

July 2010

# maine townsman

The Magazine of the Maine Municipal Association



**ON THE MOVE**  
**Fire/Rescue Agencies**  
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Dwindling state revenues and pressure on property taxes have some municipalities expanding Fire/Rescue services to attract new money. Our continuing series about collaboration among municipalities examines this gradual trend – and private-sector criticism of it.

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**COVER PHOTO:** Freeport Fire/Rescue Department Firefighter/EMT Jason Miller stands in front of Rescue 4, which is used for non-emergency transport. (Photo by Jeff Pouland)



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# Some Fire-Rescue Departments Expand

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

**M**aine fire and rescue departments are venturing into non-emergency patient ambulance transfers and providing billing and collection services for neighboring towns.

The gradual trend has resulted in increased revenues for cash-strapped cities and towns – and some complaints from private-sector ambulance companies that face increased competition.

Freeport's Fire & Rescue Department made the move a decade ago. Back in 2000, Chief Darrel Fournier received the permission of his Town Council to move ahead with a plan to build his department.

Parkview Adventist Medical Center in Brunswick had approached the department rather casually to see if the town would consider branching out beyond emergency medical response. Fournier's department purchased two new ambulances in March 2001, with that idea in mind. Business was strong right away.

"The program really exploded," Fournier said. "There was a need."

Today, at least four other fire and rescue departments are doing non-emergency transfers, which means they take patients on scheduled trips from hospital to hospital and from nursing homes or residences to hospitals. They include departments in the cities of Bangor, Augusta, Caribou and, recently, the Town of Kennebunk.

It can be a lucrative move.

Freeport now has five ambulances, 65 licensed emergency-care employees, three career firefighter-paramedics and does more than 3,000 emergency and non-emergency transports annually.

In Kennebunk, which started doing non-emergency transfers in July

2009, the move has resulted in adding about 500 such transports annually, netting the town an extra \$200,000, according to Deputy Chief Andrew Turcotte.

"It's definitely a way to increase a revenue stream," Turcotte said. "In economic down times, any new revenue is a good idea."

## CHANGE IS NEVER EASY

That doesn't mean it's easy to do. Scheduling employees and vehicles can be difficult. For example, municipalities have to make sure that they can still handle an emergency at the same time when crews may be tied up making routine transfers.

Municipalities with unionized employees may have to negotiate the added service. And, there can be resistance from for-profit and non-profit emergency-response providers, which have high profiles in their home communities and are seen as good, valued employers. In Freeport, Deputy Chief Paul Conley said the two keys are having flexible, part-time emergency-response staffers and providing excellent customer service to the hospitals, nursing homes and patients.

A departmental culture change is part of the picture, as emergency

medical technicians and paramedics who are used to the adrenaline rush of responding to accidents and fire scenes must adapt to more routine medical situations.

"Leadership within the department needs to be committed to it or the service will fail," Conley said. "A couple of failures in serving a hospital and the service would stop."

Fournier and Conley acknowledged that, while their expansion in service has brought more employees to the Freeport department, the vast majority are "per diem" staffers, who work part-time hours. While they are paid well on a per-hour basis, most do not receive health care and other benefits.

"We wouldn't be able to compete if all our employees were full-time," Fournier said.

Freeport's department routinely takes patients to hospitals in Brunswick, Portland and Lewiston. Crews have even made transports out of state, although trips like those have to be carefully scheduled so that emergency-response capability is maintained.

## MUNICIPAL COOPERATION

There can be aspects of inter-municipality collaboration to all of this. For example, the Town of Durham houses a spare rescue vehicle for Free-

## COLLABORATION CORNER

This article continues a regular feature in the *Maine Townsman*, highlighting ways that municipalities work together to become more efficient and better serve citizens.

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port, one that is available 24 hours a day. Durham emergency-response employees keep the vehicle equipped and ready to roll.

Freeport's program goes beyond providing non-emergency transfers. The department also provides billing and collection services for Yarmouth, North Yarmouth and Durham.

In this role, Chief Fournier attended the Maine Fire Chiefs' Association's annual Blaine House Conference last April – not just as a chief and MFCA member, but as a vendor. Fournier stood in the hallway outside the large meeting room at Point Lookout in Northport alongside companies that were promoting the sale of equipment and medical supplies.

Conley said Freeport's collection rate for unpaid transport bills stands at 86 percent, well above the national average of 50 to 60 percent. Patients behind on their bills are more responsive when they hear from "friendly, local staff," he said. "You're not calling an 800 number."

It probably doesn't hurt that patients and former patients realize they might bump into the employee trying to collect the unpaid money at the grocery store, or that they might need

emergency-response service in the future from the local department making the collection call.

#### THE KENNEBUNK EXPERIENCE

In Kennebunk, the town has been a little more conservative with its relatively new program, Deputy Chief Turcotte said.

Its Fire & Rescue Department provides non-emergency transfer services primarily to town residents and facilities based in Kennebunk. Knowing that eased the concern of some non-

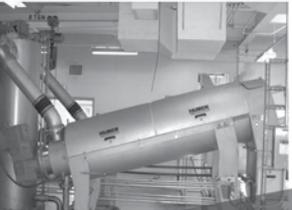
municipal providers which initially questioned the town's plan.

"We are fortunate to have four or five skilled (nursing) facilities in town," said Turcotte. "We also have a good relationship with Southern Maine Medical Center" in Biddeford.

Kennebunk responds to "2,000 to 2,500" emergency calls a year, he said. It is averaging about 500 non-emergency transfers annually right now. Kennebunk has 50 emergency-response employees and, much like Freeport, the vast majority of them work on a

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per-diem basis. The department has five full-time staffers, Turcotte said.

### PRIVATE SECTOR OPPOSITION

Not everyone supports the idea that municipalities should venture into ambulance response and non-emergency transfers, especially when cities and towns reach beyond their geographic borders.

"We don't agree with it," said Doug Remington, Senior Vice President at North East Mobile Health Services, which is based in Scarborough. "It's unfair competition."

North East provides emergency and non-emergency ambulance service over a large area, from Rockland to Biddeford. It employs 180 Mainers, two-thirds of whom work full-time, with benefits.

Remington said municipalities don't pay several taxes that his for-profit company does: property taxes; fuel taxes; and, capital-gains taxes. As a result, municipal fire and rescue departments have less overhead.

"What if a public works department went out and started bidding to do big construction projects?" Remington asked. "We think that municipality would get a lot of push-back from private contractors."

He also questioned whether municipal ambulance services really make money. In many cases, for example, municipalities don't factor in the cost of human-resources support when they do a cost-benefit analysis of whether their expanded fire and rescue departments make or lose money.

Further, if an organization like North East would be seriously hurt by municipal competition, it could be forced to lay off employees or otherwise reduce its work force. That, in turn, could mean less tax revenue for all levels of government.

Remington qualified North East's opposition, however. If a municipality has a hospital within its border, that city or town may have good reasons for providing emergency and non-emergency ambulance service, he said.

North East doesn't have a major problem with Kennebunk's new operation, said Remington. The town is home to several nursing facilities and, so far, Kennebunk is staying within its municipal boundaries.

In some cases, North East is contacted by a small municipality that asks

the company to start providing ambulance service. But if its population is too small, or if the community is located too far from the areas North East already serves, the company declines, Remington said.

In those cases, North East has no problem if a municipal fire-rescue department in an adjacent community reaches out to serve its neighbor.

### GRANDDADDY IN CARIBOU

Caribou Chief Roy Woods' municipal rescue department was born out of need.

Way back in 1985, the private ambulance provider was struggling with complaints from several towns about service, Woods said. Several communi-

ties looked to Caribou to improve the situation.

"We took over," said Woods. "After a year of skepticism, it turned out to be a big success."

Twenty-five years later, Caribou Fire & Ambulance has five emergency vehicles and two fixed-wing aircraft that it uses for both emergency and non-emergency transport. The department has 14 full-time employees and about 30 emergency-trained personnel who also work on a per-diem basis. They handle about 2,300 calls per year.

But that's not the most challenging part of providing emergency response and even non-emergency transfers in Caribou. The daunting



*Kelly Stowell, left, trains Amy O'Neil, right, billing at the Freeport Fire/Rescue Department recently. O'Neil is a Freeport Firefighter/EMT who is transitioning to the office. The Freeport Fire/Rescue Department conducts mutual billing for the towns of Durham, Yarmouth and North Yarmouth as well as Freeport. (Photo by Jeff Pouland)*

part is the vast and rural geography that the Caribou department covers.

Although Caribou has a local hospital – Cary Medical Center – the nearest tertiary hospital is Eastern Maine Medical Center in Bangor.

“Our shortest transfer is three hours by road – 45 minutes by air,” Woods said.

The logistical challenge is one reason why Woods insists on a high level of cross-training in his department. All firefighters are also trained as emergency medical technicians. The department has 13 paramedics.

And, on the six to nine flights that Caribou averages each month, the plane is staffed by both a critical-care nurse and a paramedic. The planes routinely take patients to Boston, Portland and Bangor.

The news is not all positive, however. For years, the emergency services in Caribou have been a significant revenue-maker for the city. That’s no sure thing, these days.

“More and more people are dropping their medical insurance,” Woods explained. “We have losses. Since we’re a municipality, we can’t refuse calls. We have to take them regardless.” <sup>[MI]</sup>



*Pictured is the emergency flight crew that serves the City of Caribou, which operates two fixed-wing aircraft that transport patients six to nine times per month to hospitals in Bangor, Portland and Boston.*



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# Further Consolidation of PSAPs Anticipated

By Douglas Rooks

By this time next year, municipal police departments may be dealing with another round of reductions in the emergency call answering centers known as PSAPs.

The anticipated consolidation follows a similar move by the Legislature in 2003, which took Maine from 48 to 26 PSAPs, also known as Public Safety Answering Points.

The prospect does not enthrall many municipal officials.

"I have very little confidence in the Legislature doing the right thing," said Falmouth Police Chief Ed Tolan, whose department is taking over dispatch responsibilities for Yarmouth and North Yarmouth.

Some others are more positive.

"Our hope is that this time towns will join with their partners and come up with plans that work," said Maria Jacques, director of the Emergency Services Communication Bureau (ESCB) at the Department of Public Safety. "The only way to design a good plan is for the local experts to come up with the answers."

The previous PSAP reductions were overseen by the Public Utilities Commission, with considerable involvement from the commissioners themselves. The object this time is to enlist greater municipal involvement, and generate less resistance, though exactly what will happen won't be clear until Jacques' bureau drafts a plan for the Legislature to consider in 2011.

A template for the new process is outlined in a report released in January by L.R. Kimball, a Pennsylvania-based communications consultant hired by the Legislature. The Kimball

report recommends an "optimal PSAP reconfiguration" to between 15 and 17.

The earlier round was actually supposed to end with no more than 24 PSAPs, but the PUC couldn't get agreement to go below 26.

## LEARNING CURVE

Jacques said the state learned from the earlier process, and those lessons are reflected in the Kimball report. Prominent is the recognition that simply merging PSAPs can have unintended side effects and may not produce the anticipated savings.

Reducing PSAPs without considering the underlying network of dispatch centers – many of which remained open after the earlier consolidation –

has resulted in "an emergency communication system that is more complex and fragmented than existed prior to the PSAP reduction," the Kimball report finds.

The report identifies a number of adverse impacts, including an increase in the number of transferred calls and "rate shopping" that has led some municipalities to contract with different PSAPs for police, fire and emergency calls. Other issues include cost shifting from one entity to another, and "a lack of collaboration" between state, county and local agencies.

One of Kimball's key findings is that, without doing more to align dispatch operations with the PSAPs that serve them, further consolidation



*Communications Dispatcher Doreen Lieghton answers a call at the Cumberland County Regional Communications Center in Windham. The facility, which opened in 2006, provides full-service emergency and non-emergency dispatching services for 14 municipalities and 9-1-1 communication services for several others. (Photo by Jeff Pouland)*

*Douglas Rooks is a freelance writer from West Gardiner and regular contributor to the Townsman, [drooks@tds.net](mailto:drooks@tds.net)*

of PSAPs may only further fragment emergency response, while not saving a significant amount of money.

Municipalities that have cut their emergency communications expenses have done so by consolidating their dispatch centers. That can lead to significant savings in personnel costs.

The results of the earlier PUC consolidation of PSAPs bear this out. Most of the 22 PSAPs that were closed were municipal centers, but only a handful went out of the dispatch business. Many would have preferred to have kept their PSAPs, too.

Kennebec County Manager Bob Devlin, where the county gave up both its PSAP and its dispatch operation in favor of the state's regional center in Augusta, said something had to change.

He said, "States like New Hampshire and Rhode Island have two PSAPs for the whole state," one of them a backup. "Kennebec County had five for just 117,000 people."

While Gardiner and Kennebec County ended their dispatch operations, Augusta, Waterville and Winthrop – all former PSAPs – retained theirs.

Some dispatch operations are

even smaller. On Mount Desert Island, whose four towns have a combined population of 11,000, there are three dispatch centers, in Bar Harbor, Mount Desert and Southwest Harbor.

### BY THE NUMBERS

Of the 26 current PSAPs, four are operated by the state, 13 by counties, and nine by municipalities. As of June 1, there were 31 municipal dispatch operations without PSAPs, though three of those are closing. Freeport will switch to Brunswick, Yarmouth has gone to Falmouth and Windham will use the services of Cumberland County. All are reporting substantial budget savings as a result.

Cumberland County Manager Peter Crichton, who oversees the largest regional dispatch center in the state, as measured by participating towns, cautions that it's not just about money.

"We emphasized from the beginning that we could offer a superior service. We want to show towns that we can improve emergency response through a regional center. That's the most important part of the equation from our point of view," he said.

Cumberland County, where Crichton

has been manager since 1998, commissioned a study of potential regional operations from L.R. Kimball in 2004, which found that municipalities could save up to \$2.8 million in annual operating costs through a regional dispatch center.

Although the county had always handled dispatching for some small towns, Gorham became the first major new client, in 2005. Since then, Crichton said, Gorham has saved nearly \$1

### ON THE WEB

Two helpful reports with background information about PSAPs and emergency-dispatch operations are available through the Maine Municipal Association website, in the section of the site labeled "Legislative Advocacy."

You can access the reports directly at:

<http://www.memun.org/public/MMA/svc/SFR/Publications/Kimball2010.pdf>

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million over its previous dispatch costs, or \$200,000 a year.

More towns have come aboard. Gray, which doesn't have a police department but did dispatch its emergency calls, saved \$200,000 a year by joining. Cumberland, which left Yarmouth and joined the county in 2008, estimates savings at \$80,000 annually. And Windham, the latest to join, approving the contract at its June town meeting, expects to save \$130,000.

In all, Cumberland County dispatches for 13 municipalities and handles PSAP duties for 19.

Crichton said one reason why towns have been willing to use a regional center that offers state-of-the-art equipment is that they are members, not just clients.

"We set communications up as a separate department, with its own board of directors. Each town has a seat and gets one vote. And we really listen to them," he said.

Cumberland County assesses costs on a per capita basis, rather than by call volume.

"Towns measure calls many different ways. The Kimball report rec-

ommended that we use population instead of volume, because it's more accurate and ultimately fairer," he said.

The growth of the Cumberland County center has prompted considerable rethinking of dispatch operations in the region. It has affected towns that have decided to join the county operation, as well as those that ultimately did not.

#### YARMOUTH'S DECISION

Yarmouth used to dispatch calls for Cumberland and North Yarmouth (the latter without a police department), until Cumberland decided to accept the county's offer in two years ago. That left a significant hole in the bud-

get for Yarmouth, said Town Manager Nat Tupper.

Tupper then prepared several scenarios, including one with no changes – which he recommended – and the possibility of going with the county, which the town council ultimately adopted.

But the move proved controversial, with concern among town employees and, ultimately, the voters. A group of citizens launched a referendum effort that resulted in a town meeting vote against the switch.

At the time, Yarmouth had seven full-time dispatchers. Councilors interpreted the vote to mean maintaining the operation at its existing level –

### DEFINING THE DIFFERENCE

**A Public Safety Answering Point** is an agency that receives and processes 9-1-1 calls only. As the PSAP receives each call, a basic interview is complete and the call is transferred to the appropriate dispatch site.

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(Source: Kimball Report, January 2010)

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even though Cumberland's departure meant fewer calls. For 2009, though, the town cut back to four dispatchers, with the budget decreasing from \$425,000 to about \$315,000.

This year, with budget pressures mounting, Yarmouth decided to take a look at an offer from neighboring Falmouth, which just opened a new police station and dispatch center.

Tupper said that the \$200,000 Yarmouth will pay Falmouth is thus about half what it took to run the Yarmouth dispatch center two years ago.

"They made us the same offer as the county had," he said. "And this time there was a greater comfort level."

Falmouth agreed to give the four Yarmouth dispatchers priority for hiring, and two of them went to work for Falmouth. Another is with the Buxton dispatch operation, while the fourth has not found similar work.

Crichton said Cumberland County also tries to hire displaced dispatchers, and often does. "We hired two of Gorham's dispatchers with our first contract and they're still with us."

Still, a regional center requires fewer employees than the local centers that are replaced – that's where most of the savings come from. Cumberland County now has 26 dispatchers working three round-the-clock shifts, usually with six on duty.

### IMPACT ON EMPLOYEES

Displacement of town employees was certainly a big issue in Freeport, which just concluded a long and emotional debate over dispatch, closing its center and moving to Brunswick as of July 1.

The town council discussed a possible closing last year but decided against it. This year it voted to make

## MAINE PUBLIC SAFETY ANSWERING POINTS

### (PSAPs) June 2010

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 MDPS – Houlton  
 MDPS – Orono  
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 Portland Police Dept.  
 Sagadahoc County  
 Sanford Police Dept.  
 Scarborough Police Dept.  
 Somerset County  
 Waldo County  
 Washington County  
 Westbrook Police Department  
 York Police Dept.  
**Total: 26**

### Municipal Dispatch Centers without PSAP

Augusta Police Dept.  
 Bar Harbor Police Dept.  
 Bridgton Police Dept.  
 Bucksport Police Dept.  
 Buxton Police Dept.  
 Caribou Police Dept.  
 Carrabassett Valley Police Dept.  
 Ellsworth Police Dept.  
 Falmouth Police Dept.  
 Freeport Police Dept.\*  
 Fort Fairfield Police Dept.  
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 Houlton Police Dept.  
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 South Berwick Police Dept.  
 South Portland Police Dept.  
 Southwest Harbor Police Dept.  
 Standish Dispatch  
 Waterville Police Dept.  
 Wells Police Dept.  
 Windham Police Dept. \*\*  
 Winthrop Police Dept.  
 Yarmouth Police Dept. \*\*\*

\*Transferred to Brunswick, July 1

\*\* Transferring to Cumberland County

\*\*\* Transferred to Falmouth, June 15

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the move despite a public hearing that featured pleas from residents who said they had relationships with dispatchers.

“Councilors were also hearing from more residents that they did support the change,” said Town Manager Dale Olmstead. “We’re always facing the challenge of using tax dollars efficiently while making sure that townspeople have the services they desire.”

A petition drive was launched to overturn the council decision but it fell short of the required number of signatures. The campaign even featured a legal complaint from a nationally recognized disability advocate who lives in Freeport, and said a petition requirement that the town clerk witness all signatures was discriminatory.

Olmstead said that the choice of Brunswick was comfortable for the council. “We had a relationship with Brunswick already, and they answer our calls [through a PSAP] at no charge.”

Several Freeport dispatchers had resigned in anticipation of the move. Two have now been hired by Bruns-

wick. The town estimates it will save \$100,000, about half its previous budget of \$216,000.

#### **POLICE SEE BENEFIT**

In Falmouth, Town Manager Nathan Poore has seen both sides of the debate. When Falmouth decided to build a new police station, it made sense to look for more business that might bring in revenue – which produced the offer to Yarmouth.

But Poore also researched the possibility of joining Cumberland County. The contract with Yarmouth produced a net gain of \$58,000, while the county’s offer would have saved about \$105,000. But, to work with the county would have required a capital investment of \$200,000, meaning that it would have taken four years to see a return.

Falmouth decided to keep running its own center, a decision strongly supported by Police Chief Tolan.

“We feel it’s important to have an integrated, 24/7 operation to serve the

town,” Tolan said. “It’s not just about coverage. When an officer comes in at 2 a.m. at the end of the shift, there are lights on and someone at the station. It really does make a difference for the force.”

But Tolan can see that emergency communications has changed dramatically. “The new computers can provide a lot of information, beyond just an address. They really help us do our jobs, too.”

#### **KENNEBEC COUNTY PRICES**

In Kennebec County, regional dispatch has so far not had as positive a result as in Cumberland. Gardiner closed its dispatch center first, “and they did realize some savings,” said County Manager Bob Devlin. But by the time the county made the switch, the state’s costs had ballooned – in part because of a delayed resolution of a labor dispute – and the county realized slight savings.

The higher prices eventually led to an exodus of many small towns from



*Cumberland County Regional Communications Center Director Bill Holmes, left, and Cumberland County Manager Peter Crichton, right, stand outside the facility in Windham recently. The facility provides dispatching services for the Cumberland County Sheriff’s Office and American Red Cross offices in six counties. (Photo by Jeff Pouland)*

the state's Augusta center that had originally used the county for dispatch. Somerset County, which had its own PSAP and dispatch center, said it could provide service for \$1 per capita annually, against \$2.50 for the state.

"I'm not sure that's really an accurate figure," said Devlin. "They seem to be figuring the incremental costs of adding a town, rather than the full cost for running a center, which is what the state uses."

Nevertheless, the switch of Kennebec County towns to Somerset, including some who have divided contracts for fire, police, and rescue, are part of the "rate shopping" and fragmentation of services that the Kimball report criticizes.

The state center in Augusta was criticized for its handling of certain emergency calls, including one case where a man reported wandering along a rural

road was later found dead after being hit by a vehicle. A separate state report recommended increased supervision at the center.

Most municipalities that have regionalized dispatch services say they are satisfied, and wouldn't go back to the previous arrangements. Devlin, while supporting consolidation in theory, is not sure about his county's experience.

If Kennebec County could make its decision again, "I think we'd look at it much more carefully," he said.

#### WHAT WILL 2011 BRING?

Next year's debate at the Legislature could result in further conflict between the different emergency response agencies – or it could proceed along a different path.

"We think that partners should get together now and consider whether

they would like to make new arrangements," said Maria Jacques.

"After last time, they should know that the Legislature is serious about moving ahead" toward consolidation, she said.

In Falmouth, Manager Poore said that councilors are open to further discussions. But he added: "It only makes sense if it's something that involves all our regional partners, not just one or two towns." 



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# Municipal Interest May Be Key to PACE Program

By Lee Burnett

Municipal cooperation could be a decisive factor in the success of a novel home weatherization plan, which allows repayment of state energy loans through the property-tax collection system.

The state's Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program is the most ambitious attempt yet at persuading Mainers to invest in energy conservation in their homes and businesses.

Its use of the property-tax billing process may simplify matters for homeowners – but it could complicate matters for municipal officials.

The program would provide subsidized loans for projects backed up by energy audits. Only projects documented to reduce heating and electricity bills – such as sealing cracks, adding insulation, and installing a more efficient furnace – would be eligible, and the savings generated would be sufficient to pay off the loan at no net cost.

Unlike a home equity loan, which is the sole responsibility of the borrower to repay, the PACE loan stays with the property (repayment is done through a special assessment on property tax bills) and is assumed by the new owner if the property is sold.

The Obama Administration backed PACE with \$100 million in Stimulus Act money. While 22 states have taken action on PACE programs, Maine is considered a leader because it snagged a \$30 million grant. State officials hope to combine that with \$120 million or more in traditional bank loans to finance energy improvements to tens of thousands of existing homes and businesses.

The combined sum is more than 10 times larger than last year's energy

efficiency and conservation block grant program. Weatherization appears to be a priority, although alternative energy projects would be eligible.

Whether Mainers flock to the program or stay away may be in the hands of local municipal officials. Participation in the program would require towns and cities interested in the program to adopt a special ordinance allowing a surcharge to be added to property tax bills.

**Clarification:** All the rules and regulations for the PACE program have not been adopted. Municipalities may utilize their property tax billing system to assess and collect PACE loan payments but they are not required to do so. As the article notes, municipal officials are wary of combining a PACE loan and a property tax bill. MMA's best information at this point is that PACE programs may be structured and administered without adding a surcharge to property tax bills.

## TWO WAYS TO GO

Participating municipalities have two ways of administering the program: They can do it themselves; or, they can enter into a contract with a state-level organization such as Efficiency Maine Trust to administer some or all functions of the PACE program.

The program would not add to a municipality's debt or overall tax base and would have no affect on property tax rates. Some details have not been completed, however.

"Towns and cities need to be somehow involved," said John Brautigam, outgoing director of Efficiency Maine, the predecessor agency to Efficiency Maine Trust. "Municipalities need to be involved in some way, shape or form. What that will be still needs to be

ironed out."

Efficiency Maine Trust is trying to make the program as user friendly as possible, he said. The agency is developing a model ordinance, which locals can modify or adopt as is. It is also convening a stakeholders group to troubleshoot problems before they appear.

"To maximize participation, we wanted to make it simple," Brautigam said. "The last thing we want is for municipalities to find it burdensome."

Although investing in weatherization – on paper – looks like a no brainer, it can be a difficult sell in Maine.

Reducing Maine's reliance on imported foreign oil has been an intermittent priority for more than 30 years. It recently assumed a higher profile with increased awareness of global warming and with the volatility of world oil prices, which spiked to an all-time high of \$147 a barrel in June 2008. Maine is considered especially vulnerable to oil price shocks because 85 percent of Mainers heat their homes with oil and 30 percent of Maine residents live in hard-to-heat, pre-1940s homes.

"We have the highest carbon footprint and the highest reliance on oil of any state," said Ann Goggin, a former Falmouth Town Councilor and an energy consultant.

The situation is expected to worsen, according to the Governor's Office of Energy Independence and Security. The percentage of Mainers' income that goes toward energy (which includes transportation fuels, heating and electrical usage) climbed from five percent in 1998 to 20 percent in 2008 and is expected to climb to 45 percent

## MODEL ORDINANCE

At deadline for the Townsman, a model ordinance was still being written by officials with Efficiency Maine Trust.

Lee Burnett is a freelance writer from Sanford, [leeburnett\\_maine@hotmail.com](mailto:leeburnett_maine@hotmail.com)

by 2018, according to the Office's Comprehensive Energy Plan 2008-2009.

Investing in energy conservation is touted as a sure-fire way to reduce energy use. So certain is the payback that energy-services companies working on commercial-scale projects routinely enter into performance contracts guaranteeing utility bill savings deep enough to pay off a loan at no net cost. And, those savings continue indefinitely beyond loan repayment.

Although performance contracts are not available on individual homes, small projects are as bankable as large ones. Dale McCormick, Efficiency Trust board member and director of Maine-Housing, says average savings are projected to be \$500 to \$700 a year (if oil sells for \$3 gallon) for the life of the installation.

"We say this is the gift that keeps on giving," said McCormick. "It's absolutely the No. 1 thing that people should do. If you're heartsick about the oil spill in the Gulf, then weatherize your house. It's the biggest thing you can do."

Many homeowners and businesses act as though weatherization is a low

priority. Good examples are the quotes in a recent Portland Press Herald article about Maine's new energy code, which requires builders of new homes to add more insulation and seal more cracks than is usually done.

Builder Bill Bisbara, co-owner of Bisbara Bros. in Scarborough, said he expects first-time home buyers will resent the new code's added cost (another \$1,000 or so to the current \$2,500 cost for insulation) because they expect to sell the house before they realize all the savings.

"My people would give up energy savings for a hardwood floor or a tile floor any day of the week," he told the newspaper.

### WHY A HARD SELL?

Why weatherization is such a hard sell is subject of debate. Some homeowners may be reluctant to invest because they wouldn't realize all the savings before they sell their homes.

Some may lack the up-front capital and are averse to borrowing. Some may doubt the effectiveness of weatherization. Some may be deterred by the logistics and unfamiliarity of hiring

both an energy auditor and an energy contractor. Still others may be cautious by nature.

"What I've been told time and time again is that Mainers like to see something work before they do it," said Steve Erario, a recent Colby College graduate now working as a Clean Air Cool Planet fellow for Cumberland County Council of Governments. "I just think there's not a lot of experience, especially with retrofits. People are not all too familiar with it yet."

The caution confounds many of those in the energy-conservation field, such as Tim Vrabel, strategic initiatives specialist at Efficiency Maine. Vrabel says "it's a mystery to me" why people expect quick payback from energy efficiency investments, when other large investments – such as buying a car – are made with no such calculation.

"It's just not a logical decision. I can't explain it. It's especially true in the business world. They want a payback of two years or less. Otherwise, they don't even want to talk. It's just the world we live in. It's a very odd world. And yet it's a world where gas could be at \$5 gallon next year."

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Although facilitating home weatherization is new territory for most municipalities, some cities and towns already do it. Part of President Obama's 2009 stimulus package funded the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant program, providing grants for a variety of municipal energy projects.

Some city and town officials spent their grants to retrofit their own municipal buildings, truck fleets or street lighting. Other local officials – such as in Waterville – launched initiatives that provided weatherization assistance directly to community members.

"Philosophically, we felt there was more need for this money out in the community," said Mike Roy, Waterville city manager. "The city tends to have more resources, more opportunity to finance [energy conservation and efficiency]."

## MAINE A LEADER

That Maine was chosen as a PACE pioneer may be testament to its workable population size and reputation for pragmatism, said Vrabel. Maine seems to have impressed three DOE officials, whose visit to the state coincided with a Statehouse press conference on wind energy, he said.

"They saw Democrats and Republicans, representatives, state senators and the governor working together. They were impressed with the informality of relationships, that it was non-partisan, a very collegial environment," he said.

However, the PACE program ground to a halt nationally in May due to the opposition of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, the government-chartered mortgage finance companies that buy and resell most home mortgages, according to a story in the New York Times.

It's unclear how the controversy will affect implementation in Maine, which has taken preventative steps, according to Vrabel.

At issue is what gets paid first if a borrower defaults – the mortgage or the clean-energy assessment? Property taxes have senior lien status to mortgages, but Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac notified lenders in May that PACE loans could not take priority over mortgages.

That may have less bearing in Maine because in crafting its program, Maine proposed that PACE loans be

subordinate to existing debt. Vrabel thinks the whole matter will be resolved satisfactorily because of the public outcry to Fannie Mae's and Freddie Mac's opposition.

Because federal the energy efficiency and conservation block grant program was authorized as a grant to municipalities, Maine's program will necessarily direct a flow of money to municipalities.

Municipal governments would have the authority to administer their own loan programs but Brautigam, the director of Efficiency Maine, thinks municipalities would choose to avoid the administrative burden. He said most would rather redirect the money to a single pool of money administered at the state level, which he said is more efficient anyway.

"The federal statute says this is a repayment program to municipalities," said Brautigam. "I don't think anyone's particularly thrilled with that requirement, but it's there. We just have to work with it."

Applicants could apply to a participating bank or directly to Efficiency Maine Trust. An energy audit would be a prerequisite to become eligible for a loan and would help to prioritize the projects. For the loan to be approved, the energy savings from the project would have to be sufficient to pay off the loan at no net cost, he said.

Goggin, the former Falmouth Town Councilor and a private energy consultant, has some insights about how the program would work.

"It could be as simple as receiving information from the PACE administrator, get the documentation and enter into software, collect the money and disperse it. Other than that, they

shouldn't have to do much," she said. "Properly structured, this shouldn't involve any increased risk for the community."

Munis software is capable of handling a special assessment on the property tax, she said.

Waterville City Manager Roy expressed concern about tinkering with the "sanctity of the property tax," although he considers himself to be a supporter of the PACE concept.

## 'FAR OUT IDEA'

"Sounds like a far out idea but I'd like to know exactly how they would make this special assessment on property-tax bills," he said. "The property-tax process is one that has been decided, in place, for many, many years. Toying with it is not a simple thing. That's my concern."

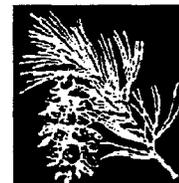
Roy wonders whether loans would be billed once a year in communities that send out tax bills just once a year. If bills are sent out more frequently than once a year, Roy said, that should be made clear to taxpayers. "It shouldn't confuse taxpayers about what [payment] is due when. This program needs to be made separate and distinct."

Roy is also concerned that the tax-foreclosure process not be used if a homeowner falls behind in payment. McCormick says she doesn't envision the tax foreclosure process ever being used. In an extreme case, a lien could be attached that would have to be paid off in the event the property changes hands.

Energy loans are subordinate to a mortgage so would be paid off only after a mortgage is paid if the house goes through foreclosure, she said. 

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# 2010 MMA Convention

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## DON'T MISS THE SPECIAL FEATURES AND EVENTS



### **Keynote – Travis Roy – Inspiration From a Maine Hero**

**Tuesday, October 12 – 9:00 a.m.-10:15 a.m.**

Our special guest and keynote speaker is Travis Roy, whose inspirational story many Mainers may know. A standout hockey player at North Yarmouth Academy, Roy attained his dream of playing Division I hockey at Boston University – only to suffer a devastating injury 11 seconds into his first game with BU. Fifteen years later, still paralyzed from the neck down, Roy runs a foundation that provides \$500,000 a year for spinal-cord injury research and to help people with medical needs. He speaks publicly 30 times each year, has written a book and offers sports commentary for ESPN.



### **How Can Small Towns Compete in a Global Economy?**

**Tuesday, October 12 – 10:30 a.m.-11:50 a.m.**

This session, coordinated with the National League of Cities, combines economic analysis, forecasting and will show leaders from small towns across Maine what they're competing against in the business world. It is possible for rural states like Maine and small communities to find lucrative niches and "be cool." That doesn't mean the competitive marketplace is an easy one to conquer. **Presenter: Dr. David Ivan, professor at Michigan State University, a national expert on rural states' economies.**



### **Running Government during Anti-Government Times**

**Wednesday, October 13 – 9:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m.**

The anger that citizens have expressed toward their federal and state government leaders splashes onto municipal leaders, too. Yet, it is widely agreed that municipalities represent the most efficient, responsible and accessible level of the inter-governmental system. Here's how to keep your chin up during a stormy political period. **Presenter: Honorable John Jenkins, former Mayor, City of Auburn**

# 2010 MMA Convention

## General Sessions & Events *(preliminary)*

**Tuesday, October 12**

**7:30 a.m. Registration Begins**

**8:00-8:50 a.m. Continental Breakfast in Exhibit Area**

**9:00-10:15 a.m. Welcome and Keynote**

### **Inspiration from a Maine hero**

Our special guest and keynote speaker is Travis Roy, whose inspirational story many Mainers may know. A standout hockey player at North Yarmouth Academy, Roy attained his dream of playing Division I hockey at Boston University – only to suffer a devastating injury 11 seconds into his first game with BU. Fifteen years later, still paralyzed from the neck down, Roy runs a foundation that provides \$500,000 a year for spinal-cord injury research and to help people with medical needs. He speaks publicly 30 times each year, has written a book and offers sports commentary for ESPN.

**10:15-10:30 a.m. Break & Time with Exhibitors**

**10:30 a.m.-11:50 a.m. SPECIAL SESSION!**

### **How Can Small Towns Compete in a Global Economy?**

Money & Finances: This session, coordinated with the National League of Cities, combines economic analysis, forecasting and will show leaders from small towns across Maine what they're competing against in the business world. It is possible for rural states like Maine and small communities to find lucrative niches and "be cool." That doesn't mean the competitive marketplace is an easy one to conquer.

*Presenter:* Dr. David Ivan, professor at Michigan State University, expert on rural states' economies.

**10:30 a.m.-11:50 a.m. CONCURRENT SESSIONS**

### **Managing Humans in a High-Tech World**

What do you do when your new employee spends too much of his workday texting friends from his desk? Or, when an employee updates her Facebook page on municipal time? Then, there's the manager who updates Facebook from home, but sometimes makes critical remarks about the workplace. This workshop examines the potential problems and how to address them, without going too far.

*Presenters:* Attorneys Linda McGill and Amanda Meader, Bernstein Shur.

### **Meet With the Managers**

This session is designed as a general discussion among town and city managers and officials from other areas of municipal government, including fire and police departments. Are there ways to

improve communication, coordination and efficiency as all municipal departments struggle with tight resources?

*Moderator:* Thomas Goulette, manager, Town of Guilford

### **Nailing the Statewide Building Code**

Thanks to a new law passed during the last two legislative sessions, Maine is on its way to developing and adopting a statewide building code. While the consistency a statewide code could bring is generally supported, the questions about details and what municipalities must do under the law need attention.

*Presenters:* Jeff Austin, Legislative Advocate, State and Federal Relations, MMA; Dick Dolby, Director, Bureau of Building Codes and Standards.

**11:50 a.m.-Noon Break & Time with Exhibitors**

**Noon-1:30 a.m. LUNCHEON CELEBRATION**

Awards and Incoming MMA President

**1:30 p.m.-1:45 p.m. Break & Time with Exhibitors**

**1:45 p.m.-2:45 p.m. CONCURRENT SESSIONS**

### **Guarding the Public Purse**

Money & Finances: How can selectmen, councilors and managers keep their eyes both on their overall municipal budgets during difficult economic times – and on employees who handle the money? MMA members have been asking for hands-on advice on both fronts. This workshop is a direct response to those requests.

*Presenter:* Ron Smith, RHR Smith

### **Wrongful Termination & Harassment**

Tight and even declining municipal budgets force managers and elected officials to make decisions about laying off employees, reducing benefits and spreading more work around. Yet, these matters have to be handled properly and even delicately. Our experts offer advice.

*Presenters:* Attorneys Edward Benjamin Jr. and Mark Franco, Thompson & Bowie, Portland

### **How to Handle Foreclosures & Vacant Buildings**

It's far from breaking news to learn that more commercial and residential buildings are going through the foreclosure process than in previous years. What might surprise you is just how many municipal departments need to be involved when this happens, including the Tax Collector and Treasurer; Tax Assessor; Code Enforcement; Public Works; even the Fire Department. Here's how municipalities can do it.

*Presenters:* Roby Fecteau, Code Enforcement, Biddeford; Joe Warren, Fire Chief, Biddeford; and, Roger Beaupre, Police Chief, Biddeford

## 2:45 p.m.-3:15 p.m. TOUR OF MMA

Stroll over to the MMA building for a guided tour, including a look at our new conference center.

## 2:45 p.m.-3:15 p.m. Break & Time with Exhibitors

## 2:45 p.m.-3:15 p.m. MMA Business Meeting

## 3:15 p.m.-4:15 p.m. CONCURRENT ROUND TABLES

### Collaboration & Cooperation

Money & Finances: It may be undersold and underappreciated, but municipalities have worked together cooperatively for generations. Still, it's a safe bet that many towns and cities are looking to save money by streamlining and sharing services. This panel starts the roundtable discussion with a few examples and then opens up the topic to other attendees.

*Presenters:* John Sylvester, Selectman, Town of Alfred, MMA President; Chief Darrel Fournier, Town of Freeport Fire and Rescue.

### Understanding Health-Care Reform

President Barack Obama calls it the milestone of his first term. There is no doubt that passage of federal health-care reforms was a significant act – but now what? How are municipalities affected as employers? What will change and how much do we know at this point about the impact of the new law?

*Presenters:* Steve Gove, Director of Health Trust Services, MMA; David Barrett, Director of Personnel Services & Labor Relations, MMA; Anne Wright, Manager of Employee Benefits, Employee Benefit Solutions, Portland.

### Crisis Communication: When News Breaks

It may be triggered by a flood, big fire, major crime or even a

protest at the municipal office. Every once in a while, municipal leaders deal with the TV crews, print reporters and website bloggers who roll into town chasing a major story. This roundtable discussion offers tips on what to expect and how to respond.

*Presenters:* Eric Conrad, Director of Communication & Educational Services, MMA; Robert Caswell, Director of Public Affairs, University of Southern Maine; Steve McCausland, Maine State Police.

### Highway Simplification Study

The Maine Department of Transportation earlier this year floated a proposal to pay municipalities an amount of money and transfer responsibility of maintaining and clearing so-called “collector roads” to municipalities. A good number of questions followed the proposal. Here's an update.

*Presenters:* Kate Dufour, Legislative Advocate, State & Federal Relations, MMA; Peter Coughlan, Director, Maine Local Roads Center; Clint Deschene, Manager, Town of Hermon.

### 3:30 p.m.-5 p.m. Right to Know

This session will review the rights and duties of public officials under Maine's Freedom of Access Act (FOAA), commonly known as the “Right to Know” law. It is designed to satisfy the Right-to-Know training requirement imposed by State law on certain elected officials, including selectmen, councilors and elected clerks, treasurers, assessors and budget committee members.

*Presenters:* William Livengood, Director, MMA Legal Services; Richard Flewelling, Assistant Director, MMA Legal Services

## 4:15 p.m.-6 p.m. Welcoming Reception in Exhibit Area

## 6 p.m. Networking Dinner on Your Own

*(Information Available at Registration Desk)*

# Wednesday, October 13

## 7:30 a.m. Registration Begins

## 7:30 a.m.-9 a.m. Hot Breakfast Buffet in the Exhibit Area

## 9 a.m.-10 a.m. SPECIAL SESSION!

### Downtown Revitalization

This workshop, organized in conjunction with the National League of Cities and its America Downtown program, offers national, Maine and local context on the challenges and opportunities that Maine communities face in developing their downtown areas.

*Presenters:* Doyle Hyett, consultant to the NLC's America Downtown program; Shannon Haines, Executive Director, Waterville Main Street.

Special Note: Mr. Hyett is available for one-on-one consultations following this workshop.

## 9 a.m.-10 a.m. CONCURRENT SESSIONS

### Community Development

Money & Finances: A planning and training session on the value

and funding of local community and economic development programs from the local, regional and private-sector perspectives.

*Presenters:* Rodney Lynch, Darryl Sterling, Gail Chase, Ron Harriman, Maine Community Development Association.

### Municipal Management in the 21st Century

Increasing productivity from the municipal work force is more important than ever. Here are some practical and legal tips on doing so, keeping in mind that while customer service is the No. 1 priority, employee rights must be considered.

*Presenters:* Attorney Pat Dunn of Jensen Baird, Portland; Glenn Aho, Manager, City of Auburn.

### Running Government during Anti-Government Times

The anger that citizens have expressed toward their federal and state government leaders splashes onto municipal leaders, too. Yet, it is widely agreed that municipalities represent the most efficient, responsible and accessible level of the inter-governmental system. Here's how to keep your chin up during a stormy political period.

*Presenter:* Honorable John Jenkins, former Mayor, City of Auburn

## 10 a.m.-10:30 a.m. Break & Time with Exhibitors

### 10:30 a.m.-Noon: HEAR FROM OUR NEXT GOVERNOR

#### Forum with the Leading Candidates

One thing's for sure about 2011: Maine will have its first "new" governor in eight years. Come and gain new insight as this session – part debate, part Q&A session – focuses on municipal issues and asks the top candidates for the Blaine House how they would address our critical needs.

*Host and Moderator:* Tory Ryden, former Anchor, WMTW-TV Channel 8

### Noon-1 p.m. PORTABLE LUNCH IN EXHIBIT AREA

#### 1 p.m.-3:30 p.m. LEGISLATIVE POLICY COMMITTEE AT MMA

Members of the MMA's Legislative Policy Committee meet to discuss upcoming Legislative issues at the 2011 session. Attendance by non-committee members is permitted. Participation is limited to LPC members and MMA staff.

### 1 p.m.-2 p.m. CONCURRENT SESSIONS

#### Credit Card Use and Risks

Money & Finance: This session will present the changing legal, technological and practical issues associated with local governments and entities accepting payment by credit card. Doing so is in popular demand, but there are some steps to consider before jumping in.

#### Preparing for the Worst

The session looks at how Maine has prepared for previous disasters and outbreaks, from H1N1 to floods and ice storms. How well-equipped are Maine municipalities to deal with the unexpected? Experts provide analysis and tips, including how elected officials can show leadership during trying times.

*Presenters:* Robert McAleer, Director, Maine Emergency Management Agency; Dr. Steven Diaz, Vice President of Medical Administration, MaineGeneral Health; Robert Gardner, Planning & Research Associate, Maine Emergency Management Agency.

#### Budgeting and Social Service Agencies

It comes up pretty routinely during budget workshops or at Town Meeting: Why is the homeless shelter getting \$10,000? Why is the animal shelter receiving \$5,000? Here is a guide to help municipalities rank social-service requests and prepare for inevitable questions about spending priorities and decisions.

#### Succession Planning

This session will cover aspects of successfully implementing a strategy for a succession plan with tips on educating and avoiding pitfalls. Succession planning is a tool that can be used at multiple levels within an organization. If done right, it reduces costs, boosts morale and helps preserve historical knowledge.

*Presenters:* Donald H Jutton, Founder and President of Municipal Resources Inc., Meredith, N.H.; Rick Dacri, Dacri Associates, Kennebunkport; Michael Pardue, Founder and President of Central Intelligence, Kennebunk.

## 2 p.m.-2:15 p.m. Break & Time with Exhibitors

### 2:15 p.m.-3:30 p.m. CONCURRENT SESSIONS

#### Online Accounts: Is Your Money Safe?

Money & Finance: More municipal money than ever before is being deposited and withdrawn electronically, with the strokes of a few keys and the click of a mouse. Here are a few hands-on ways to ease your comfort around online banking and accounting, with special tips for elected officials.

*Presenters:* Robert N. Brown, Jr., CPA, CFE, The CPA Solution; Jennifer Seekins, Vice President for Treasury and Payment Services, Bangor Savings Bank.

#### Flooding: Lessons Learned

In 2006 and 2007, the Kennebunk Sewer District experienced record-breaking floods that impacted the operation of its wastewater treatment plant. The 2007 flood caused \$1.3 million in damage and nine million gallons of sewage discharge. This workshop reviews the events, flood-protection alternatives, development of design berm parameters, permitting requirements and construction of a berm.

*Presenters:* Denise L. Cameron, PE, Project Engineer for Woodard and Curran in Portland; David W. Hughes, PE, Senior Project Manager/Vice President, Woodard & Curran.

#### Good Ethics, Good Government

Practice what you preach. All elected and appointed leaders know that ethical, professional behavior starts at the top and that all eyes are on them. This program instructs attendees about how to create and maintain an ethical workplace and a culture of professionalism.

#### Centralized Voter Registration Software

The state's top expert on Centralized Voter Registration Software that plays such an important role at election time is on hand to answer questions about how municipal clerks can get the most out of the new program.

*Presenter:* Sue Look, CVR Manager, Maine Secretary of State

### 3:30 p.m. Time with Exhibitors

### 4 p.m.-5 p.m. Dessert Social and Door Prize Giveaways (Exhibit Area)

## Nearby Hotels

Be sure to reserve early and ask for the "government rate".

Hotel	Location	Phone
Holiday Inn	Community Drive	622-4751
Comfort Inn	Civic Center Drive	623-1000
Fairfield Inn & Suites	Anthony Avenue	623-2200
EconoLodge	Western Avenue	622-6371
The Senator	Western Avenue	622-5804
Quality Inn & Suites	Whitten Road	622-3776

The Holiday Inn, Comfort Inn and Fairfield Inn are off the Civic Center exit of I-95. The remaining hotels are accessed from Exit 109, which is just one exit south from the Augusta Civic Center. Room availability may be limited.

## Affiliate Group Programs

### Maine Association of Assessing Officers:

#### TUESDAY, 10/12

- 9:15-10:15 Inspiration from a Maine Hero-  
Keynote Speaker, Travis Roy
- 10:30-12:00 Business Meeting
- 12:00-1:45 Awards Luncheon
- 1:45-2:45 Electronic Communications & More
- 3:00-4:30 Electronic Communications & More, cont.

#### WEDNESDAY, 10/13

- 10:30-11:45 Forum for the Leading Candidates

### Maine Chapter of American Public Works Association:

#### TUESDAY, 10/12 (*Other interests for Public Works*)

- 9:15-10:15 Inspiration from a Maine Hero-  
Keynote Speaker, Travis Roy
- 12:00-1:45 Awards Luncheon
- 3:00-4:00 Roundtable: Highway Simplification Study  
Roundtable: Collaboration & Cooperation

#### WEDNESDAY, 10/13 (*Sponsored Program*)

- 8:30-9:00 MCAPWA Board Meeting
- 9:30-10:00 RSMA-2010
- 10:15-10:45 LD 1725 Status
- 10:45-11:15 Snow Melting Technology
- 11:11-11:45 Dust & Erosion Control by Sweeping
- 12:00 Luncheon-Augusta Elks

### Maine Community Development Association:

#### TUESDAY, 10/12

- 9:15-10:15 Inspiration from a Maine Hero-  
Keynote Speaker, Travis Roy
- 12:00-1:45 Awards Luncheon
- 3:00-4:00 Roundtable: Highway Simplification Study  
Roundtable: Collaboration & Cooperation

#### WEDNESDAY, 10/13

- 9:00-10:00 Professional Dev. Training on Funding
- 10:30-11:45 Forum for the Leading Candidates

### Maine Fire Chiefs' Association:

#### TUESDAY, 10/12

- 9:15-10:15 Inspiration From a Maine Hero-  
Keynote Speaker, Travis Roy
- 10:30-12:00 Meet With the Managers
- 12:00-1:45 Awards Luncheon
- 3:00-4:00 Roundtable: Collaboration & Cooperation

#### WEDNESDAY, 10/13

- 10:30-11:45 Forum for the Leading Candidates
- 1:00-2:00 Preparing for the Worst: MEMA/FEMA

### Maine Municipal Tax Collectors' & Treasurers' Association:

#### TUESDAY, 10/12

- 9:15-10:15 Inspiration from a Maine Hero-  
Keynote Speaker, Travis Roy
- 10:30-12:00 Managing Humans in a High-Tech World
- 12:00-1:45 Awards Luncheon
- 1:45-2:45 Foreclosures & Vacant Buildings-A Case Study
- 3:00-4:00 Roundtable: Collaboration & Cooperation

#### WEDNESDAY, 10/13

- 9:00-10:00 Running Government During Anti-Government  
Times
- 10:15-11:15 MMTCTA Executive Board Meeting
- 1:00-2:00 Money & Finances: Credit Card Use and Risk
- 2:30-3:30 Money & Finances: Online Accounts-  
Is Your Money Safe?

### Maine Town & City Clerks Association:

#### TUESDAY, 10/12

- 9:15-10:15 Inspiration from a Maine Hero-  
Keynote Speaker, Travis Roy
- 11:00-12:00 State Agencies Update
- 12:00-1:45 Awards Luncheon
- 2:00-4:00 State Agencies Update, cont.

### Maine Town & City Management Association:

#### TUESDAY, 10/12

- 9:15-10:15 Inspiration from a Maine Hero-  
Keynote Speaker, Travis Roy
- 10:30-12:00 Meet With the Managers
- 12:00-1:45 Awards Luncheon
- 1:45-2:45 Wrongful Termination & Harassment
- 3:00-4:00 Roundtable: Collaboration & Cooperation
- Roundtable: Crisis Communication: When News Breaks
- Roundtable: Understanding Healthcare Reform

#### WEDNESDAY, 10/13:

- 9:00-10:00 Running Government During Anti-  
Government Times
- 9:00-10:00 Municipal Management in the 21st Century
- 10:30-11:45 Forum for the Leading Candidates
- 1:00-2:00 Succession Planning
- 2:30-3:30 Good Ethics, Good Government

### Maine Welfare Directors' Association:

#### TUESDAY, 10/12

- 9:15-10:15 Inspiration from a Maine Hero-  
Keynote Speaker, Travis Roy
- 12:00-1:45 Awards Luncheon

#### WEDNESDAY, 10/13

- 1:00-2:00 Social Services Agencies & Budgeting

# Registration Form

## MMA Convention – Augusta Civic Center – October 12 & 13, 2010

### One registrant per form (please photocopy for additional registrations)

Name of Municipality/Company/Agency:		First Time Attendee? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Mailing Address:		
Attendee Name:	Title:	
E-mail Address of Registrant:		
Telephone:	Fax:	
Name of Guest: <i>(Registration complimentary)</i>		

<b>TUESDAY SPECIAL PROGRAMMING (Oct. 12)</b> MMA Building Tour (2:45-3:15) <input type="checkbox"/> I WILL TAKE THE TOUR	<b>TUESDAY SPECIAL PROGRAMMING (Oct. 12)</b> Right-To-Know (3:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.) MMA Conference Room <input type="checkbox"/> I WILL ATTEND
--	---

CONVENTION REGISTRATION FEES (For one or both days)		COST
<input type="checkbox"/> MMA Members		\$ 60.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Non-member municipality/Gov't/or Non-profit	Pre-Registration - <i>must be postmarked or received by 10-01-2010</i>	\$ 75.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Non-member municipality/Gov't/or Non-profit	Registration - <i>after 10-01-2010</i>	\$ 100.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Business Representative	Pre-Registration - <i>must be postmarked or received by 10-01-2010</i>	\$ 100.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Business Representative	Registration - <i>after 10-01-2010</i>	\$ 125.00
<b>Registration Fee</b>		<b>\$</b>

TUESDAY LUNCHEON	Location	Cost
Awards Luncheon	Civic Center	<input type="checkbox"/> Registrant \$ 15.00
		<input type="checkbox"/> Guest \$ 15.00
<b>Tuesday Meal</b>		<b>\$</b>

WEDNESDAY LUNCHEONS	Location	Cost
Portable Lunch	Civic Center	<input type="checkbox"/> Registrant \$ 12.00
		<input type="checkbox"/> Guest \$ 12.00
Maine Chapter of American Public Works Association (MCAPWA)	Augusta Elks Lodge	<input type="checkbox"/> Registrant \$ 17.00
		<input type="checkbox"/> Guest \$ 17.00
<b>Wednesday Meal</b>		<b>\$</b>

<b>TOTAL (Registration Fee &amp; Meals)</b>	<b>\$</b>
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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Payment Options:**  Send invoice\*  Check will be mailed\*\*  Payment Enclosed\*\* PO #: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (\*You will be invoiced after Convention – \*\*Please send a copy of this registration form with payment)

**Fax registration form to:** (207) 626-5947 **Mail form to:** Convention Registration, Maine Municipal Association, 60 Community Drive, Augusta, ME 04330

**Please make check payable to Maine Municipal Association**

**Questions/Cancellations:** Please call Louise Ridley at MMA, 1-800-452-8786. Notification must be given three business days in advance to obtain a refund. All cancellations are subject to a \$10 processing fee. Registrations may be transferred to another official or employee. Please inform us of any special dietary needs or special requirements you may have due to a disability.

**Please keep a copy of this form for your records.**

# Annual Search Nominees for the Maine Municipal Association's Most Prestigious Award

Deadline for Receipt of Nominees – 4:30 p.m. on Friday, September 3, 2010.

AWARD WILL BE PRESENTED AT THE MMA AWARDS LUNCHEON ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2010

## Ethel N. Kelley MEMORIAL AWARD

If you know a municipal elected or appointed official, employee or volunteer who . . .

- ◆ *Is dedicated to the cause of good local government;*
- ◆ *Has conscientiously served local government and made this a lifetime achievement for 20 years or more;*
- ◆ *Has demonstrated the capability and willingness to “Hold the Community Together”;*
- ◆ *Has a selfless concern for others in their community;*
- ◆ *Has not received full recognition for their service in local government; and*
- ◆ *Is currently serving or has retired in the past two years*

**MMA wants to know about them! Please take this opportunity to nominate this individual and give MMA the opportunity to recognize their achievement and dedication.**

**THE NOMINATION PROCESS:** Please complete the Nomination Form and return it to MMA with up to five supporting letters. *The supporting letters are a critical part of the process.* Care should be taken to describe in detail why your Nominee should receive this award and to assure that they highlight the criteria referenced above. Please give examples of your Nominee's efforts. Nomination Forms can be downloaded from the MMA website at: [www.memun.org](http://www.memun.org)  
*Start thinking about your Nominee now!*

**THE JUDGING:** The panel of judges will consist of three MMA Past Presidents who will meet in mid to late September to make their selection. The award will be presented during the Awards Luncheon being held in conjunction with the MMA Annual Convention.

Auburn City Manager **Glenn Aho** won a contract extension through 2013 during a council meeting in early July. Aho, former Lincoln manager, received a 2.9 percent pay.

**Rob Bickford Jr.** has been named Wiscasset fire chief, replacing retiring chief **Tim Merry**. Bickford, a 22-year member of the volunteer department, was elected chief by his peers on June 2 and appointed by selectmen on June 15.

**Michael Bobinsky**, director of public services for the City of Portland, has been appointed chairman of the American Public Works Association Audit Committee.

**Michelle Dumoulin** has been hired as Sangerville's first town manager, effective on June 21. Dumoulin is a former Corinna town clerk.

**Paul Emery**, a Westbrook city councilor, suffered a heart attack on June 9 and credits city rescue workers for perhaps saving his life after he tried to convince them he didn't need help. Emery, 68, collapsed while standing in line at a sandwich shop. Westbrook paramedics and EMTs, who also are trained firefighters, quickly responded to the call.

York Selectman **Michael Estes** has won the Republican nomination to represent District 1 in the Maine Senate. Estes, who has not served on the state level before, will run against Rep. Dawn Hill, a York Democrat. Estes defeated an incumbent in the primary to win the nomination by three votes, 1,548 to 1,545, according to a recount by the Secretary of State.

Machias incumbent Selectman **Warren Gay** collected 187 votes in June voting and defeated two challengers for another term on the board.

Clinton selectmen have named **Craig Johnson** as acting police chief following the retirement in June of Chief **Charles Runnels**. Johnson was the town's only full-time officer when Runnels was hired as chief in November 2007, so Johnson had essentially been running the department until a chief was named. Johnson has 22

years of experience in police work and served with the Army National Guard for more than two decades before retiring as a master sergeant.

Mount Desert selectmen have named **Durlin Lunt** as the town's new manager, moving him up to permanent status after he took on the job of acting manager following the resignation of Michael MacDonald in the spring. Lunt's first contract is for one year.

Readfield selectmen on July 1 appointed **Lee Mank** as the town's new fire chief. Mank then named **Michael Nolette** as deputy chief and **Stephen Baxter** as assistant chief. Selectman **Amanda Mank** abstained from voting on her husband's appointment.

Northport selectmen have promoted **Barbara O'Leary** to administrator, effective July 1. O'Leary will remain the town clerk and treasurer for the time being.

**Gerry Pineau** has been named the new Livermore Falls fire chief. He started his new job in June and has developed a plan to restructure the department.

New Gloucester selectmen welcomed back assessor's agent **Nancy Pionette** in early July following a medical leave of absence.

**Larry Post**, a veteran Maine mu-

nicipal manager, has been hired as administrator for Somerset County. Post most recently worked as manager of the town of Hartland and planned to resign effective July 16.

Chebeague Island Town Administrator **Scott Seaver** will resign on Oct. 15, he told selectmen in early July. Seaver previously served as North Yarmouth town administrator for 26 years before taking the island job in April 2008.

Rockland officials have named a road in honor of the city's longest-serving public official, Capt. **Richard Spear** of the Rockland Port District. Spear has served for 57 years on the Port District, whose members are elected by the public. Spear also has served for decades as an appointed member of the city's Harbor Management Commission.

**Brain Stockdale**, a Brunswick firefighter, has been named Topsham fire chief, succeeding **Ken Brilliant**, who recently left Topsham to take the top fire job in Brunswick. Stockdale, who was among 28 applicants, is studying for his master's degree in organizational leadership. He was set to take over the Topsham department in early June.

**Deborah Theriault** has been named Danforth town manager. Theriault worked as manager on an interim basis from May 5 until early July. 

**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](mailto:econrad@memun.org) or [jclark@memun.org](mailto:jclark@memun.org))



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<p>P.O. Box 679 290 Main Street Winterport, Maine 04496</p> 	<p>Telephone: (207) 223-2232 Fax: (207) 223-5448</p> 

**Auburn:** A privately owned recycling plant is saving 60,000 gallons of water a day by changing the nozzles on 36 old water fixtures on just one machine, officials said in July. The change will save the company almost \$100,000 in city fees a year. The savings come from using and heating less water and from a drop in the amount of effluent that drains into the city's sewers.

**Bangor:** The Maine Land Use Commission voted in early July to deny a request from the Texas-based Trans-Canada Corp. to expand its wind farm atop Kibby Mountain near the Canadian border in western Maine. The company had hoped to add about 630 acres and 14 turbines at the Franklin County mountain area, but LURC members, in a straw vote, decided the expansion could impact wildlife habitat and the scenery in the area. The company already has approval to erect 44 turbines on Kibby.

**Biddeford:** The town council reached accord with the clerical union, the last of five municipal union groups to ink new contracts. The clerical group, as with other unionized employee groups, will not get a pay raise for the fiscal year 2009-10, but will receive 1 percent to 3 percent raises in both of the final two years of the agreement, based on the inflation rate.

**Brunswick:** Federal transportation officials approved the extension of passenger train service to coastal Maine, giving Amtrak the green light in July to rehabilitate 26 miles of rail lines and extend service from Portland to Brunswick, including a daily stop in Freeport. The project, which will be funded primarily through a \$35 million federal stimulus grant, will take more than two years to complete.

**Carthage:** Special Town Meeting voters in June rejected a proposed moratorium on commercial wind farm development by a vote of 48-42. The vote was prompted by citizen petition to slow plans for an industrial wind farm along the ridge of Saddleback Mountain in western Maine. Officials said the developer, Patriot Renewables LLC of Quincy, Mass., owner of a wind

farm in Freedom, still has numerous regulatory rules to clear before it can move ahead with its new proposal.

**Limestone:** The U.S. Senate has passed a new defense budget that includes \$1.5 million for a project at the former Loring Air Force Base to design a heavy-lift transport vehicle for the Navy.

**Mexico:** A mild winter, increased excise-tax revenue and more money than expected from the Federal Emergency Management Agency combined to help the town end the fiscal year in the black on June 30. The good news means an expected increase in the property tax rate will be less than one mill, according to Town Manager John Madigan.

**Newport:** Only one of four banks responded to the town's request for \$175,000 to finance a new sand and salt shed. Town Manager James Ricker said the lone bid was unprecedented for securing a municipal bond. While some selectmen wanted to seek bids outside of town, Ricker recommended against the move since the Merrill Bank bid had been made public. Ricker said he

would seek bids from a broader area the next time the town needs financing.

**Saco:** The town's police chief is developing a plan to create a second deputy chief position as he restructures the department into two bureaus; one for patrol and dispatch and the other for recordkeeping, training, facilities and accreditation. The department includes 47 officers and other staff members.

**St. George:** More than 200 residents have appealed the new values of their property following the first outside revaluation in 15 years. The value of the average property increased 75 percent to 85 percent. Prior to the revaluation, property was assessed at 63 percent of fair market value, officials said. [\[M\]](#)

### CORRECTION:

A News item from May about Litchfield should have said voters defeated spending \$185,000 for the town's first revaluation since 1994.

## NEW ON THE WEB

Here are some highlights of what's been added at [www.memun.org](http://www.memun.org) since the last edition of the *Maine Townsman*.

- **Economic Development.** The National League of Cities and Northeastern University are offering to help municipalities with economic development, for a \$5,000 participation fee. The program offers help on encouraging private investment and diversifying the tax base, among other things.
- **Disaster Recovery.** The Federal Emergency Management Agency has released details about aid to eligible Maine municipalities for disaster aid from recent flooding in Maine. The information includes a description of the aid that is available and instructions on how to apply.
- **Salary Surveys.** Salary surveys should have arrived in your municipal offices by now. The annual surveys, once compiled by the Maine Municipal Association, provide helpful benchmarks and perspective as municipal leaders across the state make decisions about staffing, payroll and budgets. The forms are available electronically as well. Please email the MMA at [ResourceCenter@memun.org](mailto:ResourceCenter@memun.org) with the completed electronic forms or for more information.
- **Citizen Education.** Posters, handouts and a newly narrated presentation of how property taxes work are now available from the MMA in a branded "toolkit" that leaders can use to answer common questions about municipal government.



# Municipal Bulletin Board

## BILLING & NETWORKING

The Maine Fire Chiefs' Association will hold a session on MaineCare billing on Thursday, July 22 at the Snow Bowl in Camden. The session runs from 9 a.m. to noon, and is followed by a lobster (or steak) bake.

The session is designed to help EMS Billing Clerks primarily, but also serves as a morning of networking and sharing ideas and information.

The cost for MFCA members and non-members, who register after July 16, is \$45 per person, and that includes the lobster bake. To register, please go to the Maine Municipal Association website, [www.memun.org](http://www.memun.org). Please indicate "lobster" or "steak" when registering online.

## MTCMA MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE

The 65th Annual Institute will feature keynote speaker Leonard A. Matarese, a veteran with over 39 years of management and public-safety experience, who also leads the ICMA Public Safety Services Team.

Matarese's presentation is entitled, "Asking Your Police Chief and Fire Chief the Right Questions to Get the Right Answers." He will address police deployment, staffing and scheduling. He also will talk about fire-rescue response times, workload, scheduling and insurance issues.

The Institute will be held from Aug. 18-20 at Point Lookout in Northport. Among the other topics to be addressed: Regionalization/Consolidation Successes, Failures and Legal Implications; Uncomplicating Management; and, a final-day leadership session that can develop one's "Synergy Profile."

The Maine Town & City Management Association-sponsored event begins with registration at 8 a.m. on Aug. 18 and ends at 11:45 a.m. on Aug. 20. Rates vary based on food and accommodation selections. For the complete Institute brochure, look at the Training and Workshops section of the MMA website, [www.memun.org](http://www.memun.org)

## VITAL STATISTICS: HOULTON

The Maine Town & City Clerks As-

sociation also will sponsor a workshop on Vital Statistics at Shiretown Inn and Suites in Houlton, on Aug. 23. Registration for the workshop begins at 8:30 a.m. The workshop ends at 4 p.m.

Kathy Montejo, city clerk in Lewiston, and Patti Dubois, city clerk in Bangor, will co-present. Vital Statistics is a one-day overview of the law, rules and regulations concerning important documents such as birth certificates, marriage licenses and death certificates. The workshop is among four courses needed for MTCCA certification.

Among the topics to be covered are: a history of vital statistics in Maine; duties of the Municipal Clerk; the integrity of vital records; and, amending vital records. The cost is \$50 for MTCCA members and \$60 for non-members, which includes coffee, lunch and workshop materials.

Participants need to bring their Vital Records Manuals with them. If you need a manual, please call Office Services staff at 287-2558. If you have questions about the workshop or want to register by phone, please call the MMA Educational Services office at: 1-800-452-8786.

## NEW CLERKS WORKSHOP

A workshop designed to familiarize newly elected and appointed municipal clerks with the position will be held at the MMA headquarters, 60 Community Dr. in Augusta, on August 24. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. Sponsored by the Maine Town & City Clerks' Association, the course will conclude at 4 p.m.

The workshop will cover many top-

ics, including: forms, procedures and duties; where to obtain clerk-specific information; dog licenses; marriage licenses; birth and death certificates; council/selectmen obligations and duties; and, elections. A question-and-answer period will follow the session.

The cost is \$50 for MT CA members and \$60 for non-members. This program may be used as an optional course for MTCCA certification. Participants must attend the entire day to receive a certificate. Registration can be done online at: [www.memun.org](http://www.memun.org).

## CLERKS NETWORKING DAY

The Maine Town & City Clerks Association will hold its Networking Day & Annual Business Meeting from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sept. 9 at the Waterville Elks Banquet & Conference Center.

Instructors include: Jeri Holt, of the Maine Municipal Association; Kim McLaughlin, of Old Orchard Beach; Wendy Rawski, of Eliot; Patti Dubois, city clerk in Bangor; and, Beverly Curry, town clerk in Freeport.

Among the topics to be covered: reviewing the MMA website; an overview of the municipal clerks associations, including how to increase participation; records-disaster recovery; and, overseas elections. The Bangor Daily News also will be acknowledged.

The cost is \$50 for members and \$60 for non-members, which includes lunch and workshop materials. To register or see the Day's brochure, visit the MMA website at [www.memun.org](http://www.memun.org). 



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### INTEREST ON ABATED TAXES

**Question:** Are municipalities obliged to pay interest on taxes paid but later abated?

**Answer:** Yes, State law requires it. The only elective is the rate of interest payable.

According to 36 M.R.S.A. § 506-A, a taxpayer who pays more than the amount finally assessed must be repaid the overpayment plus interest from the date of overpayment at a rate established by the municipal legislative body. The vast majority of “overpayments” are the result of tax abatements granted after taxes originally assessed have been paid.

The rate of interest may not exceed the interest rate established by the municipality for delinquent taxes, nor may it be less than that rate reduced by 4%. If a municipality fails to set a rate of interest for overpayment of taxes, the “default” rate is the interest rate it has established for delinquent taxes.

Where taxes assessed for one year are abated in another year, there is a question under the statute about which year’s interest rate for overpayments applies. MMA Legal Services and numerous other attorneys believe it is the rate established for the year the tax was assessed, not the rate for the year the tax was abated.

Incidentally, interest on overpayments is *not* required if a municipality has authorized its tax collector and treasurer to accept “prepayment” of taxes before they have been committed (see 36 M.R.S.A. § 506). A municipality may, but is not required to, pay interest on tax prepayments even if the amount finally assessed exceeds the prepaid estimate.

Also, note that “overlay” (the extra tax revenue resulting from rounding off assessments) is often used to fund tax abatements and interest on overpayments, though it is not automatically authorized for this (or any other) purpose. Overlay, like any other revenue, must be appropriated before it may be spent. For more information, see “Property Tax ‘Overlay,’” *Maine Townsman*, “Legal Notes,” May 2007. (By R.P.F.)

### RENTAL HOUSING & BASIC NECESSITIES – A NEW LAW

Last year we told readers about a new law giving municipalities the option of helping with heating fuel emergencies in rental housing where a landlord has neglected to provide an adequate fuel supply (see “Rental Housing & Heating Emergencies – A New Law,” *Maine Townsman*, “Legal Notes,” October, 2009).

That law has now been expanded to include any basic necessity. “Basic necessities” means services, including but not limited to property maintenance or repairs and provision of heat or utilities, which a landlord is otherwise

responsible for under a lease or rental agreement or applicable law.

The revised law (PL 2009, c. 566, eff. July 12, 2010) operates similarly to the original law. If there is an imminent threat to the continued habitability of the premises, the municipal officers or their designee may provide for basic necessities and recover the costs, including interest and related administrative expenses, by filing a lien against the property. But first, the municipality must make a good faith attempt to contact the landlord. If the landlord cannot be contacted or fails to comply with the municipality’s deadline, the municipality may then act.



**BY AUGUST 1** — Urban Rural Initiative Program (URIP) certification forms must be returned to MaineDOT Community Services Division prior to August 1st. This is an annual certification that must be completed by a municipality to receive URIP funds. Effective July 1, 2008, there is a requirement for municipalities to provide information on how the previous fiscal year’s funds were expended.

**ON OR BEFORE AUGUST 15** — Monthly/Quarterly expenditure statement and claim for General Assistance reimbursement to be sent to Department of Human Services, General Assistance Unit, DHS #11, Augusta, ME 04333 (22

MRSA §4311).

**BETWEEN MAY 1 AND OCTOBER 1** — Municipal officers may initiate process to close certain ways during winter months (23 MRSA §2953). For further information, see the MMA Municipal Roads Manual.

**BY SEPTEMBER 1** — Clerks of organized plantations shall make return to the Secretary of State, on blanks furnished by him for that purpose, of the names of the assessors and clerks of their plantation and that the same have been sworn. There is a penalty for failure to make such a return (30-A MRSA §7005). [\[m\]](#)



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**COMMITMENT & INTEGRITY DRIVE RESULTS**

As we noted last year, this law does not require that tenants be eligible for general assistance, nor does it obligate a municipality to act. (This law is entirely separate from the general assistance laws.) The law also does not address the issue of initial funding for basic necessities, which of course is dependent on the availability of local budget resources, if any.

For full details, see 14 M.R.S.A. § 6026-A. (By R.P.F.)

### TORT CLAIMS LIABILITY & CONTRACTED EQUIPMENT

The Maine Supreme Court has held that a governmental entity is immune from liability under the Maine Tort Claims Act (MTCA) for its use of contracted equipment where it had no direct control over the equipment's maintenance or operation.

In *Estate of Fortier v. City of Lewiston*, 2010 ME 50, the estate of a high school student sued the City for wrongful death after a plane crash killed three cadets in the school's Air Force Junior Reserve Officer Training Program. The aircraft was owned and operated by a private air service under contract with the school.

The estate argued that the contract brought this case within the MTCA's exception to immunity for negligent ownership, maintenance or use of equipment, such as aircraft (see 14 M.R.S.A. § 8104-A(1)). But by a slim majority, the Law Court disagreed, noting that exceptions to immunity under the Act must be strictly construed and holding that "use" in the case of contracted equipment requires that the governmental entity have "some measure of direct control" over its maintenance or operation. A sharply worded dissent warned that this reading "renders the law outmoded" in view of the frequency with which governments now contract for services.

As tragic as the circumstances were, the *Fortier* decision is reassurance that the courts will continue to narrowly interpret exceptions to the MTCA's general rule of immunity. It should not be surprising, though, if remedial legislation is introduced in the next session. This is often the response when a court renders what some might consider a "harsh" judgment. Whether the law is changed, however, should be for the Legislature, not the courts, to decide. (By R.P.F.)

### WIND ENERGY INFO ON MMA'S WEBSITE

Sometimes even we are surprised at how much great information is available to members on MMA's website ([www.memun.org](http://www.memun.org)).

Recently, while searching for something else, we ran across an information guide on wind energy prepared by MMA's Local Government Resource Center. The guide includes links to sample wind energy ordinances from around Maine and to the State Planning Office's model ordinance, as well as to State and federal plans and policies. Also linked are technical resources, including a wind energy siting handbook, acoustical studies, and both pro- and anti-wind energy advocacy groups.

MMA's wind energy information guide is available free to members by entering your password, clicking on "Information Packets/Guides" and

scrolling down to "Wind Energy" (all packets and guides are listed alphabetically by subject).

### ALSO ON OUR WEBSITE: WIRELESS TOWER INFO

And while we're at it, let's highlight another great information guide prepared by MMA's Local Government Resource Center and available at [www.memun.org](http://www.memun.org). It's our guide to wireless (telecommunications) towers. This guide links samples ordinances from Maine and other states as well as the State Planning Office's model ordinance. Also linked are detailed legal guidance and technical resources.

As with all of our packets and guides, MMA's wireless towers information guide is available free to members by entering your password, clicking on "Information Packets/Guides" and scrolling to that subject. (By R.P.F.) 



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