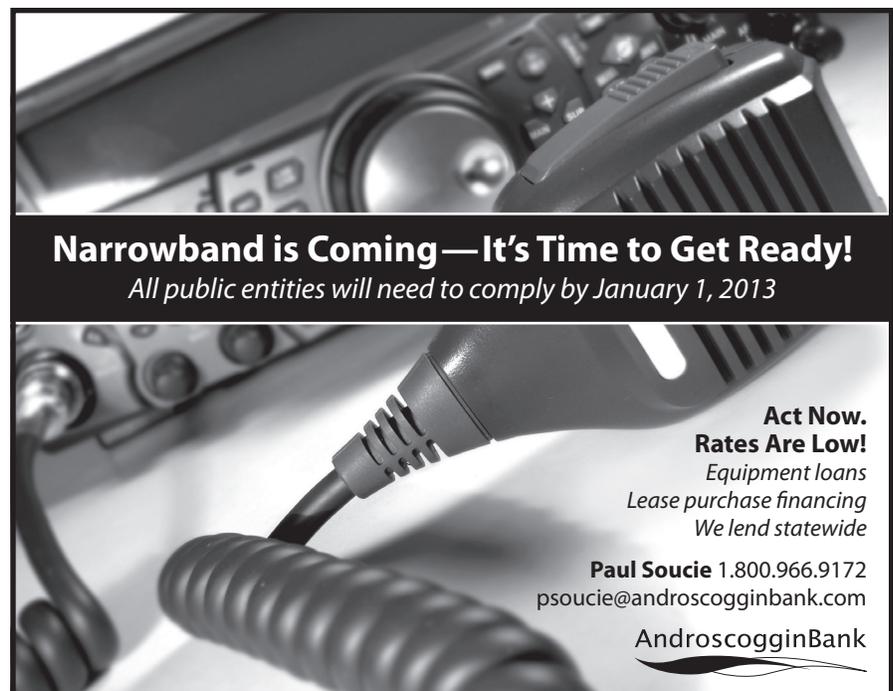


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the 10-year period, yet Cape Elizabeth's total revenues have remained flat for three straight years.

The revenue squeeze last year required the city to lay off employees for the first time. The only upside to the recession is that the bidding environment has been competitive so the city has benefited from lower prices, particularly in the construction area.

Energy issues are concerns. McGovern says, "Water has never been an issue in Maine, but energy is. When we look at the need to replace the boilers in the high schools, for example, we consider the possibility of a boiler that can use either oil or wood chips. We also consider options for solar panels to heat water in the summer months.

"The U.S. Department of Energy gave the state of Maine a grant for energy efficiency improvements that required some of the dollars be shared with local governments. Cape Elizabeth received an \$85,000 grant to make lighting upgrades that improve energy efficiency. The project is already finished, and we expect the investment will pay for itself in two years."

AGING WORKFORCE

Cape Elizabeth has 50 employees, and 20 percent of them have 25 years or more of service. Because of the recession and investment declines, no full-time employees have left the town voluntarily in the past three years.

Cape Elizabeth's workforce demographics may be younger than many others. Typically, state and local government employees are five to seven years older than their private sector counterparts. They also are more highly educated. The recession has prompted most local government employers who

are eligible to retire to work longer, but in California, retirement-eligible employees have been retiring in greater numbers.

Most Americans are not thinking about future workforce gaps when unemployment is running close to 10 percent. But managers are increasingly looking at succession planning issues, knowing they soon will have critical vacancies that must be filled. Finding, developing, and retaining talent is one of the most important legacies that a local government manager can leave behind. [mc](#)

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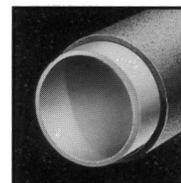
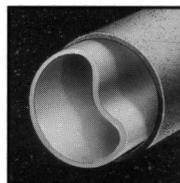
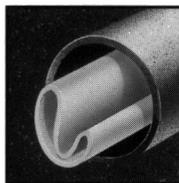
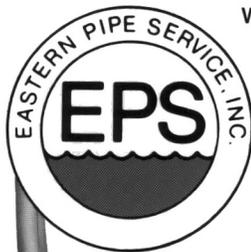
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Crying Wolf About Municipal Defaults

By Christopher Hoene

In recent months, a few Wall Street analysts have been crying wolf about the municipal bond market – warning of widespread defaults on municipal debt.

Leading the charge is Meredith Whitney, a banking analyst who appeared on CBS' 60 Minutes in December and predicted "50 to 100 sizeable municipal defaults totaling hundreds of billions of dollars." In a later interview on CNBC, Ms. Whitney predicted "local leaders want to default on debt investors and not on their constituents."

The National League of Cities (NLC) has offered an ongoing rebuttal to these predictions, most notably through our blog (www.CitiesSpeak.org) and our media outreach. We have been in good company, including PIMCO's Bill Gross, Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke, rating agencies, business writers at the Wall Street Journal and Bloomberg News and a host of organizations representing the state and local government sector.

BEYOND THE HYPE

Hyperbolic predictions about widespread and sizeable municipal defaults are based on a line-of-argument that goes something like this:

- 1) Local and state governments are facing the deepest fiscal downturn in decades.
- 2) States will likely balance their budgets by cutting support for local governments.
- 3) Local leaders do not have the political will to take policy actions to pay their debts, whether that is cutting

services or raising revenues, resulting in widespread and sizeable defaults.

The doomsday predictions are right on the first and second points. Local and state governments, including those in Maine, continue to confront significant fiscal challenges as a result of the Great Recession. The Washington, D.C.-based Center on Budget and Policy Priorities estimates that state governments must cover more than \$250 billion in shortfalls for 2011-12. NLC research on municipal fiscal conditions predicts that the revenue impact of the recession will be deepest for cities in 2011 and 2012, a situation likely to be made more difficult by forthcoming cuts in state assistance.

But, despite this bleak fiscal outlook, the overwhelming majority of local governments, here again including those in Maine, are balancing their budgets and meeting their debt obligations. It is simply inaccurate and misleading to paint a picture of the local and state sector as on the brink of default. Furthermore, these predic-

tions are distracting the policy debate from addressing the real impacts of the recession at the local and state level – cuts in services, personnel, and infrastructure financing that act as a drag on economic recovery.

At the risk of ruining a good story or undermining the profit-making potential of a few Wall Street analysts, let's inject a few facts into the discourse.

Municipal bonds, or securities, are predominantly issued by local and state governments for infrastructure and capital projects – not operating costs. Local and state governments and other government authorities may also issue bonds for a variety of other purposes, including transactions in which the proceeds are borrowed by non-profit institutions, such as health care and higher education.

Municipal debt comes in two forms: (1) General obligation (or GO) debt that is backed by the full faith and credit of a general purpose government like a city or country, and (2) Non-GO debt that is issued by govern-



Christopher Hoene is the Director, Center for Research and Innovation at the National League of Cities. This article was reprinted with permission.

ments and special entities backed by a specific revenue source associated with the enterprise.

The municipal bond market is sizeable – there are approximately 1.5 million municipal bonds outstanding, totaling \$2.9 trillion.

SAFE INVESTMENTS

Municipal securities are typically viewed as among the safest of investment instruments. Local and state debt levels usually represent a relatively small portion of local and state budgets, typically in the 5 percent to 10 percent range. All but one state and a few local governments have balanced budget requirements and many state and local governments have provisions that require steps to be taken to address problems before defaults can occur, or prioritize debt payments over spending for other government services. These factors contribute to low risk of municipal default.

Not all defaults are the same. A more minor “technical default” involves the violation of a covenant in the bond agreement, but there is no payment missed or loss to investors. The bigger concern is defaults where bond payments are missed or debt is restructured, resulting in a loss to investors.

Doomsday predictions about defaults have typically pointed to the likelihood of an increase in the frequency and severity of defaults, without specifying whether these are technical defaults or defaults resulting in losses to investors. As of late 2010, there were 72 defaults totaling \$2.5 billion, down from 204 defaults (\$7.3 billion) in 2009 and 162 (\$8.2 billion) in 2008. In terms of severity, in a market of \$2.9 trillion, the share is pretty small. Here again, we’re talking technical defaults in some cases, not actual losses to investors.

What about defaults that result in losses to investors? Fitch Ratings reports that the annual default rate for municipal debt is miniscule, less than one-third of one percent across three rating agencies (including Standard and Poor’s and Moody’s). Moody’s Investors Service reports only 54 defaults from 1970-2009, with the majority (78 percent) coming in health care and housing-related projects. Only four defaults came from general purpose governments – cities, towns or counties.

What does all of this tell us about the municipal bond market? First, even

an increase in the number defaults likely doesn’t amount to much in context of the total market. Second, increases in municipal defaults will most likely come from special purpose entities, often backed by non-GO debt, where individual projects have gone awry – not municipalities.

DEFAULTS OR CUTS?

The bottom line is that sky-is-falling reports about the municipal market are lacking in evidence. Meanwhile, a number of more important stories are being missed.

Assertions that local leaders will default on investors over constituents present a false choice. Defaulting on debt compromises the ability of local governments to fund services for their constituents. Local leaders know this and the overwhelming majority will protect debt obligations and, if necessary, make cuts in services and personnel, or raise revenues via taxes and fees. It is standard practice for

many local governments to budget to pay their debt service before they fund other operations.

The real story is not about defaults, but about cuts in services, personnel and infrastructure investments. NLC’s 2010 survey of municipal finance officers found that 79 percent of them cut personnel, 69 percent canceled or delayed infrastructure projects, 44 percent cut services other than public safety and 25 percent cut public safety or made across the board cuts. Recent U.S. jobs reports reveal

that state and local government employment levels are at a four-year low, with 435,000 jobs having been cut since the peak in 2008.

These actions have ramifications for people and communities in terms of local economies, jobs and quality of life – issues which deserve considerably more attention. Local and state leaders need to keep telling the real stories of the choices they are making, and in the process, tell a few analysts on Wall Street to stop crying wolf about municipal defaults. 



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Town Meeting 2011: Election Results

By Liz Chapman Mockler

Some of the municipal officials selected at town meeting in March are listed here. Uncontested races were not included unless the candidate was filling a seat vacated by a selectman who resigned or did not seek re-election.

Alna: Jonathan Villeneuve defeated Beth Whitney, 115-101, to replace outgoing Selectman Tom Smith. Meanwhile, newcomer David Reingardt unseated incumbent David Seigars, 116-98.

Andover: Incumbent Select Board Chair Susan Merrow defeated Jackie Gammons by a vote of 149-59. Gammons was a write-in candidate.

Avon: Greta Espeaignnette will replace Selectman Robert Ellis, who moved out of state recently. Espeaignnette was elected from the floor and was unopposed.

Belgrade: Incumbent Selectman Melanie Jewell defeated Robin Pepin, 197-187, to earn another term on the board.

Blue Hill: Incumbent Selectman John Bannister defeated Randy Astbury, 226-153, to win another three-year term.

Bremen: Hank Nevins defeated Gene Boothby, 90-21, to serve the remaining term of Patrick Ginnaty, which expire in 2013. Tom Kostenbader, meanwhile, ran unopposed to file the unexpired term of Robert Miller, who resigned last October and whose term expires next year.

Bristol: William Benner collected 212 votes to defeat incumbent

Selectman Robert Tibbetts, who received 183 votes.

Byron: Patrick Knapp-Vieulleux was elected to a three-year term, replacing Selectman Cory Freeman, who did not seek re-election.

Canaan: Incumbent Daniel Harriman collected 167 votes to win re-election, while Rita Graf and Paul Natale picked up 148 and 107 respectively. All will serve one-year terms. Louise Townsend did not seek re-election after serving more than 40 years as a town official in some capacity. She was first elected in the early 1970s and served as selectman off and on through this year.

Chesterville: Incumbent Selectman John Worth defeated challenger Edward Hastings by a vote of 73-69.

Clifton: Selectman Chairman Julie Clewley, who did not seek re-election, accepted another term after winning with 91 write-in votes. Newcomer John William won the second open seat with 80 votes. Peter Beckford received 77 and Eric Jellison tallied 37.

Cornville: Melvin Blaisdell defeated challenger Samuel Jencks by a vote of 158-142.

Eddington: Incumbents Donn Goodwin and Joan Brooks received 102 and 88 votes, respectively, to win re-election to three-year terms, while newcomer Michael Shepherd captured 81 votes to win the third open seat.

Farmington: Jessica Berry defeated

incumbent Selectman Nancy Porter, 187-121, while former Selectman Dennis Pike garnered 185 votes to win a second seat.

Freedom: Brian Jones received 82 votes to defeat incumbent Selectman Carol Richardson, who collected 57 votes.

Friendship: Write-in candidates won both open selectmen seats, with Arthur "Bubba" Thompson collecting 220 and Kendall Delano Jr. garnering 114 votes respectively. There were no official candidates listed on this year's ballot.

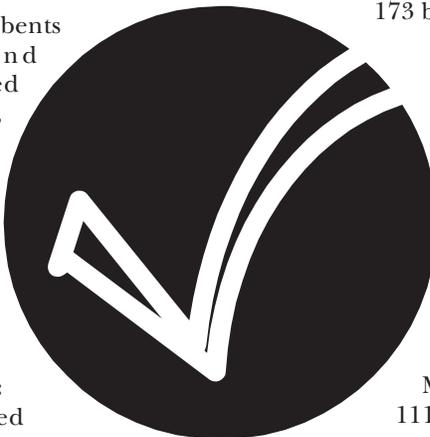
Harpwell: Alison Hawkes defeated Richard Daniel to succeed Mark Wallace by vote of 463-418.

Jackman: William Crumley received 88 votes to win one of two open selectmen seats, while Billy Blankenship captured the second seat with 29 write-in votes.

Jefferson: Six candidates ran for four open selectmen seats. The winners were incumbents Blaine Kimball and Christina Moylan, who received 229 and 197 votes, respectively. Newcomers Darin Walker earned 234 votes and Josiah Winchenbach received 173 ballots to win.

New Portland: Andrea Reichert defeated Kenneth White, 108-26, to win a three-year term.

New Sharon: Incumbent Selectman Russell Gardner defeated challenger Tamara Morgan by a vote of 111-87.



Liz Chapman Mockler is a freelance writer and editor from Augusta, lizmockler@hotmail.com

Newburgh: Former Selectman Steven Burgess and newcomer Craig Toothaker were elected to fill the unexpired terms of Leonard Belcher and Leona Smith, both of whom resigned in March. Burgess received 255 write-in votes, followed by Toothaker with 55 votes. A third write-in candidate received 34 votes.

Nobleboro: Walter Allen bested incumbent Selectman Henry Simmons by a vote of 161-66 to win a three-year term on the board.

Norridgewock: Twelve candidates vied for five seats on the board of selectmen. The top five vote-getters won. They included three incumbents: Ronald Frederick, who received the most votes at 176; Laura Lorette with, 113 votes; and, Richard Holt with 99 votes. Also elected were newcomers

Sara "Sallie" Wilder, who garnered 117 votes, and James Hilton, who received 169 ballots.

Orono: Two incumbent councilors were re-elected from a field of five candidates. Current Chairman Geoffrey Gordon won the most votes at 316, followed by Cynthia Mehnert, who received 278 votes.

Rome: Kelly Archer received 82 votes in her uncontested race to replace longtime Selectman Robert Moreau, who did not seek re-election. Leslie Real defeated Debbie Smith for the second selectmen's seat by a vote of 53-33.

Roxbury: Selectman John Sutton won his first full three-year term on the board, defeating planning board member Cathy Matson by a vote of 34-27. Sutton had filled the unexpired

term of Mark Touchette.

Somerville: Carolyn Doyle collected 38 votes, while incumbent Selectman Arthur Barnett received 37 and Walter Nichols 31 to win seats on the board.

South Bristol: Chester Rice won his fifth term as selectman, defeating former Selectman Don Stanley, 108-66.

Strong: James Burrill defeated incumbent Selectman Mary White, 142-101, to earn a three-year term on the board. Joan Reed received 195 write-in votes to defeat several other write-in candidates for a one-year term.

Warren: Newcomer Douglas Pope defeated incumbent Selectman Frank Braun, 142-62, while Daniel Davey garnered 181 votes as an uncontested candidate to replace John Crabtree. 



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Bangor police officer **Rob Angelo** jumped into the Penobscot River in mid-April to save a woman who had jumped 40 feet from the Joshua Chamberlain Bridge that spans Bangor and Brewer. The woman, 44, was calling for help. She could not swim, so Angelo brought her safely to shore. He said the 20-foot swim seemed longer than it was because of the icy water.

Sangerville Selectman **Lance Burgess** resigned April 28. Burgess, chairman of the selectmen at the time, said mounting obligations to his family and personal life prevented him from serving effectively as selectman. He had served the town for 10 years on the board and as a member of the forest committee. Burgess said he will continue volunteering for other town efforts. A special election is set for June 11 to fill the vacancy.

Livermore Falls firefighters **James Butler** and **Tim Toothaker** were off-duty and attending the annual Reggae Festival in Carrabassett Valley when a deck collapsed at The Rack pub. They were first to help the victims, four of whom were taken to the hospital in Farmington. Butler and Toothaker said the pub was “mobbed” and since so many people were on the upstairs deck, they walked downstairs moments before the structure gave way. No one suffered life-threatening injuries.

Casey Cote has been named to replace Frenchville Town Manager **Philip Levesque**, who managed the town for almost 30 years. Levesque retired in January.

Jerry Davis was hired in mid-April to replace Greenbush Town Manager **Robert Littlefield**, who retired last month after 25 years. Most recently, Davis worked seven years as code enforcement officer for the town of Lincoln, while also working as a part-time CEO for Greenbush for the past three years.

Madison Town Manager **Norman Dean** announced his retirement in late April after managing the town for 11 years.

Bowdoinham selectmen reached a severance agreement with Town Manag-

er **Kathy Durgin-Leighton** and will begin searching for a new manager with the help of a consultant. Durgin-Leighton will receive nine months’ pay. Janet Smith, a part-time office worker, will assume the duties of manager until a full-time replacement can be hired, hopefully by July 1, selectmen said. Smith was also appointed interim tax collector and treasurer during an April meeting.

Irving Faunce resigned in late April as a Wilton selectman to take the job of running a 96-bed nursing home in the town of Penobscot, which was placed in state receivership by the state. Voters will replace Faunce at the June 1 municipal election; there were two years remaining on his term.

Longtime Buxton firefighter **Frank Herbert** was overcome by smoke and flames during a brush fire on his land in early April and died of his injuries. Valiant attempts to save him by a friend and volunteer firefighters **Jeremy Redlon** and **Jamie Grant** were unsuccessful because of thick smoke. He was 85.

Rangeley selectmen voted April 19 to hire **Timothy Kane** as the next town manager. Kane, a resident of Concord, Vt. but a Rangeley native, was expected to start his new duties on May 9. He has earned numerous degrees and holds a master’s degree in education. He is making plans to move his family to Rangeley. His third child was due in May.

Phippsburg residents grappled in April with the apparent death of town “pillar” **Richard Lemont**, whose skiff was found near ledge in the Kennebec River about an hour after he left town. The Coast Guard looked for Lemont in vain for nearly two days. Lemont was active in many civic efforts, including serving on the town’s shellfish committee for two decades. He also was credited with helping keep the town’s clam flats open by restricting overboard discharges.

Former Caribou City Manager **Richard Matilla** died in Boston after a long illness on March 19. He was 71. Matilla, a longtime banker, was hired in 1991 and remained with the city until his retirement in 2001.

George Merrill has retired after 25 years as a Lewiston firefighter. He was hired by the city 1985. He was promoted to lieutenant, battalion chief and finally to assistant chief in 2006. Merrill was active in regional and statewide leadership efforts, including serving as president of the Androscoggin County Fire Chiefs Association.

Augusta police records officer **Raymond Moinester** retired April 29 after 23 years with the city. Moinester was hired as a night patrolman in 1988, later went to the day shift, was promoted to detective and worked for many years as a juvenile officer, including introducing “Officer Friendly” and the D.A.R.E. program to Augusta schools.

Matthew Pineo started his new job as Brownville town manager on May 2 after working more than two years as manager of Bradford in a neighboring county. A Hudson native, selectmen reportedly liked Pineo’s experience with finances and his knowledge of how different levels of government work together. He worked in corporate America for 25 years before taking the Bradford job. Pineo said he will move to Brownville.

Wilton selectmen have hired former **Lt. E. Page Reynolds** to replace Police Chief Dennis Brown. Reynolds, a retired Connecticut officer, worked as a lieutenant for Wilton for two years before resigning last December because he didn’t want to interrupt his teenagers’ school years and relocate his family.

Todd Shea has been named the new Arundel town manager after serving as Hallowell city manager since 2009. 

PHOTOS:

If your municipality submits a news item for the Townsman, consider sending a corresponding photo to: Eric Conrad or Jaime Clark (econrad@memun.org or jclark@memun.org)

Auburn: The city's school department is facing a budget deficit of nearly \$7 million in state and federal funding, after the council ordered the school board to cut \$2.5 million from its budget. Meanwhile, parents turned out in droves during the same period with concerns about providing iPad computers to kindergarten students.

Augusta: City officials fear they'll be left paying the \$100,000 cleanup bill on a building that included asbestos and a California owner who is now defunct. The three-story, abandoned building has become home to vagrants and a hazard to the public.

Augusta: The state Transportation Department received a \$75,200 federal grant to create a scenic byway in the St. John Valley and \$52,200 in federal funding for the Acadia All-American Road project on Mount Desert Island.

Brunswick: A marine modeling center will locate at the former Naval Air Base, now being redeveloped under the name Brunswick Landing. The non-profit American Bureau of Shipping, headquartered in Houston, employs 3,000 people in 70 countries. Its chairman said Maine workers' reputation for good and hard work, and the leadership of Peter Vigue, chairman of the Cianbro construction and engineering firm, prompted the group to settle on Maine for its new operation. The project will create 30 jobs initially.

Dixfield: Although two former selectmen took out nomination papers for an open seat on the Board of Selectmen, no one returned papers by the deadline. The seat was left vacant when longtime Selectman Bettina Martin died. Martin was chairwoman at the time of her death.

Falmouth: The town of about 11,000 has been deemed the No. 1 municipality to work and live in by GreatSchools and Forbes.com Falmouth was among 66 other communities across the United States to make the list, which is based on population data, home prices and school test scores. The town's school department achieved a rank of 100 for its operations and results.

Lewiston: Councilors are divided on whether to continue funding bus transportation for parochial school students. Mayor Larry Gilbert, former long-time police chief and U.S. marshal, said the busing has always been focused on getting kids to school safely. But other councilors said the city faces layoffs and will be under pressure to stop the practice rather than cut positions or services. The present proposal calls for keeping only two of the three bus runs for St. Dominic's Academy, saving the city an estimated \$42,000.

Livermore Falls: Town officials will publish the recommended dollar amounts from both the selectmen and budget committee following a legal opinion in April. The town will print only "yes" or "no" on the two boards' recommendations on referendum questions, but the town meeting warrant and report will include the dollar amounts suggested by both groups.

Portland: Developers unveiled a \$100 million "gateway" project, complete with office buildings, a hotel and restaurant, parking garage and event

center. The Maine Red Claws' owners, among the others, hope to win a Tax Increment Financing break to help pay for some of the infrastructure needed for what city officials say will be a "world class" entrance into the city. Construction could begin next spring, after nine abandoned industrial buildings have been demolished.

Sangerville: A Bangor attorney retained by the town has concluded a recent budget committee meeting at a member's home violated the state Freedom of Access law. "This isn't to point the finger at anybody. This is to be a learning tool for our committees" in the future, Selectman Lance Burgess said during an April board meeting, according to the Bangor Daily News.

Scarborough: An estimated 60 residents attended a city budget forum in April, asking the council to reconsider nearly \$300,000 in municipal spending and another \$225,000 from the school system. As proposed in late April, the city's budget totaled \$70 million, which would require a property tax increase of nearly 4 percent. [\[m\]](#)

NEW ON THE WEB

Here are some highlights of what's been added at www.memun.org since the last edition of the *Maine Townsman*.

- **ELearning Center.** MMA is pleased to announce a major expansion of web-based learning opportunities, working with partners MyPlace to Learn and New Horizons. The many training offerings are affordable and cover a wide range of topics, from leadership skills for elected officials to advanced information technology training.
- **Narrowbanding.** The Department of Homeland Security has released A Practical Guide to Narrowbanding for local and state emergency radio response systems. The 37-page handbook is intended to explain the upcoming deadline to convert to narrowband radio and ease municipalities through the transition period. It can be downloaded through the MMA site.
- **Celebrating service.** MMA, as part of its 75th Anniversary, is recognizing many officials for their tireless years of public service. Oral histories – first-person interviews – can now be heard at the website. Walter Foster of Friendship and Linda Boudreau of South Portland are the first subjects whose interviews are available for listening.
- **Municipal Literacy.** Working with the City of Saco and Jobs for Maine Graduates, MMA introduced the "Municipal Literacy Project" to four pilot high schools this school year, in Belfast, Houlton, Newport and Saco. Lesson plans developed by the schools and JMG are now available online. The project is part of MMA's ongoing Citizen Education program.



Municipal Bulletin Board

LICENSING WORKSHOP

Dog licensing topics such as fees, the warrant, late fines and monthly reports will be among the issues discussed at a day-long licensing workshop on May 17 at the MMA Conference Center in Augusta. The event, sponsored by the Maine Town & City Clerks' Association, starts with registration at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 4 p.m.

Hunting and fishing licenses and business licenses – including amusement and liquor licenses – also will be on the agenda. All participants should bring with them a copy of the Municipal Licensing & Permitting Handbook as well as a copy of the Municipal Clerk's Manual.

The cost is \$50 for MTCCA members and \$60 for non-members. Details on the event and how to purchase a manual are available through the MMA website.

CASH MANAGEMENT

John Eldridge, Finance Director for the Town of Brunswick, will present a workshop on Cash Management practices on May 18, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., at Jeff's Catering in Brewer.

Sponsored by the Maine Municipal Tax Collectors and Treasurers Association, the workshop will touch on many topics, including: objectives of cash management; role of the cash manager; disbursements and payables; budgeting; cash-flow forecasting; deposits and investments; and, banking relations. Registrants should bring calculators with them.

The cost is \$50 for MMTCTA members and \$60 for non-members. Details and a brochure are available through the MMA website.

MMTCTA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

On May 19, the day after the Cash Management workshop, the Maine Municipal Tax Collectors & Treasurers Association will hold its Annual Conference at Jeff's Catering in Brewer. Registration begins at 8 a.m. and the event ends with a door-prize drawing at 4 p.m. Certificates of attendance will be issued.

Many experts are slated to speak on topics ranging from bank foreclosures

to bankruptcy to GASB 54 and fraud. Geoff Herman, Director of State & Federal Relations at MMA, will present legislative updates. Officials from the state Inland Fisheries & Wildlife Department and Bureau of Motor Vehicles are scheduled to appear as well. The MMTCTA business meeting will begin at 3:30 p.m. That will include election of officers and directors.

Cost to attend the conference is \$60 for MMTCTA members and \$75 for non-members.

PERSONNEL PRACTICES

MMA's Personnel Practices workshop, which sold out several times in 2010, makes a comeback on May 24 from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the MMA Conference Center in Augusta. Attorney Larry Winger is the principal presenter.

The workshop is a must-attend event for every elected or appointed municipal official who supervises employees or generally needs to be well-versed on personnel laws. Among the issues to be discussed: discipline and discharge of public employees; performance expectations; progressive discipline; family medical leaves; reasonable accommodations; and, managing productive but disruptive employees.

Cost of the event is \$75 for MMA members and \$95 for non-members. Registration can be done online or by printing out a seminar brochure that can be found through the MMA website.

20TH ANNUAL HIGHWAY CONGRESS

The Maine Chapter of the American Public Works Association holds its Annual Highway Congress on June 2 at the Fairgrounds in Skowhegan. The must-see event celebrates its 20th anniversary, beginning with registration at 7 a.m. and ending at 3 p.m.

It includes an equipment show, presentation from the Maine Local Roads Center, safety tips and a host of workshops and demonstrations. Employees from all municipal highway and solid waste departments should attend. There are also door prizes and awards

to be given away.

The saying, "There's no such thing as a free lunch" doesn't hold true with the Congress, because the BBQ chicken lunch is free – for people who register before May 20. If you register after that date, lunch is still cheap at \$7. Details are available at the MMA website. Registration forms and names can be mailed to the Highway Congress, Maine Chapter of APWA (at MMA's address), 60 Community Drive, Augusta, ME 04330.

NEW MANAGERS WORKSHOP

MMA and the Maine Town & City Management Association will co-sponsor a one-day workshop designed especially for new municipal managers and administrative assistants. It also is a good refresher course for managers who have been on the job for awhile.

The workshop begins at 8:30 a.m. on June 9 at the MMA Conference Center in Augusta. It will end at 2:30 p.m. Participants will: further understand the rights and protections offered public employees; hear from experienced municipal managers; become acquainted with services and support available through MMA; and gain a greater understanding of their roles and responsibilities in municipal government.

The workshop is complimentary for new managers in Maine as of May 2009. Otherwise, the cost is \$30 for attendees from MMA member municipalities and \$45 for officials from non-MMA member towns. The workshop also provides an excellent networking opportunity.

EXCISE TAX BASICS

Gilberte Mayo, Treasurer in the Town of Lincoln, will present a Basic Excise Tax Workshop on June 16 at the MMA Conference Center in Augusta. The day-long event costs \$50 for members of Maine Municipal Tax Collectors & Treasurers Association and \$60 for non-members. MMTCTA is sponsoring the workshop. 

All of the upcoming workshops can be found on the MMA website. Use the following link:
<http://www.memun.org/public/MMA/svc/training.htm>

ACOS, STRAY DOGS & ANIMAL SHELTERS

Question: Must we have an animal control officer (ACO), must our ACO enforce the State's stray dog laws, and must we have a designated animal shelter?

Answer: Yes, yes and yes. Every municipality is required by law to appoint a certified ACO (see 7 M.R.S.A. § 3947). Within 10 days of the appointment, the clerk must notify the Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture of the name, address and telephone number of the ACO. If the position becomes vacant, the clerk must also notify the Commissioner of the vacancy within 10 days.

One of the many duties of the ACO is to enforce the laws governing stray dogs or dogs "at large." These laws prohibit a dog from being off the premises of its owner and not under the control of any person, except when used for hunting (see 7 M.R.S.A. §§ 3907(6), 3911). They also require the ACO to seize, impound or restrain a stray dog and deliver it to an animal shelter if the owner is unknown (see 7 M.R.S.A. § 3912).

Every municipality must also have a contract or arrangement with an animal shelter to accept stray animals (see 7 M.R.S.A. § 3949). The clerk must annually, on or before April 1st, certify to the Commissioner the name and location of the animal shelter. A municipality may also contract with an animal shelter to perform the duties of an ACO provided an employee of the shelter is certified and is appointed as the ACO for that municipality and the duties of the ACO are actually performed by that person.

Any municipal officer (selectman or councilor), clerk, manager, ACO or other official who refuses or intentionally fails to perform any of the above duties (among others) commits a civil violation for which a fine of not less than \$50 and not more than \$500 may be levied (see 7 M.R.S.A. § 3950-A). The Commissioner, on the Commissioner's own initiative or upon written complaint, must investigate any alleged refusal or neglect of these duties. The Commissioner must also

order proceedings to be instituted to enforce these laws.

For more on Maine's animal welfare laws and other helpful links, go to the Department of Agriculture's animal welfare webpage at <http://www.maine.gov/agriculture/aw/>. (By R.P.F.)

FELONS, LITIGANTS & TAX DELINQUENTS

What do convicted felons, people who are engaged in litigation with a municipality, and people who are delinquent in paying their property taxes have in common? They're all eligible under Maine law to hold municipal office if they are otherwise legally qualified. We make this observation because we're sometimes asked about it and because Maine law does not disqualify felons, litigants or tax delinquents from holding local office.

According to 30-A M.R.S.A. § 2526(3), in order to hold municipal office, a person must be (1) a resident of Maine, (2) at least 18 years of age, and (3) a citizen of the United States. A municipal officer (selectman or councilor) must also be a registered voter. This means he or she must be a legal resident of the municipality. Likewise, school board members must be residents of the municipality from which they are elected (20-A M.R.S.A. §§ 1254, 1471, 1651 and 2305). For all other municipal offices, a person need not be a municipal resident in order to hold office unless residency is required by municipal charter.

Just as a charter may impose additional qualifications for office, such as residency, it may also include disqualifications for office, such as term limits or conviction of certain crimes. It is doubtful, however, that a charter

could disqualify litigants or tax delinquents from holding office since these factors are not necessarily related to an official's ability or commitment to serve.

Even if felons, litigants and tax delinquents are not legally disqualified, this may not, in the end, make much difference since the voters (in the case of elected officials) or the appointing authority (in the case of appointed officials) may simply refuse to consider someone with such questionable "qualifications." (By R.P.F.)

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS FOR MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES

Question: Can we require our municipal employees to be residents of our municipality?

Answer: Generally, no. State law expressly prohibits a municipality from enacting an ordinance or negotiating a collective bargaining agreement requiring employees to reside within the boundaries of the municipality as a condition of employment (see 30-A M.R.S.A. § 2703). A municipality may, however, require employees to reside within a specified distance or a specific response time of a facility where this represents a legitimate job requirement (such as for public safety or emergency services personnel), though such a requirement does not apply to employees already employed.

Note that for purposes of this law, "employee" does not include an elected or appointed official (see 26 M.R.S.A. § 962(6)). For elected and appointed officials, however, only the municipal officers (selectmen or councilors) and school board members are required by statute be local residents. A municipal residency requirement for other elected or ap-

 **Municipal Calendar**

ON OR BEFORE JUNE 15 — Monthly/Quarterly expenditure statement and claim for General Assistance reimbursement to be sent to Department of Human Services, General As-

sistance Unit, DHS #11, Augusta, ME 04333 (22 MRSA §4311).

JUNE 30 — Pinball machine licenses expire on this date (8 MRSA §443).



pointed officials may be imposed only by charter (see “Qualifications for Municipal Office,” *Maine Townsman*, “Legal Notes,” May 2008).

Also note that a different rule applies to town managers under the statutory manager plan. A manager need not be a resident of the town or state when appointed but, while in office, may reside outside the town or state only with the approval of the selectmen (see 30-A M.R.S.A. § 2632(2)). This effectively requires municipal residency for town managers unless waived by the municipal officers. (By R.P.F.)

ORDINANCE ATTACHMENTS

Question: Can we amend an attachment to an ordinance without amending the ordinance itself?

Answer: It depends. If the attachment is part of the ordinance or is incorporated by reference in the ordinance, such as a zoning map, fee schedule or technical specifications, the attachment can be amended only by the municipal legislative body (town meeting or town or city council), by the same process as for amending the ordinance itself.

But if the attachment is not part of or referenced in the ordinance and is simply attached for the information or convenience of interested parties, such as an application form or contact information, it may be amended administratively, without going through the legislative process.

One way of avoiding the legislative process for attachments that *are* part of an ordinance is for the ordinance itself to delegate amendment authority to another body. A common example is ordinance fees. Instead of amending fees by ordinance, the ordinance could simply authorize the municipal officers, for example, to amend the fees from time to time as they deem reasonable in light of the municipality’s costs of administration and enforcement. This is not an option for zoning maps or other attachments that require legislative action, however.

For a related discussion on correcting clerical errors in an ordinance

(where action by the municipal legislative body is always required), see “Ordinance ‘Typos,’” *Maine Townsman*, “Legal Notes,” January 2011. (By R.P.F.)

VOTER REGISTRATIONS PRIOR TO ELECTION DAY

We recently discovered an error in our *Town Meeting & Elections Manual* (July 2010 Revised Edition).

On page 121, in a discussion of when the registrar of voters must be open for in-person registrations prior to election day, the manual states that

for municipalities with a population of more than 2,500, the registrar must be open on the last five business days that the clerk’s office is open before election day during the hours the clerk’s office is open and for two hours between 5 p.m. and 9 p.m. on at least *three* of those days. This last number is incorrect. Evening hours are required for only *one* of these days (see 21-A M.R.S.A. § 122(6)(A)(2)).

The online version of the manual at www.memun.org has already been corrected. We regret the error. (By R.P.F.)

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