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Official Publication of the New Jersey Association of Municipalities

January 2017

Leading as a Problem Solver

*You can always be a critic of a situation
or you could be part of the solution.
I chose to be a part of the solutions in my city.*

Albert Kelly
NJLM President
Mayor, Bridgeton

Conference Round Up

Advancing Excellence: 2016
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New Jersey Municipalities Magazine

Volume 94 | Issue 1

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Leadership

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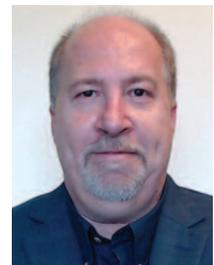
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Lead Through Engagement at the Local Level

As we begin this year, our State will engage in a conversation that will lead to an election to determine New Jersey's next governor and legislature. That conversation will take time and engagement. As leaders in local government, your engagement is particularly important if we are to assure the municipal agenda is part of this important conversation.

The League is well prepared to assist you. League resolutions have been adopted to focus and give direction regarding important policies concerning local government (see list on page 52). League President Mayor Al Kelly of Bridgeton is leading an engaged Executive Board that includes members from every county across the state. The League's staff in Trenton has begun arranging meetings with candidates' staffs and preparing position statements on important municipal priorities. All these efforts, however, can only support—not replace—your engagement as local officials.

In the coming months you will read in these pages about the candidates' positions relative to issues important to local government. That information can be utilized to further communicate, apprise, and question the candidates on those vital issues. It is only by hearing your voices, reading your letters, and seeing your presence at events through the year that we can work together to reinforce to the candidates the importance of issues faced by local government.

Whether the campaign issue is the environment, economy, infrastructure, taxes, social needs, children, technology, or myriad other concerns, lead the effort to inform the candidates on how local government addresses such issues closest to the people. Lead the effort to educate on how State policies impact local capacity to address such issues. Lead the effort to keep municipal priorities in focus for the candidates.

Starting right now, the League can help you lead this communication effort. Our Internet-based efforts provide issue summaries on the League home page, njslom.org, offering background information on major ongoing priorities such as affordable housing, pension and benefit reform, and energy tax restoration. You can also catch up with the League's weekly roundup via email and the Towne Crier blog <https://njlmblog.wordpress.com/>.

Also, please take a moment to register for Voter Voice for quicker communication with state and federal officials by visiting njslom.org/letters/2016/2016-0818-voter-voice.html. Finally, read Mayor Kelly's remarks on page 6 as he leads the membership through this critical year.

The League provides tools to assist you in leading local government engagement. Should you need guidance in growing your local government leadership potential, I encourage you to attend one of the League January seminars "Orientation for Municipal Officials" in East Rutherford or Mt. Laurel and the "Mayors Legislative Day" on February 8 in Trenton.

Michael Darcy

“ In the coming months you will read in these pages about the candidates' positions relative to issues important to local government. That information can be utilized to further communicate, apprise, and question the candidates on those vital issues.”



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– Chante', 2015 graduate

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– Mike, 2013 graduate



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Q&A with the New League President

NJLM Question and Answer Session

By Albert Kelly, NJLM President; Mayor, Bridgeton

“The public wants to know that elected officials care about their problems, and though every situation cannot be solved immediately, they need to know that we are listening to them and working for the common good of the overall city.”



Q What led you to get involved in local government in Bridgeton?

A I have always been someone who liked to get involved, from being a high school class president to the present. I like being able to help people and move things forward.

My first elected position was with the school board for a number of years, from there it was on to council and now mayor. You can always be a critic of a situation or you could be part of the solution. I chose to be a part of the solutions in my city.

Q How would you describe your leadership style?

A My style is that of Servant Leadership; I try to demonstrate the qualities needed to show the citizens that I am willing to sacrifice and roll my sleeves up and work just as hard as anyone to solve a problem. I am thankful that I was elected, but that is just the start.

It is just as important to show and demonstrate the qualities of leadership and not just talk about the qualities and wait for someone else to do the hard work.

Q What are the greatest strengths of local government in New Jersey? What are the most problematic weaknesses?

A The greatest strength of local government is that we are closer to the people than any other elected positions in the state.

I have numerous people come to my office with problems and stop me in the grocery store or on the street when they want advice and direction. Some might see this as a hindrance, but I see this as part of government service. Citizens want to know that we as elected leaders care, and a part of that is being accessible to your citizens.

Bridgeton is not a very large city and many people know my car and where I go to breakfast and other places in the city, and though some of the situations they present seemingly can wait, it is important to them at that moment.

They need to know that the mayor and other elected officials care. There is a saying, “don’t tell me what your priorities are, let me watch you then I can tell you what you care about.”

Q What do citizens expect from their municipal officials, and has that changed, at all, over the years?

A As I said previously, the public wants to know that elected officials care about their problems, and though every situation cannot be solved immediately, they need to know that we are listening to them and working for the common good of the overall city.

I don’t think this will ever change and I believe that this has always been the essence of local elected government.

Now with new methods of social media, we elected leaders have to respond and get answers just as quickly as those who are inquiring.

Q What are your goals as League President?

A One of my goals as League President is to continue to be inclusive in our decision making. The leadership of the League has done a great job of informing the local leaders on statewide and local issues that can affect their communities.

I, personally, would like to reach out and ask more mayors to be involved in the League.

Q & A with New League President

Some of my personal priorities that I would like to highlight are the preservation of the Urban Enterprise Zones, promoting a change in the culture of health in our communities, affordable housing reform, restoration of the energy tax receipts, real property tax relief and tax fairness concerning exempt properties, extension of the 2% cap on arbitration awards, supporting the needs of our veterans, and promoting youth involvement.

These are just a few of the things I see that we as an organization can and will tackle this coming year. I know this list can and probably will change as the months roll by, but it is a good starting point.

Q What advice would you give to someone just elected to local office for the first time?

A I would suggest that they take the classes offered by the League as a good starting point to better understand local government.

They should also find a mentor who could guide them through the maze of regulations and laws that make up our government.

Lastly, they should be quick to listen rather than to have their minds made up prior to hearing both sides of an issue.



At the League Conference: Mayor Kelly, President NJLM (right) with (l to r) Senate Minority Leader Tom Kean, Jr.; Assembly Speaker Vincent Prieto; Chief Political Correspondent Michael Aron; Assembly Minority Leader Jon Bramnick, and Senate President Stephen Sweeney.

Remarks of the Honorable Albert Kelly

President, New Jersey League of Municipalities;
Mayor, Bridgeton

I want to thank all of you for your vote of confidence in my ability to serve as President of your League of Municipalities.

I'm honored to preside over an organization that has weathered the storms of 101 years, an association that unites Democrats, Republicans, and Independents, an institution that serves the interests of cities, suburbs, and rural communities, an enterprise that continues to find new ways to help New Jersey's local leaders better serve their hometowns and their hometown neighbors.

At the same time, I'm humbly aware that you expect me to preserve that resilience, that unity, that consistent record of steady service and of prudent progress.

Despite the odds against it, the League has only been able to protect and promote the principles of local self-government by continually relying on its members for ideas and action. Throughout its history, our League has always known, and always shown, when New Jersey local leaders put their differences aside and focus on their common problems and opportunities, nothing is impossible.

During my year as President, I will rely on all of you for your support and counsel. I know how much you appreciate the importance of municipal government. I know you are dedicated to preserving the vital life-enhancing and life-sustaining programs and services that can best be delivered by municipal governments—effectively, efficiently, and economically. And I know how you value the part played by the League in representing your interests in the Statehouse and in supplying the information and analysis to help you to better serve your neighbors at home.

We all work individually to protect the interests of our fellow citizens. And we become active in the League of Municipalities so that we can work together to protect their interests, also.

I hope that this year I am able to continue the standard of service set by my predecessor and friend, Mayor Joe Tempesta of West Caldwell. Mayor Tempesta recognized the diversity of municipalities in this State and what can be the diversity of our interests, but he always emphasized the need for unity in action on key public policies. As has been said before, unity in action and the active participation of more and more friends of local government are the only tools that we can use to build a better New Jersey.

The League has been blessed by a series of great leaders and I salute all of our Past Presidents for their leadership, integrity, intelligence, and skill. I also want to thank all the members of our Executive Board with whom I have served and on whom I will continue to rely for support and wise counsel.

I thank you, again, for calling me to the office. And I urge all of you to continue to support the League and to get more involved. One finger cannot lift a pebble. But together, we just might be able to raise high the hopes of all our colleagues in local government for a better future for our neighbors and for our children.

Let's get to work. 🍷





NOW & THEN



Let's Get Started!

Fresh off of the League Conference, many of us are filled with great ideas for the year to come. It's been that way for 100-plus years here in the state of New Jersey, as municipal officials have gathered to share their successes and their hopes for the future under the banner of the New Jersey State League of Municipalities.

Not long after the League started in 1915, the leaders of the organization noted the need to share information with its members in the form of a conference, which has gone from the first meeting that year on to flourish. The next step was the establishment of a publication, *New Jersey Municipalities*, filled with articles from local officials as well as state and federal sources and League staff. This "monthly periodical devoted to municipal progress and efficiency" was described in its inaugural issue January 1917 proposing to:

1. Supply original articles by men in a position to speak with authority in their respective fields.
2. Review for our city officials the municipal affairs of the country.

3. Convey to all our municipalities that part of our research work which might be of general interest.
4. Endeavor to stimulate and inspire to the end of securing more effective democracy and great efficiency in municipal government.



Amy Spiezo
Managing Editor

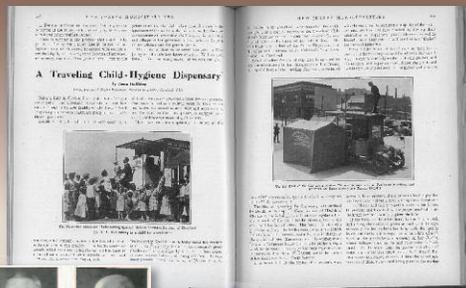
These are still our goals and while we celebrate *New Jersey Municipalities'* 100th anniversary, the focus of that celebration will be the continued tradition of being a "live, pulsating organism functioning vigorously for the League and its member municipalities."

In each issue this year, we'll put the Now & Then spotlight on a different decade of the publication, sharing how far we have come—and how many of our local governing issues are timeless concerns for generations of municipal officials. We eagerly anticipate looking back and proudly sharing the rich history contained in the pages of the archived editions of the magazine, and we are equally enthusiastic to share your thoughts, plans, successes, and hopes in issues to come in our 100th year of publication and beyond. 🍀

Time Capsule: 1915-1919

The first decade of publishing *New Jersey Municipalities* shows the gelling of the League's organizational structure and the establishment of its leadership.

What topics were in the forefront of members' concerns? Some familiar themes such as road maintenance and a topic the League plans to focus on extensively this year under the guidance of our new League President, Mayor Albert Kelly of Bridgeton: youth health and wellbeing.





NOW

New Executive Board Members Sworn In



League President Albert Kelly, Mayor of Bridgeton (right), swears in the newest members of the NJLM Executive Board, (l to r) Councilman Daniel Flynn of Newton, Mayor William Pikolycky of Woodbine, and Mayor Gayle Brill Mittler of Highland Park.

During the Dec. 1, 2016, New Jersey State League of Municipalities Executive Board meeting, three new board members—Mayor Gayle Brill Mittler of Highland Park, Councilman Daniel Flynn of Newton, and Mayor William Pikolycky of Woodbine—were sworn into office by League President Albert Kelly, Mayor of Bridgeton.

For details about the new Board members, please see page 50. 📖



DCA's Richman Honored with Distinguished Public Service Award

Charles “Chuck” Richman, Commissioner of the NJ Department of Community Affairs was presented with the Distinguished Public Service Award 2016 by then League President, Mayor Joseph Tempesta of West Caldwell.

The League presented the 14th annual award in recognition of Richman’s longtime, dedicated partnership with municipal officials. Richman has worked at the DCA for 29 years, and has more than 40 years of experience in New Jersey State government.

Prior to joining the DCA in 1986, he served as Executive Director of the NJ State Energy Office, Assistant Commissioner, and then Acting Commissioner of the NJ Department of Energy. He was named Assistant Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs in 1986 and was promoted to Deputy Commissioner in 2005. He has held the title of Acting Commissioner at DCA three times, most recently from July 2009 to February 2010.

Throughout his DCA career, Richman has spearheaded effective policy development in areas ranging from affordable housing, fire safety, community planning, and economic revitalization to budget development. He has been responsible for regulatory reform in a variety of building and housing codes; evaluations of municipal operations; formulation of legislative strategies; preparation of department budgets and priorities; contract management; and supervision of operating divisions.

In the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, he helped lead efforts in providing Sandy-displaced families with housing options and in administering federal Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery funds to assist homeowners, renters, and local governments in their Sandy recovery and rebuilding efforts. 📖

DUNES ARE CRITICAL

Seaside goldenrod in Barnegat Light NJ
Photo by Ben Wurst

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Municipal Messaging Success Stories

Public Information Contest Winners Announced

The winners of the 55th Annual Municipal Public Information Contest were announced in November at the 101st NJLM Conference in Atlantic City. Recognizing creative new ways of increasing the public's awareness of government operations, strengthening community ties, and providing useful information to citizens in innovative and effective ways, the awards promote the use of successful and innovative techniques that increase local government's ability to meet citizen needs and improve access to government services.

The hope behind the competition is that it will create interest and provide incentive for municipalities to develop or enhance their public information programs in order to be able to offer more innovative, responsive, and personalized, services to citizens.

The projects cover four categories, Best In Class, Best Print Media, Best Digital Media, and Best Special/Innovative



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Alan Zalkind, Director, Rutgers Center for Government Services, presents the awards for the 55th Annual Municipal Public Information Contest Winners at the

League Luncheon, held at the League Conference in November in Atlantic City.

Media and judging is based on the following four qualities:

- Content—Is the information comprehensive?
- Clarity—Is the entry clear and well presented?
- Adaptability—Does the entry lend itself to further use and adoption by other municipalities?
- Appearance—Is the entry user-friendly?

Judges for the contest were: Gregory J. Bonin, Township Administrator of Branchburg Township, Past President, New Jersey Municipal Management Association; Lori Buckelew, MPA, RMC, Senior Legislative Analyst, New Jersey State League of Municipalities; Frederick C. Carr, MPA, Borough Administrator, South River Borough; Jewel Thompson-Chin, MBA, Borough Administrator, Tenafly Borough.

This year's winners were:

Best Overall: Waldwick

Class A (Municipalities under 5,000 population)
Franklin Borough (Sussex) (Print media)
Longport (Special/Innovative media)

Class B (Municipalities 5,000-20,000)
Asbury Park (Web/Social media)
Buena Vista (Visual media)
New Providence (Print media)

Class C (Municipalities Over 20,000)
Brick (Web/Social media)
Evesham (Special/Innovative media)
Jersey City (Visual media)
Moorestown (Print media)

Requests for submissions are sent to Mayors/Municipal Clerks in early summer. 📧



Fresh off being named one of New Jersey's Greatest Downtowns by the NJ Chapter of the American Planning Association, Clinton heads into the holiday spirit with annual events such as Dickens' Days featuring carriage rides by KV Carriage among the festivities. photo: jan 📷

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NJLMEF Recognizes Leadership, Service

Several former leaders of the NJLMEF Education Foundation were recognized for their service at the League's Annual Conference held November in Atlantic City.

The Distinguished Public Service Award was presented posthumously to Art Ondish, former Mayor of Mount Arlington, League Past President, and a Past President of the NJLMEF. The award, presented by League then-



Then League President Mayor Joseph Tempesta of West Caldwell (l) and NJLMEF Education Foundation President Mayor Tim McDonough of Hope Township present Yvonne Ondish with her husband Art's Foundation Crystal.



NJLMEF Executive Director presents NJLMEF Past President Louise Wilson (above) and NJLMEF former officer Jun Choi (top) with tokens of the organization's appreciation.

president Mayor Joseph Tempesta of West Caldwell, was accepted by Art's wife, Yvonne Ondish at the League Luncheon on Thursday, November 17.

At the League Business Meeting later that day, NJLMEF Executive Director Michael J. Darcy, CAE, recognized the years of service of two past presidents of the NJLMEF. Louise Wilson, former Mayor of Montgomery, and Jun Choi, former Mayor of Edison. Each received a Foundation Crystal as thanks for their years of volunteering. 🇺🇸

JANUARY

January 7

Orientation for Newly Elected, Re-elected, or Experienced Municipal Officials
Hilton Hotel, East Rutherford

January 19

Brownfield Funding Sources: A Look at Where to Find Them and How to Utilize Them
Webinar—Your Computer

January 28

Orientation for Newly Elected, Re-elected, or Experienced Municipal Officials
Hotel ML, Mount Laurel

January 30

Siting for Wireless Facilities in the Rights-of-Way: Challenges for Municipalities
Webinar—Your Computer

FEBRUARY

February 8

25th Annual Mayors Legislative Day
Statehouse Annex, Trenton

February 22

OPRA In Depth: OPRA and the Common Law
DoubleTree Hotel, Tinton Falls

February 24

A Quick Review of Budget and Audit Updates
Webinar—Your Computer

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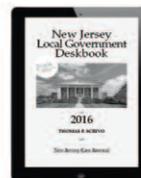
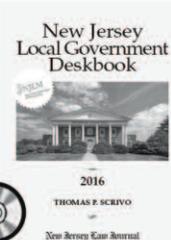
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The City of Perth Amboy Focuses On Access and Opportunity with Citywide ID Program

By Wilda Diaz, Mayor, Perth Amboy

As we reflect on this past year and policies discussed during the presidential election, none have been more highlighted than the United States immigration policy in the upcoming Trump administration. This is partly due to the President-elect's promise to undo President Obama's 2012 executive action on immigration.

In the City of Perth Amboy, immigration has also been a priority of my administration, and I have been extremely concerned about the misinterpretation of messaging regarding immigration and believe that the bigger discussion on a municipal and national level should be about access and opportunity for all citizens currently residing in communities. On March 10, 2016, I am proud to say, the City of Perth Amboy launched its citywide ID program and the first in Middlesex County.

This program offers all residents of Perth Amboy age 14 and older a valid ID card that will allow them access to vital services the city has to offer. The local identification card serves as proof of identity within the community and will help residents who do not have access to other forms of identification to interact with city agencies and get access to local resources.

While this is a program that will impact immigrants, its reach is farther and wider than that. The City ID Card will be useful for all residents, especially marginalized communities such as people with disabilities, youth, elderly, formerly incarcerated, homeless, immigrants, and people who have a gender identity that is different from the gender identity on their own ID card. All of these various groups are the backbone of our communities, and if they are not able to have access to the same resources that are provided to other members of our communities, we are doomed to fail them—and we will continue to create an economic and social divide that will not help urban communities thrive.

The City ID Card affords ID card holders the opportunity to open bank accounts and, in turn, creates economic opportunities for our residents, businesses, as well as municipalities. It can also serve as a form of identification for local police, public schools and buildings, hospitals and health care facilities, library cards, NJ Public Transit cards, discounts at public and private organizations, such as: museums, local businesses, recreation centers, city attractions, and other local and private government agencies. Issuing City ID Cards to Perth Amboy residents will serve as proof of identity and proof of residency, and also give residents

who do not have access to proof of residency or identity an opportunity to be able to have this access/interaction with local authorities. It is especially useful for those who do not have identification documents and are often too afraid to report a crime or interact with police out of fear of being discovered as undocumented or due to some other concern.

Additionally, individuals that do not have identification who are badly injured or killed through assault or workplace injury may not be easily identified, which can prevent notification to their loved ones. Furthermore, individuals who do not have identification are unable to open bank accounts because they lack identification, becoming walking targets for robbery. Not having identification presents various problems and leaves many residents in vulnerable and often dangerous situations. Today, as you are reading this article, we are embarking on a New Year with a new President with new opportunities and challenges. The opportunities are endless in urban communities; our residents are the most diverse which makes for our rich history.

Urban communities have become destination points for people to live, work, and play. We have a lot of work to do to enhance them while we strive for economic prosperity for all residents. The challenge that presents itself is that we must not forget our vulnerable populations and must remember the history that our great nation was built upon.

Since the birth of this great nation, various groups have come to the United States to escape religious persecution, economic adversities, poverty, and other strife with the hopes of a better life. This is the American dream that we have always looked forward to.

Mayors and communities from across our great nation have signed on to implement the ID program in the belief of that dream of access and opportunity for all. I will be working with various groups and agencies to ensure that we continue to support our urban communities and that the policies and investments that are in place are effective and reaching every citizen.

Perth Amboy was the among many communities in the state of NJ to adopt the municipal ID program, along with Newark, Asbury Park, Trenton, and Roselle, and the number is continuously growing. To date, we have signed many residents to the program that provides a safe and controlled mechanism to help integrate more people into the City of Perth Amboy. We all stand to benefit from bringing people out of the shadows, improving access to law enforcement and supporting local businesses.

Let's look forward to the coming year and work together to create safer, economically viable, and sustainable communities! 🍀

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WASHINGTON

America Open for Business: New Jersey/ New York Port Deepening Project

By U.S. Representative Rodney Frelinghuysen, District 11

The ceremony in early September did not garner a great deal of attention. *The Star-Ledger* and the *Bergen Record* covered the event. Some local television stations sent reporters. But, after more than 20 years of effort, the completion of the Harbor Deepening project at the Port of New York and New Jersey was truly momentous news! The project capped a cooperative endeavor that will touch the lives of 23 million Americans and potentially boost the fortunes of every manufacturer, wholesaler, retailer, transportation company, “Mom and Pop” business, and job-seeker up and down the East Coast of the United States!

Since the late 90s, the Army Corps of Engineers has been working in concert with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to deepen 38 miles of channels to a depth of 50 feet, beginning south of the Verrazano Narrows Bridge and winding its way into waters between New Jersey and Staten Island.

The goal is to allow the world’s largest container ships access to Port Newark/Port Elizabeth. The project is essential to maintaining the competitive position of our four major terminals, particularly now that the Panama Canal has been expanded to allow huge ships to transit between New Jersey and Asia.

Why is this important?

More than 90% of global trade, valued at over \$1.7 trillion, moves by ship and the Port of New York and New Jersey is the largest port on the East Coast of North America and the third-largest in our nation, behind only Los Angeles and Long Beach, California.

The Port is the unquestioned economic engine of northern New Jersey, spurring more than \$22 billion in economic activity each year. The Port is responsible for \$9.4 billion in personal income and more than \$5 billion in annual tax revenues to state and local governments.

Moreover, this project has already provided direct benefits over 260 thousand people employed along the piers, docks, and terminals and thousands more working in New Jersey companies that depend upon the cargoes hauled by these vessels.

As a longtime member of the House Energy and Water Development Appropriations Committee, and as its past chairman,

the project has been, for more than 20 years, one of my highest priorities in Congress as it is essential to ensure that our Port remains the most attractive destination for international trading partners.

But the efforts to complete this harbor deepening project have not always encountered smooth sailing. Frankly, for many years, it was very hard to focus the public attention of state and federal leaders on this maritime commercial and national security priority in our backyard!

In bipartisan fashion, Senator Bob Menendez joined my efforts to protect funding and a remarkable coalition of the Port Authority, the Corps of Engineers, the Coast Guard, shippers, terminal operators, dredgers, unions, and environmental organizations banded together to help bring this project to completion.

While every member of this outstanding alliance navigated several significant challenges over the past 20 years, including serious economic recessions, the Army Corps deserves particular commendation. The Corps was able to complete this \$2 billion project while simultaneously weathering Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, Superstorm Sandy in our region, flooding on the Mississippi, and other calamities, while their commanders and soldiers repeatedly deployed to the war zones in Iraq and Afghanistan and while they played a key role in New York City’s recovery from the attacks of 9-11.

As a result of these herculean efforts, the Harbor Deepening Project is putting our region in a good position to benefit from growing global trade. Here at home, these projects help retain current jobs and add new ones, and affect the cost of consumer goods up and down the East Coast. It is a true ‘win-win-win’ for our State.

As I travel my Congressional District, talking with people on the street or in their small businesses, I meet people who have been job-hunting for years. While the “official” unemployment rate may be dropping, the labor participation rate in our country is as low as it has been since the ’70s. As a result, “real” unemployment is much higher than advertised.

The question should then occur to every citizen of our great State: where would our jobless rate in New Jersey be without a vital, active, and growing Port Newark/Port Elizabeth? 🚢

Rep. Frelinghuysen is a member of the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Subcommittee

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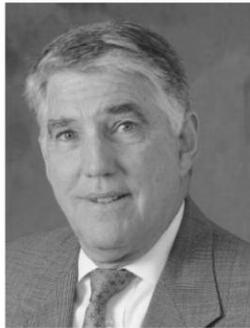
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Making New Jersey a Leader in Reducing Hunger

By Assemblyman Adam J. Taliaferro, District 3

Hunger and food insecurity are some of the most significant public health concerns that we face as a state. More than one million of our residents suffer from food insecurity, the lack of reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable nutritious food. According to a study published by Feeding America in 2014, this problem affects an alarming 12% of New Jersey's population, including one in five of our children.

The food banks and pantries that serve our hungry are in need of strong reliable donations throughout the year. The winter, spring, and summer months are especially difficult for food banks. Food supplies dwindle and there is a shortage of volunteers after the holiday season. Rural and urban areas tend to have the most need, statistically rating higher than the state average for food insecurity.

We have the resources to address this problem and stock our food banks throughout the year. An estimated 25% to 40% of food grown, processed, and transported in the United States will not be consumed.

We need to be finding new ways to ensure more of our food supply is used and what better way than to get our unused food into the hands of those who need it most? Using a small fraction of what we waste as a society could feed millions. This is not only a humanitarian issue; it is a severe environmental concern. When food is disposed of in a landfill it rots and becomes a potent source of methane, contributing to global warming.

There are already great organizations taking advantage of this potential source of food and resources. Thousands of supermarkets, restaurants, and farms around the country have begun successful gleaning programs in partnership with local food banks and pantries. Gleaning is the act of collecting excess fresh food, food that would otherwise be discarded or go to waste, in order to provide it to those in need.

As a state, we can expand on the success of these programs by implementing them in our public institutions. I introduced legislation which would encourage school districts and institutions of higher education to examine what they can be doing to help with this issue. The measure was approved by the General Assembly in June.

Under the legislation, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture, in consultation with the Department of Education, the

Department of Health, and the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, would establish the voluntary guidelines to encourage and facilitate the ability of school districts and institutions of higher education to donate excess and unused food.

The proposed guidelines would include: information on food waste and recommendations on how to create programs and activities for the donation of food, information on the types of food schools may donate, a cost-effective, safe, and sanitary means for the donation of food, and a method by which schools and local voluntary food assistance programs may contact each other.

The guidelines would be distributed to each school district and institution of higher education and posted on the website of the Department of Education and the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education.

In addition, the measure would amend the "Food Bank Good Samaritan Act" to extend legal immunity to school districts that donate food, which appears to be fit for human consumption at the time it is donated.

We should be pursuing common sense measures that ensure non-profits have the resources to feed those in need. School districts and colleges have the means to contribute vast quantities of unused food and guidelines are essential to encouraging a greater contribution to this effort.

Encouraging our schools to participate in food donation will have countless benefits. I encourage us all to look at what we can personally do in our daily lives to help alleviate food insecurity in our country. Donating food, our time, or raising awareness to this issue are all effective ways to feed America and help those in need. ♻️

Adam J. Taliaferro represents the residents of municipalities in all of Salem County and parts of Gloucester and Cumberland counties; he serves on the Agriculture and Natural Resources and the Education committees.

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Life-Saving Model

Jersey City reports success in United Rescue volunteer-based emergency response program

By Steven Fulop, Mayor, Jersey City

It's been a little over a year since Jersey City launched United Rescue, the first-in-the-nation volunteer-based emergency response program designed to save lives and leverage our strongest assets—our residents—to augment and enhance city services at no cost to taxpayers.

In that time, trained volunteers have responded to more than 600 medical emergencies, from minor accidents to life-threatening conditions and have saved lives in many ways, from administering Narcan to victims suffering from an overdose to supplementing existing emergency services during the blizzard last January. We've cut our best response time literally in half. This program, a partnership with RWJBarnabas-Jersey City Medical Center, can and should serve as a model for forward-thinking municipalities to proactively adapt technology to change the way they deliver services to their citizens.

Emergency "Uber"

United Rescue essentially does for emergency responders what Uber does for public transit—by using mobile technology to activate private citizens and supplement existing infrastructure. The linchpin of the United Rescue program is a smartphone application that alerts trained and equipped volunteers of nearby medical emergencies. When an ambulance is dispatched, this alert system notifies and activates any nearby community-based emergency responders, volunteers who have gone through the United Rescue first responder training, to provide care while professional EMS personnel are en route. Minutes can mean the difference in some situations between life and death, so the ability to get care immediately to a potential victim literally saves lives.

For example, an office worker could be suffering from a heart attack while someone who could save his or her life might be in a meeting, unaware of the emergency, a floor below. If that person was properly trained, equipped, and notified, he or she



could respond to the emergency more quickly than the ambulance would arrive, potentially saving a life. The value of the United Rescue program lies in ensuring that there is always a cadre of trained and equipped volunteers who can be instantly located and dispatched via the mobile app and the 911 system to any scene in the city.

As a result, we've managed to drop our emergency response times from just under six minutes, already among the best in the country, to only two and a half minutes if an active United Rescue participant is nearby. Moreover, because the program is completely volunteer-based and supported by charitable donations, we've managed to accomplish this at no cost to the taxpayers of Jersey City. And the relationship between the Jersey City Medical Center professionals and the United Rescue volunteers could not be stronger.

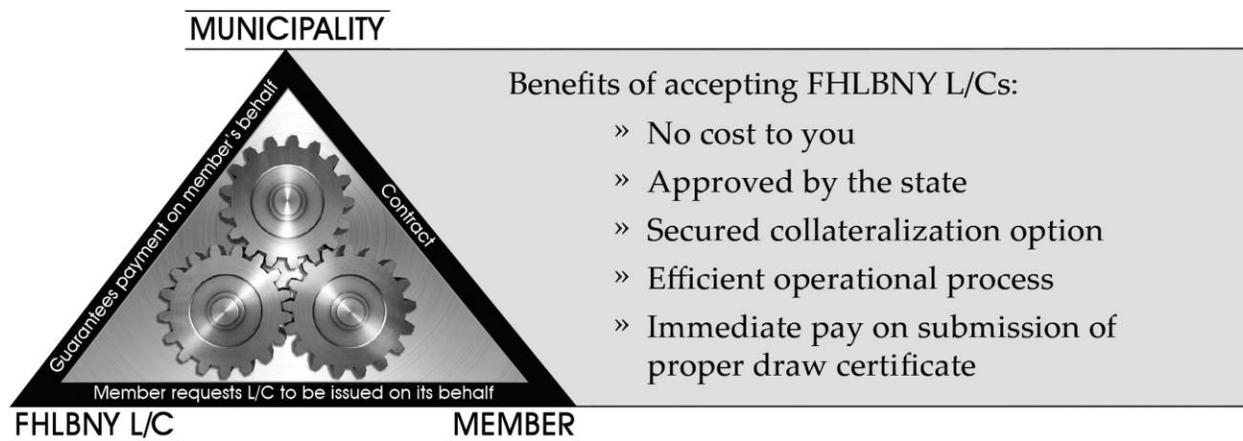
Importantly, the program's more than 100 volunteers on the street or in training come from all areas of the city and many different ethnic backgrounds, ensuring a wide diversity. Not only does this translate into a more effective program with broader coverage across the city, but it also brings together citizens from every group and geographical area in our uniquely diverse city, fostering great and abiding friendships and a lasting, deep sense of community that strengthens Jersey City's civic fiber. Currently over 600 more volunteers have signed up and are awaiting training. 📍



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Doing More With Less

Consolidated Princeton
Turns Four

By Liz Lempert,
Mayor, Princeton;
Member, NJLM Executive Board



January 2017 marks the four-year anniversary of the consolidation of Princeton Borough and Princeton Township into a single municipality called Princeton. With enough time for hindsight, the obvious question is “Was the merger (parts of which are still in progress) worth the effort?” The resounding answer is “yes.”

Consolidation has been a massive undertaking, and challenges remain. But the fact is, consolidated Princeton has saved money for its residents at the same time it has enhanced such essential services as police operations, emergency response, and trash collection. A combined government also has proven more responsive to its citizens.

Getting to Consolidation

When Princeton Borough and Princeton Township consolidated

on January 1, 2013, it was the first time two municipalities of significant size had combined in the state of New Jersey in over 100 years. Princeton had rejected consolidation proposals three times before—in 1953, 1979, and again in 1996. In 2011, voters finally said yes. The referendum to consolidate into a single municipality called simply “Princeton” passed overwhelmingly, by 61-39% in the former Borough, and 85-15% in the former Township.

Third Time's a Charm

The 2011 consolidation effort differed from prior efforts in several respects.



- Consolidation was more feasible in 2010 because of the Local Option Municipal Consolidation Act, which allowed more flexibility in the timing of ordinance integration and debt separation, if needed. The changes in the law helped the consolidation effort get off the ground even though we ended up not using many of the new provisions.



- A majority of elected officials from both the Borough and Township openly favored consolidation as the most prudent way to reduce expenditures without sacrificing services, and elected officials from both municipalities served on the consolidation study commission alongside citizen volunteers.



- The governing bodies, with the assistance of a \$38,000 state grant, engaged an outside consultant, the CGR group. Their unbiased, transparent, and logical approach helped assure the citizens of the integrity of the study. Once the commission completed its report with a recommendation to consolidate, a group of citizens formed the Unite Princeton campaign to counter anti-consolidation forces and present a positive case for merging.

are better positioned and more financially robust as a community having consolidated nearly four years ago.

SAVINGS

The Consolidation Commission estimated the town would save approximately \$3.1 million annually (5% of our approximately \$60M combined budget) once consolidation was fully implemented, which was expected to occur by the end of 2015. The savings were based entirely on the impact that reduced staff needs would have on salaries and benefits.

In reality, the estimated gross savings from consolidation-related staff reductions in 2015 were \$3.92 million, compared to pre-consolidation levels in 2011, adjusted for inflation. After factoring in the costs for expanded services, including town-wide trash collection and additional staffing in some areas, the net savings for 2015 equaled \$2.77M. That is over \$600,000 more

There were three main reasons given in support of consolidation: financial savings, enhanced governmental services, and a more responsive government. Consolidation has delivered.

The savings from consolidation have met and even exceeded expectations. Despite a smaller staff, having a single administration has enabled us to expand and better coordinate services to our residents. Whether it's clearing snow, responding to pothole reports, or communicating with residents, we are able to do our job more efficiently and effectively as a consolidated government.

That said, consolidation is not a panacea. Princeton still faces the same budgetary pressures as other municipalities in New Jersey, including ever-rising pension and health care costs. Moreover, only a small fraction of property tax dollars fund the municipal budget; over three-quarters of Princeton's property tax levy is for school district and county purposes, so savings at the municipal level have been dwarfed by increases at the school and county level.

Still, the savings and improvements have been real and significant, and we



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than the Consolidation Commission estimated, and does not include savings in operating expenses. For example, the town only needs a single maintenance garage now instead of two.

The \$3.92 million annual savings figure also does not include savings on capital expenses that were cut in half in some instances. For example, both the Borough and Township's 911 dispatch centers needed expensive technology upgrades. With consolidation, the dispatchers moved into one of the existing centers, and only one set of equipment needed to be upgraded. Prior to consolidation, the municipality's department

for substance abuse treatment and prevention was in need of a new facility that would have cost millions of dollars to construct. Because of space created by consolidating departments, instead of building a brand new facility, we were able to relocate the department into the vacated offices formerly occupied by the Borough police.

Consolidation helped reduce municipal taxes in 2013, hold taxes flat in 2014, and keep increases minimal in 2015 and 2016. Princeton has had the slowest increase in municipal taxes since consolidation compared to any of our neighboring towns.

ENHANCED SERVICES

Consolidation has also provided the opportunity for enhanced services. Prior to consolidation, Township residents had to pay for private trash hauling, at the out-of-pocket expense of approximately \$200/year per household. With consolidation, the municipality now provides residential trash pick up across the entire town.

“Consolidation helped reduce municipal taxes in 2013, hold taxes flat in 2014, and keep increases minimal in 2015 and 2016. Princeton has had the slowest increase in municipal taxes since consolidation compared to any of our neighboring towns.”

One of the biggest concerns prior to consolidation was how the merger would impact policing. Perhaps surprisingly, the new, combined police department is widely recognized both within the department and throughout the community as greater than the sum of its parts, and has been one of the shining successes of consolidation. Although the department shrunk from 60 officers down to 51, by restructuring under one administrative staff, there are actually more police officers on the street post-consolidation.

We now have a Safe Neighborhoods Unit that is dedicated entirely to community policing and relationship building. The department also reinstated a dedicated traffic unit, which had been eliminated in both the former Borough and Township

forces because of budget cuts. In 2014, just one year after consolidation, the department received its accreditation.

MORE RESPONSIVE GOVERNMENT

The benefits of consolidation are especially evident during snowstorms and other emergencies when the challenges of communicating across police departments and dispatch centers have been eliminated, public works staff can be more effectively deployed, and all emergency staff work together as a team on behalf of the entire community. Since the former Princetons were “doughnut and doughnut hole” towns, many streets that started in the former township ran through the former Borough only to re-emerge in the Township, creating a winter-emergency conundrum since snow removal operations were not always coordinated. Last winter, one resident remarked to me, after one of the heavy snows, that the roads in Princeton were cleared so quickly that she was completely unprepared for the undrivable conditions she encountered on her way to her job out of town.

Governing as a single community also enables us to be more responsive to residents and neighborhood concerns, especially in neighborhoods that were once bisected by the old Township-Borough boundary line. For example, responding to an outpouring of support from neighbors, the Princeton Council recently voted to designate the Witherspoon-Jackson neighborhood a historic district. Prior to consolidation, the neighborhood would have had to appeal to two separate historic commissions, governed by two separate ordinances, and then to two separate governing bodies.

CHALLENGES

Consolidation is not without major challenges. Change is disruptive, and uncertainty can take a toll, especially on staff morale. The process of harmonizing the two code books has been time-consuming, politically vexing at times, and expensive. (Despite the expense, our total legal bills are now lower than prior to consolidation). Consolidation has been a time-consuming process for

elected officials and especially for staff—from the research and data collection needed during the study to the retraining, relocations, and restructuring required during implementation. All of this extra work has had to occur across the municipal government over several years, above and beyond the day-to-day operation of the town.

CONCLUSION

Municipal governments everywhere are faced with a tough challenge: how to manage increasing costs without cutting back on important services or burdening residents with ever higher property taxes. For Princeton, consolidation has enabled us to deliver better services with a smaller staff and at a lower cost. 📌

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When Are Police Body Camera Videos Subject to OPRA?

Supreme Court guidance may be coming in 2017

By Jeffrey S. Jacobson, Esq.,
Partner, Kelley Drye & Warren LLP



OPRA's exemption precluding the release of "criminal investigative records" may shield recordings of investigative activities from public release, but courts have not yet ruled definitively on how far that exemption reaches, or on the extent to which privacy and other exemptions may affect OPRA requests for other kinds of body camera footage.

Creating a Standard

The Attorney General's Directive does not mandate the use of cameras, but requires any police department that uses them to adopt written guidelines that conform to the Directive's minimum standards. It states, for example, that body cameras may only "be activated while in performance of official police duties," and cannot be recording when the officer "is not actively performing law enforcement functions."

As New Jersey municipalities decide whether to equip their police officers with body-worn cameras, one major uncertainty is how courts will apply the state's Open Public Records Act to video from those cameras. The New Jersey Supreme Court may clarify that issue later this year, but for now, the answer is muddled.

Police officers equipped with cameras need not record everything they do, but a Law Enforcement Directive issued by the Attorney General's Office on July 25, 2015, binding on all law enforcement agencies in the State, requires cameras to be activated during all law enforcement activities and some non-enforcement activities, like responses to medical emergencies.

Cameras must be activated whenever the officer responds to a call for service, stops a driver or a pedestrian for questioning, conducts a search, uses any type of force, makes an arrest, transports an arrested person, interviews a witness to a criminal offense, or is on the scene when another officer performs any of these tasks. Once activated, the camera must continue recording until the entire event concludes, although the Directive has exceptions when officers are in sensitive locations like schools, hospitals, and houses of worship.

The Directive requires all camera recordings to be retained for at least 90 days in a secure, tamper-proof system. The system must allow authorized personnel to have ready access to specific recorded events, and it must have a way for officials to "tag" important footage for longer-term preservation. A recording might need to be tagged, for example, because it relates to a criminal prosecution, a civilian complaint, or an

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Police Body Cameras

internal affairs investigation, and all of those records must be preserved until the case concludes. Recordings of use of force incidents must be retained until the statute of limitations for filing a civil complaint has expired.

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Requests and the Courts

The Directive recognizes that OPRA's applicability to body camera footage is largely up to the courts. It says if a

“How the Supreme Court decides to apply OPRA to body camera videos may be a major factor in municipalities' decisions to adopt the technology.”

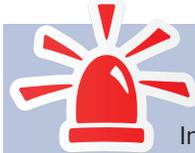
police department receives an OPRA request or any other type of request to see body camera footage, the department must immediately notify the

County Prosecutor. It then says that the department may not voluntarily release a “recording of an event or encounter that involves an investigation of a criminal offense,” unless the County Prosecutor or the Attorney General's Office affirmatively authorizes that disclosure.

These instructions basically obligate municipalities to deny OPRA and other requests for body camera recordings that depict criminal investigatory events, and to insist on a court order before disclosing those recordings, unless the County Prosecutor says otherwise. A plaintiff that wins a disclosure order in an OPRA case is entitled to recover her attorneys' fees.

Importantly, this requirement to pre-clear release of body camera footage applies only to criminal investigative records, but not everything that the Directive says must be recorded is a step in a criminal investigation.

An ordinary car stop, for example, where the driver has committed a violation but not a crime, has to be recorded if

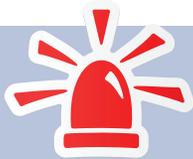


Supreme Court Reviews

In June 2015, in a case arising from a police-involved shooting in Lyndhurst, the state's mid-level appellate court held that when a police officer turns on a camera after being called to join a criminal investigation, OPRA's exemption for “criminal investigative records” applies, and the footage need not be disclosed. The Supreme Court has agreed to review that case and recently held a hearing on it.

In June 2016, however, in a case involving a felony car stop in Ocean County, a different panel of the same court disagreed with the Lyndhurst ruling. Two of three judges hearing the case held that the dash camera footage had to be disclosed, even though it pertained to a criminal investigation. One judge dissented, agreeing with the Lyndhurst ruling, and that case, too, is headed to the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court has given few clues how it may rule in either case. In a recent decision involving discovery in a criminal matter, the Supreme Court unanimously held that prosecutors, before turning over video evidence to the defense, may redact from the video anything that would compromise building security or the privacy rights of persons not involved in the case. That ruling may signal the court's willingness to consider the application of OPRA's security and privacy exemptions to body camera video, but do not shed light on how the Court will rule on when a video is a “criminal investigatory record” and is not yet even subject to mandatory disclosure to the defendant.



Body Camera Footage Access Beyond OPRA

Municipalities also must bear in mind that OPRA is not the only tool that the media and other requestors have to obtain access to body camera footage. The common law “right to know” applies, too. Even OPRA-exempt records are subject to a common law balancing test, weighing the strength of the public’s right to view the materials against the government’s interest in secrecy. Courts can order even exempt criminal investigative records disclosed if the public’s interest in disclosure is strong enough.

When criminal investigative records are at issue, the government’s interests in protecting the integrity of the investigative process, and the rights of the accused, usually are strong enough to overcome common law challenges. Body camera video, however, may test the outer limits of the government’s interest in secrecy, especially use of force matters where a video either clearly does or clearly does not demonstrate proper conduct by the police in a civilian confrontation.

Officials can decide on their own that the public interest in viewing a particular video is strong, and to release that video voluntarily under the common law right to know, without waiving any arguments that the same video is not subject to OPRA. If officials do not release a video voluntarily, and the balancing test must be applied by a judge, the judge has a right to view the video privately before making the decision.

the officer is wearing a body camera. Although a traffic stop may evolve into a criminal investigation if the driver attempts to elude the officer or the officer finds contraband in the car, but ordinary traffic stops, even for drunk driving, involve violations, not criminal matters.

Police departments have regularly released dash camera footage of drunk-driving stops, believing no OPRA exemption to apply. Courts may find that body camera footage should be released to the same degree, and the Directive does not require preclearance from County Prosecutors to release this footage voluntarily.

Body camera footage that depicts criminal investigative steps should be exempt from OPRA, and most courts to have considered the issue ruled that way, but the issue remains under challenge.

Swift Communications

With the law still uncertain in this important area, the Attorney General’s Directive mandates swift and consistent communication between municipalities

and their County Prosecutors, and between County Prosecutors and the Attorney General’s Office. This is intended

to ensure that decisions to release videos voluntarily are made after County and State officials have a chance to participate in the process, and that where the decision-makers’ consensus is against disclosure, courts are presented consistently with the strongest possible arguments, as well as an agreed explanation as to when disclosure may become appropriate.

How the Supreme Court decides to apply OPRA to body camera videos may be a major factor in municipalities’ decisions to adopt the technology. Even if the Supreme Court agrees that camera video of criminal investigative steps need not be disclosed under OPRA, it may take some time for courts to develop a predictable body of law as to how common law requests for body camera video will be decided.

In the meantime, municipal governments deciding whether or not to use body cameras must continue to confront the uncertainty of not knowing when and under what circumstances camera video may have to be released under public access requests. Municipalities using body cameras will want to have open channels to their County Prosecutors and to consult with counsel familiar with the law as it continues to develop. ♣



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Building Business through 3P

Old Bridge Business Alliance forges new relationships

By Owen Henry, Mayor, Old Bridge Township



The Old Bridge Business Alliance, formed in September 2015 in conjunction with the Mayor’s Office of Economic Development, has a membership that has rapidly grown to over 500 during its first year. Recently honored with the NJBIZ Public - Private Partnership Award (in partnership with the New Jersey League of Municipalities) for its work in bringing the Old Bridge Business community together in an innovative way, the Alliance is comprised of local and regional businesses that are interested in partnering with Old Bridge Township to create a dynamic business environment.

The Executive Officer of the Mayor’s Office of Economic Development, Steve Mamakas, works directly with the business community on recruitment, retention and business expansion initiatives in Old Bridge. To achieve these goals, the Alliance has become a great resource, helping its members to create invaluable relationships and growth by working together and sharing business ideas, leads, and contacts.

Opportunities to Share

The Alliance provides advantages to businesses of all sizes. Each month, a small local business alliance member volunteers to open its doors to host a monthly meeting. On a quarterly basis, a large local business alliance member, like the local hospital or banquet facility, offers to hold a bigger event. These are wonderful opportunities for these businesses to showcase

Growth by Design

The Old Bridge Business Alliance was designed to help everyone in our local community by creating partnerships, fostering new opportunities and strengthening the relationships necessary for a better business environment to exist. Since its inception, Old Bridge now has more ways to bridge the business community with the Township, the school district, and not-for-profit organizations, thus creating more public-private relationships to help build and increase positive economic growth for all.

Old Bridge Business Alliance membership corporations, builders, developers, professionals and non-profit organizations. The Alliance also welcomes representatives from our local school board to the meetings, enabling them direct access and unlimited opportunities to engage fully with the business community to assist them in their school fundraising needs.

@ For more information contact The Mayor's Office of Economic Development @ 732-721-5600, Ext. 7920 or email obedo@oldbridge.com

and share their products, goods and/or services to all members. Every month at these events, one of the newer businesses in town is also highlighted and enthusiastically welcomed to the community. Mayor Henry's message to the Business

Alliance membership is simple, "This is your Alliance! It has been developed to benefit all local businesses in Old Bridge. It's a new approach to working together, and the connections that are created will help your business thrive in many ways."

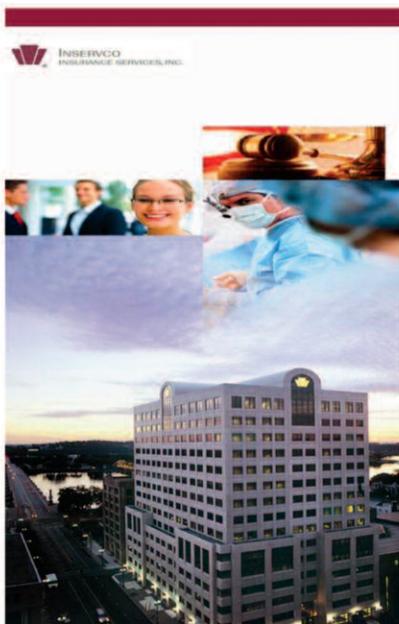
Programs for Success

To date, through Alliance connections, two very exciting new programs have emerged, featuring the public-private partnerships the town was seeking to create. On April 14, 2016 at the Old Bridge Business Alliance Leadership Forum, which gained state recognition, the Alliance launched these two programs: the "Think Old Bridge" Property Tax Reward Program focusing on saving taxpayer's money and promoting local business growth; and the groundbreaking UBER "Safe Ride" Program to keep our community safer.

- **Think Old Bridge** The Think Old Bridge Property Tax Reward Program strengthens our economy by offering residents and non-residents incentives to shop locally at participating businesses. As they shop, a percentage of the bill will be held in their personal Think Old Bridge account, accumulate throughout the year, and be automati-

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Old Bridge Business Alliance

cally credited on their third-quarter property taxes.

Renters and non-residents will receive their earnings by a rebate check. Cardholders can easily track their account online through the Property Tax Card website and keep up to date with current participating establishments. The more they shop, the more they earn.

Over 20,000 Think Old Bridge Property Tax Reward Program cards were sponsored by local businesses and corporations.

• **UBER Safe Ride** The UBER “Safe Ride” program was presented in an effort to combat alcohol-related incidents and provide incentives for residents to dine in Town. The Old Bridge Business Community and UBER have partnered together through the Alliance to pilot the “Safe Ride” program.

Every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday night, between 9 p.m. and 2 a.m., free UBER rides are offered to the patrons of the participating locations, to take Old Bridge Township residents home safely.

The Pilot Program was funded by a lifelong resident and local business owner who has generously donated \$2,500 to kick-off this program, and the good news is that many more

OLD BRIDGE UBER

FREE RIDES HOME

BE SAFE AND LET UBER TAKE THE WHEEL

Uber and the Old Bridge Business Community are working together to reduce alcohol-related incidents.

Rides requested from participating locations between 9pm and 2am on Thursday, Friday or Saturday nights are FREE.

** Rides must end within Old Bridge city limits **



HOW IT WORKS

- 1 Open the app
- 2 Select OLD BRIDGE from the bottom bar
- 3 Tap 'Set Pickup Location'
- 4 Tap 'Request'

PARTICIPATING LOCATIONS:

- General Saloon: 1194 Englishtown Road
- T.G.I Fridays: 1001 US Highway 9 North
- The Grand Marquis: 1550 Route 9 South
- Big Ed's BBQ: 305 Highway 34
- Café Luna: 3679 Route 9 North
- Texas Roadhouse: 1000 US Highway 9
- Pine Tavern: 151 Route 34 & Dock Road
- Bensi Restaurant Italiano: 3899 US Highway 9Shop
- Palms Plaza Caterers: 343 Rt. 34
- Outback Steakhouse: 1398 U.S. Route 9 North

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Alliance members are waiting their turn to take the lead and sponsor this program as well.

The Mayor's Office of Economic Development is always seeking innovative ideas to engage the business community and assist in promoting their service and strengthening our community. Recently, it worked alongside the Middlesex County Workforce Development Team and members of the Alliance to participate in a job fair, which over 50 other businesses attended.

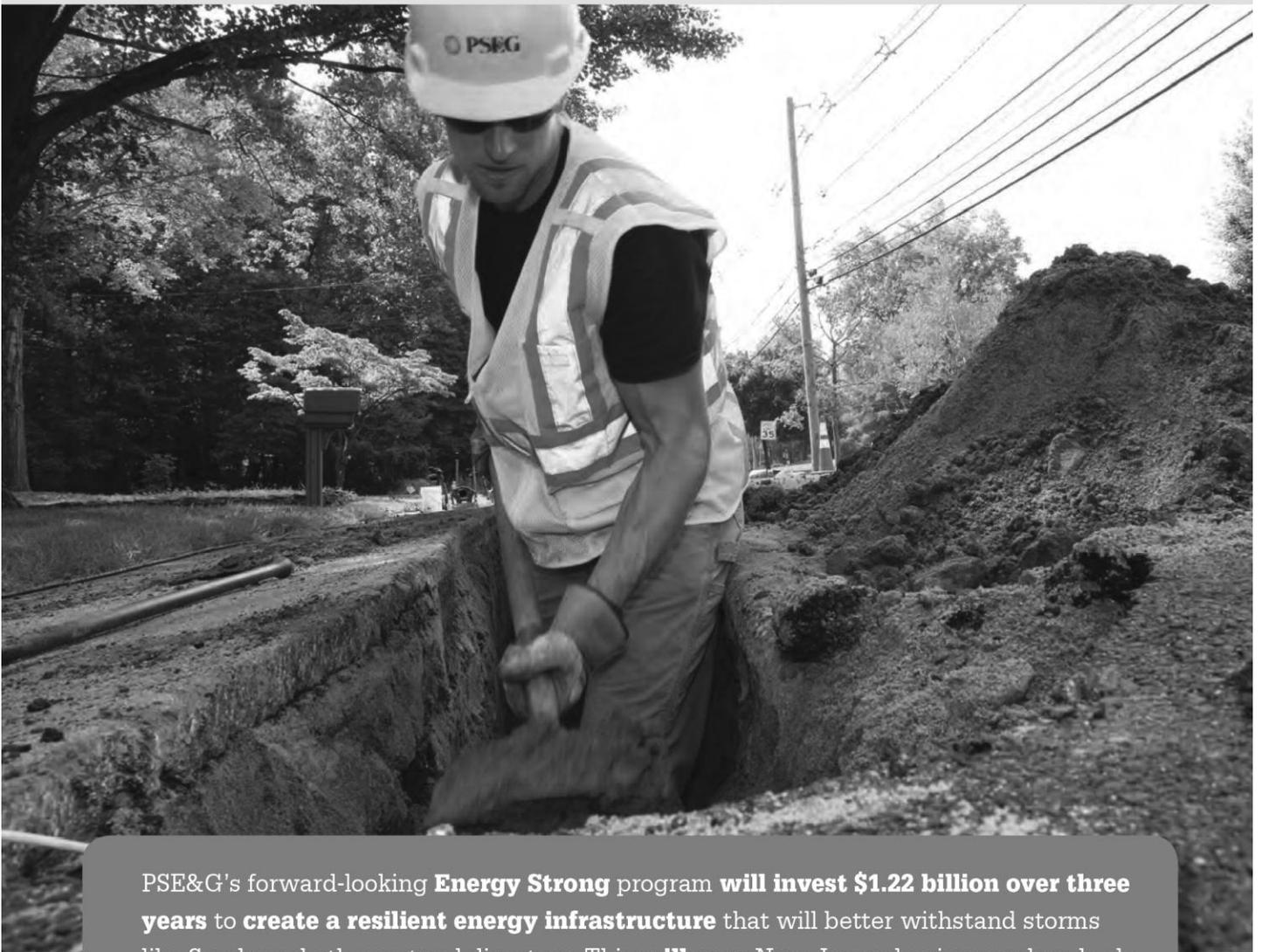
Over the last year, the Old Bridge Business Alliance has generated many opportunities that have saved taxpayer money, encouraged economic growth, created new business relationships, and made the Township of Old Bridge safer.

The excitement around town is contagious, and we cannot wait to see what happens next! 🍀

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Securing Resources

Climate Resiliency through WaterSense

By Janice Whitney, EPA Region 2 Liaison, WaterSense Program



Image courtesy: United States Environmental Protection Agency

Weather patterns are constantly changing and climate changes with an additional number of “extreme” weather events continue to exacerbate the problem. While Superstorm Sandy showed us that flooding is becoming more severe and more frequent, water-rich states like New Jersey are also experiencing bouts of moderate to severe drought. These conditions are raising concerns about how to deal with events releasing too much water, as well as how to prepare for periods of water scarcity.

As these trends continue, startling statistics show just how far we are straining our resources. Between 1950 and 2000, the U.S. population nearly doubled, while the demand on public supply systems more than tripled, depleting aquifers at rates exceeding their recharge. Water and wastewater utilities anticipate needing billions of dollars to maintain infrastructure just to keep up with demand. Over the next 20 years, water infrastructure needs across the US will total more than \$630 billion simply to maintain current levels of service. Climate change

impacts are further stressing these increasing demands. Preparing for climate-change related impacts will cost drinking water and wastewater utilities an additional \$448 to \$944 billion through 2050, according to the EPA’s assessments and data.

Part of the Solution

EPA’s WaterSense program is part of the solution. Coming in second among Ten Potential State Agency Clean Water and Drinking Water Climate Change Adaptation Actions listed in EPA’s FY 2015 National Water Program Guidance Addendum,

Just moving, treating and heating water uses energy, and energy used by the U.S. water sector is more than **30 Billion kWh/year!** Since the program was launched in 2006, WaterSense-labeled products have helped consumers save:



\$1.5 trillion gallons of water



More than \$32.6 billion dollars in water and energy bills.



By the end of 2015, reductions of 212 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity.



78 million metric tons of greenhouse gases were achieved through the use of WaterSense labeled products. That's the equivalent of planting 2 billion trees.

The program's WaterSense Label products use 20% less water and perform as well as, or better than, standard models. Backed by strict water efficiency and performance criteria, WaterSense-labeled products are independently certified to save water and perform as well or better than standard models, so partners can feel confident telling customers to look for the WaterSense label.

“ EPA’s WaterSense program is part of the solution.”

More good news? Water efficiency can stretch our limited water supplies further by reducing the need for expensive water supply infrastructure investments, delaying the need to repair already strained resources and delaying the need

is a recommendation that state and local governments become WaterSense partners. WaterSense | US EPA was launched in

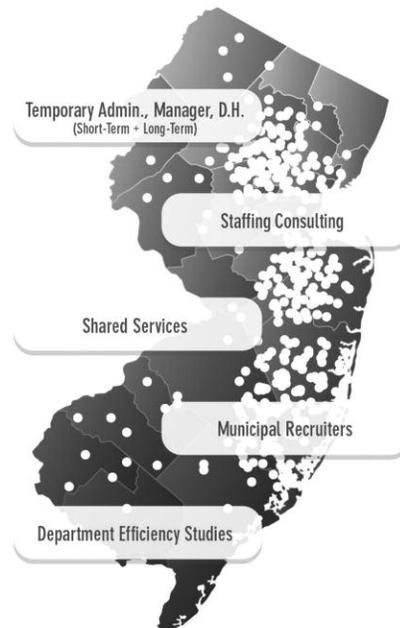
June 2006 as a national, voluntary effort designed to reduce indoor and outdoor water use across the country.

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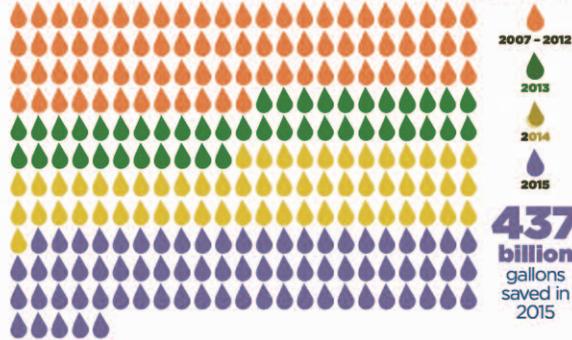


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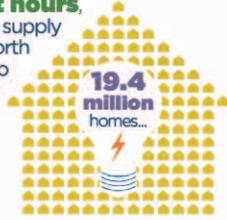
WaterSense, a partnership program sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), works collaboratively with companies, organizations, and communities to encourage innovation in manufacturing and support sustainable jobs for American workers. These graphics illustrate the program's impact.

1.5 trillion gallons of water saved since 2006!

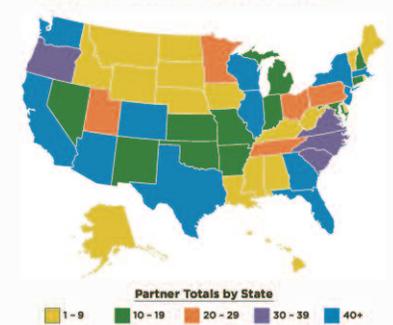


That's **more than** the amount of water used by all of the households in **California for a year!**

WaterSense has helped **reduce** the amount of **energy needed** to heat, pump, and treat water by **212 billion kilowatt hours**, enough to supply a year's worth of power to more than **19.4 million homes**...



WaterSense has more than **1,738** organizational partners...



...and more than **2,200** irrigation pros certified by WaterSense labeled programs

...eliminating **78 million metric tons** of greenhouse gas emissions...



...and **saving consumers \$32.6 billion** in water and energy bills

to construct additional infrastructure right away; perhaps even preventing the need to build new wastewater treatment facilities. Every gallon of water has an

energy "footprint," and the nexus between energy and water is noteworthy because saving water reduces the amount of energy needed.

Smart and Simple Changes

At the same time, even as more efficient products are becoming increasingly available, uninformed consumers continue to needlessly waste water, when they could be making simple changes to reduce demand on resources and help water utilities avoid expensive projects to expand capacity.

More than 700 families around the country have cut their energy and water bills by up to \$600 because they live in WaterSense-labeled new homes that can save about 50,000 gallons of water every year, compared to those living in a typical home.

Homeowners and businesses can hire any of the 2,200 WaterSense-certified irrigation professionals to help design, install, and maintain an irrigation system that delivers a healthy landscape while minimizing waste. If just one out of every 10 American homes installed WaterSense labeled fixtures, we could save more than 120 billion gallons and over \$800 million a year in household utility bills.

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Municipal Methods

The water conservation measures you decide to undertake are solely driven by your priorities. Whether you choose to design a facility water management plan and develop initiatives to reduce overhead costs by conserving water, or launch an outreach and education program in your community for the general public, or at the local schools, WaterSense has the materials to ensure your resiliency success.

If you should decide you want to make your facilities more efficient, WaterSense has created several free tools to help facility managers and building owners get started saving water.

- The *WaterSense at Work—EPA* guidebook includes best management practices on water management planning, water use monitoring and education. Use our Simple Water Assessment Checklist to walk through a facility and quickly identify and target projects and practices that refer directly to a corresponding best management practice in the *WaterSense at Work* guidebook.

- Our Water Use Savings and Evaluation Tool (we call the WaterUSE Tool - US Environmental Protection Agency), is an Excel worksheet, providing some suggested improvements and calculating potential water, energy, and cost savings that could be achieved with each project. Each of these tools are available on the WaterSense website.

- WaterSense also offers monthly water conservation campaigns from which you can pick and choose. You may decide to launch an Education and Outreach Campaign for your community. Or you may want to launch our September Campaign to Save Water in Schools.

In addition to the monthly campaigns, WaterSense also provides partners with access to our Kids Page, full of games, fun facts, handouts (available in Spanish and English) and teacher guides. Teachers can enlist students to become ambassadors, both in school and at home by taking the Family Pledge to save water. I am also available to travel with our mascot Flo—the big blue water droplet—to train the trainers (and get

teachers ready to spread the word to their students in school), set up a WaterSense booth at a festival or conference/workshop, or make a presentation. ♻️

TO JOIN:

It's easy and free to join our partnership. Visit www3.epa.gov/watersense and:

- Review the program guidelines (PDF) and eligibility requirements.
- Complete and submit a simple Promotional Partnership Agreement online and take our Partnership pledge, terms, and conditions.
- The on-line application is only two pages and takes a few minutes to complete. We simply ask for a contact person.

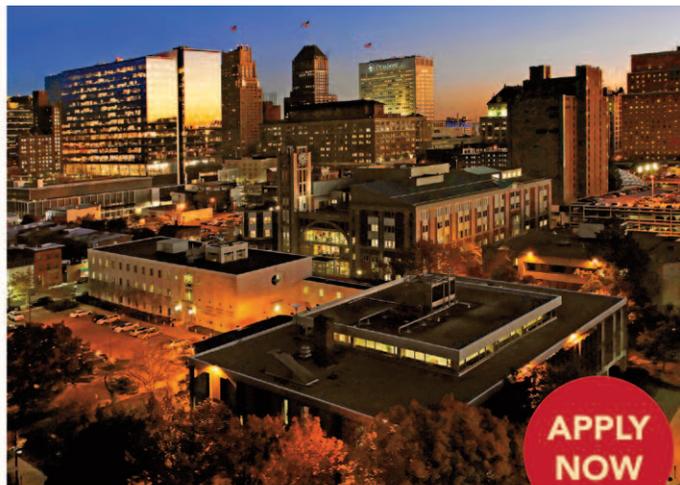
Pledge to educate your community and schools about the importance of water efficiency and water conservation and encourage other eligible constituents to join our growing family of WaterSense promotional partners.

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Advancing Excellence

Innovation in Governance Awards Program winners named

By Connie Jackson, Public Relations Officer, East Orange;
Stacy Kaplan, Communications Coordinator, Highland Park

The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs and the New Jersey League of Municipalities continue to recognize Innovation in Governance through their annual awards program. The awards were presented as part of the Mayors Lunch and Executive Briefing on Wednesday, November 16, during the League of Municipalities Annual Conference in Atlantic City.

This award program highlights exemplary local government programs that provide innovative and practical approaches to solving municipal problems and concerns.

At the same time, these innovative approaches are shared with municipal leaders throughout the state at the Annual New Jersey League of Municipalities Conference, and through the National League of Cities “Best Practices” database nlc.org/find-city-solutions.org.

The 2016 judges were: League Past Presidents Paul Maticera and Plainsboro Mayor Peter Cantu; Division of Local Government Services Director Timothy Cunningham; and League of Municipalities Executive Director Michael J. Darcy, CAE.

The program invited applications describing any type of innovation undertaken by municipalities in the past 18 months. And the participants responded with a range of submissions that underscore the variety of challenges municipalities solve. This year, two municipalities garnered top honors: the City of East Orange and the Borough of Highland Park.

The following is a rundown of the winning projects’ highlights and how they may apply to other municipalities.

Presented with plaques at the League’s annual Conference in Atlantic City, two projects received top honors:

City of East Orange: 9-Step Approach to VAP

Borough of Highland Park: HP Gives a Hoot Initiative

Honorable Mention:

City of Somers Point: Live in Somers Point Marketing Campaign to Attract Homeowners

City of Summit: Summit re: Vision–Master Plan Re-Examination Program AND Shark Diddy TV and Lifejacket Awareness Campaign to Promote Pool Safety Awareness

Williamstown/Monroe Township (Gloucester): Brand and Logo Development and Website to Promote Williamstown



Volunteers from throughout the community have helped make Highland Park’s HP Gives a Hoot Initiative a success story.

9-Step Approach to Vacant and Abandoned Properties Program (VAP)

As the Director of Property Maintenance, Dwight Saunders had one goal—to once again make East Orange one of the cleanest cities in America, a designation it held three times over three decades ago.

Challenged with years of urban decay and blight, Saunders spearheaded the development of a Vacant and Abandoned Properties Program (VAP) that would aggressively combat this issue using codes that had been on the city’s books for years, yet not enforced. In doing so, he helped to create not only a cleaner community, but a safer and more profitable one.

Under Saunders’ leadership, East Orange’s administration has been able to successfully work toward achieving its mission to enhance the quality of life by providing outstanding service to its residents, visitors, community, and business partners.

Armed with a staff of Rutgers University-certified personnel who employ the latest technology to inspect and identify

blighted properties, the Department of Property Maintenance is using code enforcement to hold property owners accountable and clean up the city. Once identified, property owners are forced to address the issue of blight—either by following the code or paying fines. In one year’s time, the efforts of Property Maintenance have resulted in over 1,027 properties being identified, more than 856 owners tracked down, and a surplus of \$604,000 in unanticipated revenue for the city since December 2014. From June 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016, Vacant and Abandoned Division has collected \$384,000 in registration fees.

His effective 9-step VAP program is now considered a best practice in municipal code enforcement, garnering statewide attention and requests for Saunders to speak before the State Assembly Housing Committee as well as before attendees of numerous conferences and seminars dedicated to implementing the Abandoned Properties Rehabilitation Act to enact change.

Working collaboratively with the

Quality of Life Task Force, Property Maintenance has empowered residents and businesses to take a proactive part in keeping the city clean. Seeking to encourage active participation in the beautification of East Orange, the department launched the “Don’t Dump on EO” campaign, a citywide initiative to reinforce community pride among the young people in our community.

Most recently, working with the Mayor’s Office of Training and Employment, Saunders played a vital role in executing “The Neighborhood Clean Up Initiative.” This project employed a team of 12 residents to assist in cleaning up vacant and abandoned properties. The response was tremendous and contagious, eliciting scores of offers from volunteers wanting to help. The initiative, once limited to 12 weeks, will be continued using funds generated through Saunders’ department.

HP Gives a Hoot

In the summer of 2015, the mayor and Borough employees noticed a group of young children wandering outside the

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Before



After

East Orange's VAP program resulted in before and after success stories throughout the city.

IN YOUR TOWN

East Orange's VAP is a model for other municipalities trying to strengthen their municipal code enforcements. Consider the 9-steps for a successful VAP in your town:

1. Identifying vacant and abandoned properties
2. Property assessment
3. Property classification
4. Administrative maintenance of identified vacant and abandoned properties.
5. Public notice
6. Notification to owner of record of responsible party
7. Vacant and abandoned property registration form
8. Processing property registrations
9. License: Issue vacation property registration license (valid for one year from date of registration)

For the complete PowerPoint rundown of the VAP, visit njslom.org/InnovationGovernanceAwards2016.html

municipal building, looking bored. At lunchtime each day, they would enter the building and ask employees for snacks. Of course, we all obliged.

It didn't take long to realize that these children, whose parents were working during the day, did not have access to healthy lunches when school was not in session. Instead, they would often either skip lunch or have fast food or snacks during the day. With more than 36% of our students on free or reduced lunch at school, the severity of this issue became quite apparent.

Highland Park's commitment to all of our children led to Mayor Gayle Brill Mittler's idea to create a town-wide fund called "HP Gives a Hoot" (representing our school's mascot of an owl). This fund, a nonprofit run by a committee comprised of Borough employees and volunteers, was created to provide lunches for children when school was not in session. It has grown rapidly, raising enough money to also help source funds for our Highland Park Recreation Summer Camp as well as scholarships for four high school students to attend a YouthROOTS mentorship camp this past summer.

"HP Gives a Hoot" began with a written appeal from the mayor to a select group of Highland Park residents and businesses, asking for support to start this fund. Residents were also invited to an evening of musical performances by some of our high school musical groups, along with refreshments provided at a

discounted rate by the restaurant.

In July, the Borough rolled out a large-scale campaign, collecting donations at our Independence Day Fireworks celebration, and subsequently at our Police Department's National Night Out event in August. More than \$2,000 was raised, mostly through contributions of \$1 or so, through these efforts and events, and "HP Gives a Hoot" continues to receive donations throughout the year. The goal is to encourage our residents to help one another.

During the 2015-2016 schoolyear, "HP Gives a Hoot" worked with Elijah's Promise Soup Kitchen in New Brunswick to provide bagged lunches for the children on days when school was not in session. Elijah's Promise generously donated the lunches, which were available at our Senior/Youth Center. Children were also treated to a movie or games to entertain them for a few hours, and volunteers from our high school supervised the children, alongside volunteers from our senior population.

On an average day, approximately 20 students attended this program and received a bagged lunch. This program was only publicized through word-of-mouth in the beginning to gauge the numbers of children who would be participating, and throughout the year, the number of children participating grew.

The Borough recognized the need to establish a long-term lunch program. Through a partnership with our school

IN YOUR TOWN

Advancing Excellence

Highland Park's "HP Gives a Hoot" program can be replicated in communities throughout New Jersey. With the help of volunteers, and the coordination with local soup kitchens or food pantry organizations, towns throughout New Jersey can help feed their children healthy meals when schools are closed and these meals are not available to them.

The program is a perfect example of how municipal leadership can encourage resident volunteer efforts.

"HP Gives a Hoot" is the quintessential example of a successful government/citizen/philanthropic/business cooperative effort. It utilizes the organization of municipal support and is run by both municipal employee volunteers and a committee of volunteer residents. This committee makes decisions regarding fund distribution and coordination, food venues and daily execution of the program. The committee of volunteers includes clergy, food pantry workers, and our Human Relations Commission members, among others (including senior citizens), as well as a member of our communications staff at the Borough.

SETUP: Municipalities can set up a trust fund, made up of donations, which was done through the Borough's finance department.

MEETINGS: This committee meets on a monthly basis to discuss issues and opportunities to help the children.

CONTRIBUTORS: Aside from the committee, residents and local businesses have contributed generously through donations or volunteer efforts.

PARTNERS: The committee, spearheaded by a Borough employee, is well-organized and committed to their mission. The mayor plays an active role in this program and keeps the Borough Councilmembers advised of the fund's programs. The partnerships with Elijah's Promise Soup Kitchen and the Global Grace Café were cultivated by our committee, and support from our Community Food Pantry is also an important factor in the success of this program.

district, we were able to identify children who would benefit from the program. This cooperation also helped maintain the confidentiality of the children and families that participate in the program. During the summer of 2016, the Borough partnered with the Global Grace Café, a cafeteria-type dining establishment operated out of a local church in Highland Park. The Borough was given discounted vouchers, paid for by the "HP Gives a Hoot" fund, which children could bring to the café for a free lunch.

In exchange, our Community Food Pantry helped make this partnership possible by donating ingredients and supplies to the Global Grace Café, thereby lowering their product costs and enabling them to offer discounted lunches. Because of the contributions from these two organizations, we were able to provide more than 150 lunches to children during the summer. The program was not only beneficial to the children, but helped increase traffic and revenue to the café, and it will continue through the school year when school is not in session. 📌



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Conference Connections Successfully “Meeting the Challenges of Municipal Government”



The League’s Annual Conference in Atlantic City Rolls Out Inspiration and Action Plans for Local Government to Move Forward.

At a meeting abuzz with talk of new leadership on the federal level and an exciting race to come for the governor’s office, the 101st New Jersey State League of Municipalities Annual Conference at the Atlantic City Convention Center in November was a success from start to finish.

Providing attendees with the opportunity to connect with their peers and a wide array of exhibitors, this year’s conference lived up to its promise: “Meeting the Challenges of Municipal Government.”

Attendance was up as the League’s members met to elect a new president and executive board, grow and develop new understanding of today’s most challenging municipal issues, and formulate plans for success in town and in the state legislature for 2017.

Thank you to the more than 720 exhibitors and 16,000 attendees who made the Annual League Conference a success! We thank you for your support of the League and your continued service to New Jersey’s local governments.

Following are highlights of the annual gathering, from special events to inspirational sessions.

@ Visit njslom.org for a full photo album of each day at the conference

“I’ve been mayor for 21 years and was on council for 11 before that, so I’ve been coming [to the League Conference] for 30 years and I’m still learning.”

Jim Cassella, Mayor, East Rutherford; NJLM 1st Vice President; Speaker, Orientation session



The NJ Beach Bird created by artist Willie Cole was on exhibit in the Atlantic City Convention Center entryway through the NJ Clean Communities Council. The bird is created out of recycled plastic water bottles.



The first day of the Conference, Tuesday, Nov. 15, had an eager audience ready to participate in sessions and workshops as well as visit the exhibit floor for an in-person look at the latest products and services to improve municipal operations. On the slate for the day was an Orientation, the League’s Resolution Committee meeting, and sessions on topics ranging from budgets, to laughter in government, to regulating drones.

“We are like a fraternity and we all want to put the best foot forward. What ends up happening in one community may end up happening in other communities.”

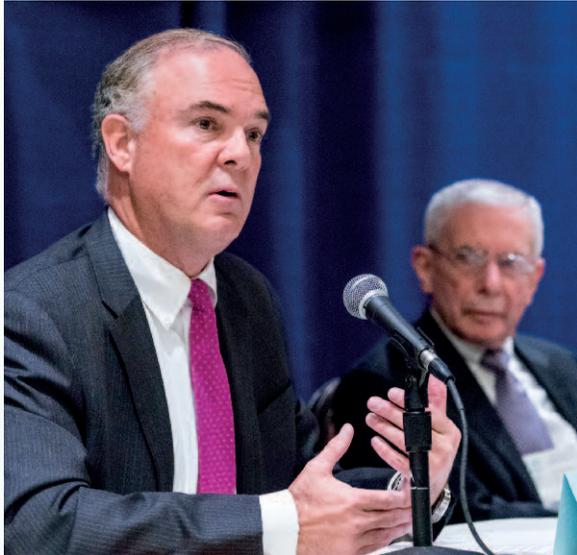
Brian Wahler, Mayor Piscataway;
NJLM Past President; Speaker,
Orientation session



left to right from top: Providing a welcome to the event, an Orientation session was presented by (l to r) Mayor Albert Kelly of Bridgeton, then 1st Vice President; Mayor Brian Wahler of Piscataway, League Past President; Mayor James Cassella of East Rutherford, then 2nd Vice President; and League Executive Director Michael J. Darcy, CAE. • The League’s Resolution Committee met to establish priorities for 2017. Here, Andrew Coppola, Administrator of Washington Township (Morris) shares his views. • There was a steady stream of traffic in the Exhibit Hall throughout the event. • The attendees were out and ready early for a day of learning and networking to kick off the annual event. • The “Drones: Challenges and Opportunities for Local Governments” session, moderated by Mayor Brian Wahler, League Past President (holding drone), brought in an example of the flying regulatory riddles.



The second day of the League Conference, Wednesday, Nov. 16, was packed with activity from sun up until sundown. Attendees had the opportunity to kick off the day with an Mayors Wellness Campaign event, Fitness with an Olympian featuring Joetta Clark Diggs, four-time Olympian and campaign spokesperson. For the remainder of the day, there were intriguing panels regarding the next governor, the opinions of previous governors, and the outlook of state leadership. The Mayors Box luncheon honored the achievements of longstanding mayors with Hall of Fame inductions as well as thought-provoking presentation from US Dept. of Homeland Security's Ehsan Zaffar as well as Commissioners Chuck Richman from NJ DCA and Bob Martin from NJ DEP.



“ We’ve already saved 2 billion gallons of water. BUT we’re 15-30% lower than we should be. Every drop counts.”

Bob Martin, Commissioner, NJ Department of Environmental Protection, Panelist at Mayors Box Lunch



left to right from top (page 46): NJ DEP Commissioner Bob Martin discusses hot environmental topics at the Mayors Box Lunch. • East Orange’s Director of Property Maintenance Dwight Saunders and Mayor Lester Taylor accept the town’s 2016 Innovation in Governance award from NJ DCA Commissioner Chuck Richman. • (L to R) Highland Park Council President Susan Welkovits, Councilman Jim Walsh, Mayor Gayle Brill Mittler, League Executive Board Member, Councilman Matt Hersh, NJ DCA Chairman Richman, and Councilwoman Elsie Foster-Dublin accept the city’s Innovation in Governance award. • Attendees filled meeting rooms to learn the latest on a variety of hot topics for municipal officials. Legislative Leaders met for a panel discussion moderated by Michael Aron, NJTV Chief Political Correspondent. (L to r) Senate Republican Leader Thomas H. Kean, Assembly Speaker Vincent Prieto, Aron, Assembly Republican Leader Jon M. Bramnick, Senate President Stephen M. Sweeney, and Bridgeton Mayor Albert Kelly, League 1st Vice President.

left to right from top (page 47): Ehsan Zaffar from the US Department of Homeland Security discusses the local role in Mitigating Violent Extremism. • Former Governors’ Year in Review featured former NJ Governors John Bennett, Donald DiFrancesco, James Florio, and James McGreevey in a panel moderated by ABC-6’s Nora Muchanic. • Panelists at the Wednesday session “Public Financing” (l to r) Douglas Goldmacher, Analyst, Moody’s Investors Service; Edward McManimon, League Bond Counsel, McManimon Scotland & Baumann; Mayor Dana Redd of Camden; Timothy Cunningham, Director, DLGC, DCS; and Jennifer Edwards, Managing Director, Acacia Financial Group, Inc. (Panelist Noreen White, Co-President, Acacia Financial Group, Inc., not pictured). • Olympians and mayors alike were on the move at the Mayors Wellness Campaign early morning workout, hosted by spokeswoman Olympian Joetta Clark Diggs. • The Governor’s Race & the Urban Agenda inspired Atlantic City Mayor Don Guardian to share his hopes with attendees of the New Jersey Urban Mayors Association meeting.



The final day of the Conference, Thursday, Nov. 17, included a breakfast with the Women in Municipal Government Committee, a visit from Governor Chris Christie to the League Luncheon as well as the election of a new League president and sessions that included water infrastructure, the future of volunteer EMS, and OPRA and electronic records management.



“Mayors and councilpeople are some of the most thankless jobs in New Jersey. You work 24 hours a day, seven days a week and everyone in town thinks you are in charge of everything in town.”

Governor Chris Christie, Speaker at League Luncheon



At the League Business Meeting (top to bottom), then League President Joe Tempesta was presented with a service plaque from incoming President Kelly. Then President Tempesta was joined by Senate President Stephen Sweeney to swear in new President Kelly and the League's Officers, Mayor James Cassella of East Rutherford as 1st Vice President, Mayor Colleen Mahr of Fanwood as 2nd Vice President, and Mayor James Perry of Hardwick as 3rd Vice President.



Left to right from top: At the Women in Municipal Government (WIMG) breakfast then President Tempesta acknowledges the work of committee chair and League Past President, Mayor Suzanne Walters of Stone Harbor. • Walters presents WIMG Outstanding Women In Government Awards to Executive Director at Thomas Edison University's John S. Watson Institute for Public Policy, Barbara George Johnson, and the Mayors' Wellness Campaign, represented by New Jersey Healthcare Quality Institute president and CEO Linda J. Schwimmer. • At the League Luncheon, then President Tempesta greets Lt. Gov. Kim Guadagno and Senate President Sweeney. • Gov. Chris Christie speaks about his outlook and plans. • DCA Commissioner Richman prepares to accept his Public Sector Career Recognition Award with (l to r) Mayor Janice Mironov of East Windsor, League Past President; John Donadio, Executive Director, NJ Association of Counties; and Atlantic City Mayor Don Guardian.

101st Conference **Exhibitor** Highlight

**Be sure to follow-up
with exhibitors after
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Meet Your New Board Members



Gayle Brill Mittler

Gayle Brill Mittler is Mayor of the Borough of Highland Park. She was appointed mayor in 2014, and elected in 2015. Prior to her appointment, she served as Council President in 2012, and she was a Council member since October 2009. In this capacity, she served as Chair of the Council's Economic Development Committee. She was also on the initial group of volunteers that created the downtown district's Main Street Highland Park.

Mayor Brill Mittler strives to make Highland Park an "economically sustainable" community that addresses the needs of all its diverse population groups. She spearheaded the creation of the Borough's two 1st Place Innovation in Governance Awards for the "Park Partners Community Grant Program" and "HP Gives a Hoot." (See page 42 for more on the award-winning program).

Mayor Brill Mittler's two children are graduates of Highland Park High School. She resides in Highland Park with her husband, Uri Mittler.



Daniel Flynn

Daniel Flynn is a councilman in Newton who was first elected in 2012 and, before being elected, served on the Newton Planning Board.

Mr. Flynn started his career as a civil engineer for DMJM Harris. In 2008, he went to work as a Project Manager for Stormwater Compliance Solutions, LLC, an engineering firm that specializes in stormwater management and many other types of water resource-related projects. He also works for Ferriero Engineering, Inc., as a design engineer and assists in various municipal engineering projects. The two companies work out of the same office. Councilman Flynn became a licensed engineer in 2014 and partner in the firm of Stormwater Compliance Solutions, LLC, where he continues to build the company's portfolio as a firm specializing in stormwater management both in New Jersey and around the region. Prior to moving to Newton, he was a member of the Byram Township Architectural Review Committee.

In 2007, he graduated from SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, a satellite school to Syracuse University, with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Engineering. He graduated Lenape Valley Regional High School in Stanhope in 2003.



William Pikolycky

William Pikolycky was first elected Mayor of Woodbine in November 1990. Prior to that he was a councilman from January 1979.

In addition to his 26 years as Mayor of the Borough of Woodbine, he also serves as Chair of the Woodbine Municipal Utilities Authority and of the Woodbine Port Authority, and is Chair of the Pinelands Municipal Council. He is a League of Municipalities representative on the Board of Trustees for Sustainable Jersey. He has been a member of the New Jersey Water Association since 1991. He has also been involved with the MidAtlantic Pilots Association and the AOPA. He served as President of the New Jersey Conference of Mayors in 2005, and now serves as a director. He is also Past President of the Cape May County League of Municipalities. He served on the Board of Directors for the Sam Azeez Museum of Woodbine Heritage and is now on the Advisory Board of the Anne Azeez Instructional Site of Stockton College, which is also located in Woodbine.

Mayor Pikolycky is an active member of the local Ukrainian community, a member of St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church in Millville, and a member of Ukrainian National Association Branch 378. He was employed by the State of New Jersey in various capacities at senior management level positions for 27 years, before retiring in 2002. He is a graduate of the Camden County Police Academy and served as a Police Officer with the Department of Human Services. He graduated from the Certified Public Manager Program at Rutgers University, Camden.

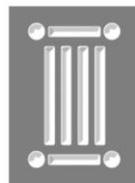
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2017 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



L league President Albert Kelly, Mayor of Bridgeton has identified a number of League priorities for 2017, and asks for your assistance in advancing these priorities.

Some of the items listed below may be familiar issues—Mayor Kelly continues to prioritize previously unaddressed significant public policy issues that remain impactful to our municipalities and our taxpayers.

He has also added several new subjects to the forefront of the League’s efforts, and he requests your assistance and advocacy to help the League move these key issues to a positive outcome.

PUBLIC HEALTH The League will focus on the promotion of a culture of health, including access to food, food deserts, and summer feeding programs. We’ve started already with the drive at the League Conference to secure a place for New Jersey in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) plans to launch a two-year pilot to enable Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participants to purchase their groceries online. Each day, thousands of New Jersey residents struggle to put healthy food on the table for their families. As of July 2016, there were 858,572 persons in New Jersey receiving SNAP benefits, which is approximately 10% of our state’s population. A significant number of your constituents are dependent on these benefits to provide nutritious and affordable food for their children and families.

STATUS OF TAX EXEMPT PROPERTIES Tax exempt properties such as hospitals, private schools, and government properties and tax fairness for property taxpayers.

YOUTH Promotion of youth involvement in public service, including youth City Council members. These opportunities will give youth from communities all over New Jersey the opportunity to get involved with their home towns, develop character and integrity, and help develop the next generation of leadership.

Additionally, the League maintains the following as key and ongoing legislative priorities:

AFFORDABLE HOUSING REFORM With hundreds of municipalities seeking clarity on their State imposed affordable housing obligations, the League will continue to press the Administration and Legislature to enact long-overdue reforms to enact a reasonable, rational, fully-funded and achievable state housing policy.

RESTORATION OF ENERGY TAX RECEIPTS This is a means to provide real property tax relief. Due to rising costs, municipalities often need to spend more in successive years in order to maintain services and programs at a steady level. When the State provides flat property tax relief, the difference will, in many cases, have to be made up by increases in property taxes or reductions in existing services

Over the course of the next year, the League will also focus on important topics such as maintaining integrity of local PERS and PFRS funding and the extension of the 2% cap on interest arbitration awards.

The League continues its strong commitment to empowering local governments, helping them to operate more efficiently and effectively as they advance innovative programs that strengthen the level of service provided while saving taxpayer dollars. 📌

Further Considerations

President Kelly has also directed the League to maintain engagement on the following issues:

➤ **UEZs** Preservation of Urban Enterprise Zones (UEZs) is a priority as the League supports efforts to extend Urban Enterprise Zone (UEZ) authorization in municipalities where the program is scheduled to sunset.

➤ **VETERANS** Providing needed support for Veterans, including suicide prevention, housing and addressing homelessness.

➤ **DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFTS** Responding to the changing needs of local governments, when municipalities become majority minority.

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Annual Mayors' Hall of Fame

At the 101st Annual New Jersey League of Municipalities Conference in Atlantic City, then League first vice president Mayor Albert Kelly of Bridgeton and officials from throughout New Jersey honored the most recent inductees to the Mayors' Hall of Fame.

The League established the Mayors' Hall of Fame to recognize mayors who have served for over 10, 20, or 30 years. "Serving as mayor for decades is a long-term commitment of time and energy as leaders with the goal of bettering their communities. Over the years, the mayors we have recognized have seen their communities grow and change while they have worked to make a difference," said League Executive Director Michael Darcy, CAE. "They have earned this recognition."

The members of the 22nd induction class of the Mayors' Hall of Fame were honored at a special ceremony during the Mayors Box Luncheon on Wednesday, November 16, in Atlantic City.



Gold Level Mayors (L to R) Mayor Janice M. Mironov of East Windsor, Mayor Chuck Chiarello of Buena Vista Township, and Mayor Suzanne M. Walters of Stone Harbor. All three of these honored Mayors are League Past Presidents.

Silver Level Mayors (L to R standing): Mayor David A. Runfeldt of Lincoln Park Borough, Mayor Neil Henry of Mendham, Mayor Walter G. LaCicero of Lavallette Borough, Mayor Randy Brown of Evesham Township, League Executive Board Member. (L to R seated) Mayor Daniel Mahler of Wanaque Borough, Mayor Dave Fried of Robbinsville Township, Mayor Paul J. Kennedy of Ocean Gate Borough, Mayor Paul Medany of Deptford Township.

List of Inductees:

Gold (20+ years as Mayor)

- Honorable Thomas Nicole. Brielle Borough
- Honorable Chuck Chiarello,
League Past President. Buena Vista Township
- Honorable Janice M. Mironov,
League Past President. East Windsor Township
- Honorable George D. Fosdick Ridgefield Park Village
- Honorable Suzanne M. Walters,
League Past President Stone Harbor Borough

Silver (10 to 20 years as Mayor)

- Honorable Paul Medany Deptford Township
- Honorable Randy Brown,
League Executive Board Member. . Evesham Township
- Honorable Walter G. LaCicero . . . Lavallette Borough
- Honorable David A. Runfeldt . . . Lincoln Park Borough
- Honorable Neil Henry. Mendham Borough
- Honorable Allen Morgan. New Providence Borough
- Honorable Paul J. Kennedy Ocean Gate Borough
- Honorable Jose "Joey" Torres . . . Paterson City
- Honorable Dave Fried Robbinsville Township
- Honorable Brian G. Gallagher . . . Somerville Borough
- Honorable Daniel Mahler Wanaque Borough
- Honorable Janet W. Tucci,
League Executive Board Member . . . West Long Branch Borough
- Honorable John E. McCormac . . . Woodbridge Township



League Committee Approves 19 Resolutions

On Thursday, November 17, 19 resolutions articulating new legislative and policy priorities for the League of Municipalities were adopted at the Annual Business meeting, held to conclude the League’s 101st Annual conference.

On Tuesday, November 15, the League Resolutions Committee screened these resolutions. The Committee, chaired by the incoming League President Albert Kelly, Mayor of Bridgeton, recommended all 19 resolutions.

League staff will be working with the sponsors of the resolutions to line up legislative sponsors and taking other steps to see the implementation of these resolutions.

Resolutions Index

NJLM Resolution No. 2016 – 01

In Support of an Affordable and Sustainable National Flood Insurance Program

NJLM Resolution No. 2016 – 02

Resolution Calling for the use of 9-1-1 Service Fee Revenues for 9-1-1 Maintenance and Next Generation 9-1-1 System Infrastructure

NJLM Resolution No. 2016 – 03

Resolution regarding the Provision of Reliable Telephone, Wireless, and Wired Broadband Service to All Residents in All New Jersey Municipalities

NJLM Resolution No. 2016 – 04

In Support of Regulations and Procedures Governing the Use of Municipal Seals

NJLM Resolution No. 2016 – 05

Resolutions Supporting Legislative Reforms to Affirm the Language and Intent of the Fair Housing Act in Regards to the “Gap” Period

NJLM Resolution No. 2016-06

Resolution Urging the State Legislature to Extend the 2% Cap on Police and Fire Arbitration Contract Awards

NJLM Resolution No. 2016 – 07

Veterans Treatment Courts Honor Those Who Served

NJLM Resolution No. 2016 – 08

Resolution Supporting Urban Enterprise Zone Extension

NJLM Resolution No. 2016 – 09

Resolution Concerning Investments Permitted by a Joint Insurance Fund

NJLM Resolution No. 2016 – 10

Advocating for a 21st Century Water Infrastructure

NJLM Resolution No. 2016 – 11

Resolution in Support of an Aggressive But Achievable Renewable Portfolio Standard by 2050

NJLM Resolution No. 2016 – 12

Resolution Calling for Legislation Allowing for Enhanced Municipal Oversight of Massage Parlors

NJLM Resolution No. 2016 – 13

Resolution Supporting the Federal Tax Exemption on Municipal Bonds

NJLM Resolution No. 2016 – 14

Resolution Calling for a Study on the Cost and Application of the Open Public Records Act

NJLM Resolution No. 2016 – 15

Resolution Calling for the Restoration of Energy Taxes to Municipalities

NJLM Resolution No. 2016 – 16

Resolutions Supporting Legislative Reforms to the Fair Housing Act For a State Housing Bank as a New Creative Tools to Facilitate Municipal Compliance and Generate Housing Funding

NJLM Resolution No. 2016 – 17

In Appreciation of League President Joseph Tempesta, Mayor of West Caldwell

NJLM Resolution No. 2016 – 18

Resolution for the Adoption of Guidelines for the Prevention and Management of Concussions and Head Injuries in Youth Sports

NJLM Resolution No. 2016 – 19

Resolution Calling for Fairness in Reimbursement of Benefits of Non-Vested Employees

Water Quality Management Planning—Some Changes That are Worth Understanding

By Edward Purcell, Esq.
Staff Attorney-NJLM Associate Counsel

On October 6, 2016, the DEP adopted new Water Quality Management Planning (WQMP) rules. These rules will play a large part in future development and are well worth the time it takes to understand them. This article is not meant to be a fine-toothed analysis of these rules but it will discuss: 1) some background on the WQMP rules; 2) major changes you should be aware of; and 3) an overview of the process used to expand sewer service. That last issue, sewer service expansion, will be a very important affordable housing issue.

First, we need to go over some background. The WQMP rules are a component of the state's water quality continuing planning process as required by the federal Clean Water Act. In other words, they regulate the provision of sewer and septic service across the state. As a part of this regulatory system, the Governor has designated 12 area-wide Water Quality Management (WQM) Planning Areas in New Jersey. Each area has a WQM Plan, also known as an area-wide plan. Wastewater Management Plans (WMPs) are components of the area-wide plans. WMPs are created by local agencies and approved by the DEP.

WMPs address wastewater management planning in each county or municipality. Planning must take into account whether an area is within a sewer service area or not. Non-sewer service areas may not be suitable for any wastewater service or they may only be suitable for individual subsurface sewage disposal systems (ISSDS), i.e., septic systems that discharge less than or equal to 2,000 gallons per day to ground water.

In 2008, the DEP amended the WQMP rules to be more restrictive than its previous rules and to encourage the adoption of up to date WMPs. The responsibility to create WMPs was placed on local agencies, first on the county and, alternatively, on the municipal level. The general consensus has been that the 2008 rules were unworkable. In 2010, local agencies were granted additional time to complete WMPs. After that, the legislature empowered DEP to make individual determinations regarding water quality management planning in lieu of actual

long-term planning by counties and municipalities. See P.L. 2011, c. 203 as amended and supplemented by P.L. 2013, c. 188. The DEP's recent rule adoption reinstates a muscular process for wastewater planning in New Jersey.

So, what changed?

A fair amount of changes were made in the new WQMP rules, but for the sake of brevity there are five you should know about.

“ WQMP rules are a component of the state's water quality continuing planning process as required by the federal Clean Water Act. In other words, they regulate the provision of sewer and septic service across the state.”

First since 2008 approximately 180,000 acres of environmentally sensitive areas have been removed from existing sewer service areas. These areas can, by default, be considered only suitable for septic systems or as areas not suitable for development.

Second the new rules eliminate the mandatory withdrawal mechanism imposed by the 2008 rules. The 2008 rules incentivized the creation of WMPs by withdrawing sewer service designation if a local agency did not adopt its WMP on time. The new rules remove mandatory withdrawal. N.J.A.C. 7:15-4.2.

Third the new rules remove most requirements for the adoption of ordinances. For example, municipalities will no longer be required to adopt ordinances that regulate nonpoint source pollution. However, the rules do require that WMPs

for septic areas must demonstrate that septic tanks “are subject to a mandatory maintenance program.” N.J.A.C. 7:15-4.5(c)(1)(vi). These programs can be implemented with or without an ordinance.

Fourth the new rules keep the 2008 rules’ comprehensive build out analysis for septic areas but remove its mandatory downzoning requirements. Without getting too far into the weeds, the rules limit development by imposing limitations on the discharge of nitrates into the groundwater. Nitrates are a byproduct of sanitary waste. Generally speaking, the greater the amount of waste, the larger that sites must be zoned to accommodate it.

Under the 2008 rules, municipalities were required to downzone when there was an insufficient nitrate dilution capacity to meet the DEP’s 2.0 mg/L nitrate target. These regulations eliminate that requirement.

Instead, the DEP has vowed, in these instances, to “work with counties and

municipalities to explore options to address the nitrate issue to protect groundwater.” Proposed Repeal and New Rule: N.J.A.C. 7:15 et al, Docket No. 10-15-09, at 30. Thus, while downzoning is one tool that can be used to meet nitrate dilution targets, it’s not the only one.

Fifth the new rules also remove the mandate to resolve all sewer service capacity issues before a WMP can be adopted by the DEP. Like the 2008 rules, these rules will require local agencies, submitting a WMP within a sewer service area, to do a current wastewater capacity analysis and determine future wastewater needs based on population, and existing and planned future development. But, unlike the 2008 rules, these rules do not require that these issues be resolved before the DEP can adopt the local agency’s WMP. N.J.A.C. 7:15-4.5(b). Rather, the local agency must identify strategies it or its wastewater treatment plant has considered or will consider to address identified

capacity needs. These five changes are worth noting but, as will be discussed below, it’s important to understand something that didn’t change—how sewer service area can be expanded.

Lastly we will talk about how amendments, or changes, to area wide plans can be made. This is particularly important, given the current affordable housing situation in New Jersey. In Mount Laurel IV the N.J. Supreme Court advised judges hearing towns’ declaratory judgment actions that parts of COAH’s third round rules could be used as “guidelines” in their determinations.

Under COAH’s regulations, a municipality could receive a durational adjustment if its open space lacks access to sewer capacity. N.J.A.C. 5:93-4.3(c). Alternatively, open space without sewer service can, under certain circumstances, be included in a municipal affordable housing plan. The pertinent COAH rule provides:

When a community has sufficient land, but insufficient water and/or sewer to

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support inclusionary development, the Council shall review each possible site for inclusionary development to determine if it is realistic for the site to receive the required water and/or sewer during the period of substantive certification. The Council shall require sufficient information to determine the site's prospects of receiving infrastructure, and the site's prospects of inclusion in an areawide water quality management plan amendment, developed in accordance with the rules of the DEP. [emphasis added] N.J.A.C. 5:93-8.

Put another way, open space that lacks sewer capacity can still be used to meet a municipality's fair share obligation, but only if, pursuant to DEP rules, the expansion of sewer to that area is "realistic."

Let's use an example. Consider a town with moderate affordable housing obligations. The town is entirely built out, except for one very large parcel of vacant land that is outside of a sewer

service area. That property could be zoned for affordable housing (i.e. inclusionary zoning). However, a court would only find that it can be used to meet the towns' affordable housing obligations if sewer expansion is "realistic." Thus, it's important to focus on the factors DEP considers in granting amendments to its area-wide plans.

The DEP's decision to amend existing area-wide plans focuses on factors outside the context of affordable housing need. N.J.A.C. 7:15-3.5 et seq. In making a request for a site specific amendment, the applicant is essentially asking for the DEP to reconsider the factors it considered during its original delineation of sewer service. N.J.A.C. 7:15-4.4(h). These factors are: 1) local zoning; 2) future land uses in municipal and county plans; 3) local land use objectives, such as agricultural or environmental preservation; and 4) whether or not any environmentally sensitive areas fall within certain exceptions

which allow the inclusion of sewer service. *Id.* To the extent that a site's environmental sensitivity does not fall into an exception that would allow it, the expansion of sewer may not be "realistic" and, consequently, a site could not be used to meet affordable housing obligations.

Local agency WMPs are due no later than eighteen months from the effective date of the new rules, i.e., April 6, 2018. N.J.A.C. 7:15-4.2(b). Please note, however, a plan prepared and adopted under the 2008 rules will satisfy this requirement.

Only time will tell how these new WQMP rules interact with municipal planning generally and affordable housing specifically. This is a big corpus of technical regulations, with lots of moving parts, but they will have a real impact on local land use decisions. So, it's something that we, the municipal community, should take the time to understand. ♣

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GOLD DOME



The Chance to Do Something Great

By Benjamin Dworkin, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Political Science (Adjunct);
Director of the Rebovich Institute for NJ Politics at Rider University

In a recent survey conducted by Democratic pollster Stan Greenberg for Democracy Corps, two out of three voters said that “people in power haven’t paid much attention to what I worry about.”

If you look at just white, working-class women—who largely abandoned Clinton in the last two weeks of the campaign—that number was 69%. If you look at just white, working-class men, it was 80%.

Even when one considers the core constituencies for Hillary Clinton—millennials, minorities, and unmarried women—the percentage that believed “people in power haven’t paid much attention to what I worry about” on election night was 63%.

In 2016, this kind of disconnect spread its way across the public, regardless of partisanship. The electoral results reflected the distrust and disgust of the American people with the politics from the ruling elites.

It is upon this landscape that New Jersey enters the pivotal, final year of Gov. Chris Christie’s administration.

The essence of Christie’s speech at the League of Municipalities conference in November can be boiled down to this: “The best part of being governor is I wake up every morning knowing that I have the chance to do something great.”

Whatever it is that he wants to do, he has (at most) one more year to do it.

Of course, that means working with a Democratic controlled legislature. Some legislators are ready to delay legislation in the hope—indeed, the expectation—that the next governor will be Democrat Phil Murphy, the former Wall Street executive and U.S. ambassador to Germany, with whom they might strike a more favorable compromise.

(The biggest conventional wisdom in Trenton today is that the next governor is going to be a Democrat. The state’s changing demographics plus “Christie fatigue” are two of the biggest reasons for this mindset. As the presumptive Democratic nominee, Murphy is the presumptive next governor.)

So what can be done in this final year? Where will we see something “great” being done?

Three areas come to mind:

School aid Recently, the governor has been promoting his plan to equalize state funding on a per student basis. Regardless of where one lives, the state would provide the same

amount of support for each student. In his budget address this February, Christie could propose those equalized numbers. It would, to be sure, create utter chaos in many school districts because their budgets are generated based on the proposed school aid formula announced in the governor’s proposed budget address. But it would also be a dramatic move that would shape the politics for the year.

Pension payments Another possible bold action could involve pension payments for public employees. The governor could, in theory, propose a complete budget that makes the state’s full payment and offers dramatic, specific cuts to schools, hospitals, public safety, higher education, etc. “This is the budget, with all the draconian cuts, that must be passed if we make a full payment to the pension system while not addressing the costs of retiree health benefits,” he could say.

Christie could then announce that, the following day, he will be introducing an alternative budget, one that restores the cuts to other services and makes only a partial payment to the pension system, along with a demand that there be additional union givebacks on health care. Again, it would be a shock to the system, but that kind of aggressive move would certainly focus attention on the reforms he is still seeking.

Drug treatment By all accounts, opioid addiction and abuse are growing across the country and New Jersey is not immune. During his tenure, the governor has made drug treatment a priority and, indeed, the legislature has worked with him to pass several new laws to try and help stem the problem.

But there may be more that the governor wants to do, while he has the chance. This issue cuts across party lines and most recognize that there is nothing to gain from delaying a bold state response to the epidemic. It’s not hard to imagine Christie seizing the initiative for one more run at solving it.

For Christie, it’s time to cement his legacy. “Second-term governors,” he said recently, “are built to make the difficult decisions.”

If you had just one year to be governor, what would you do? That is the question facing our governor right now. Even with a dismal approval rating, Christie is still the governor, and as such, is the epicenter of the New Jersey political universe, around which all other players orbit.

The public is looking for political change that delivers. Gov. Christie has the opportunity. New Jersey is waiting to see what great things he will do with it. 🍀



Budgeting 101: The Basics of Spending and Revenue

By Joseph P. Monzo, Deputy Manager/Chief Financial Officer, South Brunswick; 3rd Vice President, Government Finance Officers Association NJ

While it may seem simplistic to write a column on basic budgeting, the continuing number of stories about municipalities getting into financial trouble would suggest otherwise. This article will review some of the basic, yet vital, areas that must be addressed when formulating a budget that is fair, manageable, and continues to deliver appropriate services to the public.

SPENDING

Most municipal operating departmental expenses remain consistent from year to year. However, it is important to understand that spending decisions should not be made in a vacuum. Capital purchases and projects are especially prone to generating higher-than-normal operating expenses. The purchase of open space for a recreational park will lead to an increase in operating costs for park maintenance. The construction/expansion of a senior center will increase operating expenses for programs and building maintenance. The purchase of vehicles and equipment may lead to a reduction in certain maintenance costs, but may increase others.

Labor Costs The single largest expense in any municipal budget is the cost of the workforce. That expense is not just limited to the paychecks delivered every two weeks. The employer-provided health care costs continue to escalate at a rate greater than the spending and levy caps, causing public officials to make hard choices between staffing and other priorities. The health care reform in 2011 which precipitated the employee cost sharing known as Chapter 78 is now 5 years old. Most employers are collecting the maximum permitted by law. So, while the cost sharing has provided significant budgetary relief, it is reaching its maximum monetary benefit. As the provisions of Chapter 78 will soon sunset, it will become a factor in stabilizing labor costs.

The other significant, labor-related costs are the municipal obligations to the State pension systems. While the increases in the last several years have not been as onerous as they once had been, they still account for a significant portion of municipal budgets. The appropriations due to the systems (April 1)

are based on the second quarter reported earnings to the State from two years ago (2017 bill is based on 2nd quarter 2015 reported wages, etc.). The rates for 2017 for PERS add 12.91% to your budget as well as 25.51% for PRFS. From a municipal perspective, the changes in your salary expense will not influence your pension expense for two years.

Capital Spending/Financing/Debt Service The municipal “credit card” is a necessary evil. Infrastructure will always need improving. Ever-evolving technology must be maintained. Over-utilized equipment will need to be replaced. The good news is that interest rates for long- and short-term financing are favorable to municipalities. The levy cap law allows exclusions for increases in debt service, so the only hindrance is the willingness to use that exclusion.

“The formulation and continued management of a municipal budget is a collaborative effort.”

If timed with the retirement of existing debt, the issuance of new debt may not significantly increase your budget expense for debt service. In the long run, the emergency costs related to not maintaining a viable infrastructure and operating equipment will be costly and an operating cost within the 2% levy cap framework, not a capital cost which is excludable.

REVENUE

Miscellaneous Revenues State Aid has been stagnant for years now and nothing we have heard in recent years is going to change that. Municipal budgets cannot survive on stagnant interest income, court fines, and recreation fees alone.

State budget law only allows local governments to anticipate revenues in a given budget year based on collections in the prior year. This conservative approach has served us well for a long time. It seeks to prevent shortfalls and deficits that will

adversely affect budgets for years to come.

However, these revenue sources are one of the few ways that we can generate (build) fund balance (surplus) for use in future budgets. Anticipating revenues in a given year at a level less than the prior year has the potential to generate excess revenue when the actual budget year revenues are greater than anticipated. This is especially true with hotel fees and construction permits which tend to increase when the economy is escalating.

Tax Levy Cap The 2% cap on the municipal tax levies was enacted to curb the double digit increases in local property taxes. However, much like the appropriations cap enacted in 1977, this is not a hard cap. There are exclusions, as recognized by the legislature, that are either difficult to control (employee health benefits and pension) or should not necessarily be constricted (debt service to maintain updated infrastructure,

equipment and technology). This has become a difficult concept to explain to the public, who have come to believe that the 2% cap is the ceiling not the floor.

When the tax levy (the amount of taxes billed to the taxpayers) is determined, the final tax rate may properly produce a tax increase greater than the 2% because of the exclusions.

Fund Balance Utilization Years before the levy caps, the formulation of municipal budgets raised taxes that generated surpluses and built fund balances. Once these laws sought to limit these tax increases the utilization of fund balances to offset those increases began at a rate that has drained these rainy-day funds. Now it is a good year if budgets can simply re-generate the fund balance utilized.

However, the bond rating agencies are still fixated on a town's ability to manage its' surplus without overly relying on it. This is not an area that should be over-

looked or over utilized when preparing a municipal budget.

Assessed Value In NJ, the basis for all municipal, county, and school property taxes is the net taxable assessed value of the property in the municipality. In the last 10 years, tax appeal awards have reduced these values and offset any added assessment gains that should have benefited municipalities and lessened the burden on the taxpayer. Constant conversations with the town's tax assessor about ongoing tax appeal issues will prevent surprises that cannot be overcome at budget time.

The formulation and continued management of a municipal budget is a collaborative effort. As with most successful endeavors inclusion works better than exclusion. The public good is best served when the professionals appointed to represent the financial interests of the community play a role in the process. 📌



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Around the State



International Fish Lands Local Beauty

The ribbon cutting for the Barnegat Bronte & Friends Mosaic Fish Mural, located at 218 Main St., Toms River, was held in September. The largest fish in the mural is the Fluke, measuring 51 x 106 inches, and the mural contains more than 180 fish. The project was a collaboration of 72 artists each donating smaller mosaic fish which are inside the larger fish, with 16 volunteers involved in the installation. The artists hail from Australia, England, France, Germany, Italy, Canada, and 15 states in the U.S. with the concept and design by local artist, Yvonne Yaar. It is the first outdoor mosaic mural in Downtown, Toms River and the first international collaborative work of public art in Downtown. Shown here: Toms River Mayor Thomas Kelaher, NJLM Executive Board Member, with artist Yvonne Yaar. 🐟

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