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Official Publication

State League of Municipalities

January 2019



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## New Jersey Municipalities Magazine

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# nj contents

Volume 96 | Issue 1, January 2019



## Features

### 6 UpFront: NJLM President Q&A

Mayor Colleen Mahr of Fanwood discusses her presidential plans at the League

### 20 Focus: Governor Murphy Addresses League

Speaks at League Conference Luncheon on achievements and priorities

Governor Phil Murphy

### 24 Focus: Innovation in Governance

Smart Planning Recognized

### 32 2018 Great Places in New Jersey Designations

Sheena Collum, Executive Director, New Jersey Chapter of the American Planning Association; Village President, South Orange

### 36 EDA Calls on Municipalities

Group explores Innovation Challenge in support of Governor's plan  
Tim Sullivan, Chief Executive Officer, NJ Economic Development Authority

### 40 NJ Local Government Week Launched

NJLM rolls out new program to boost municipal pride

## NJLM

### 50 2019 Legislative Priorities

### 52 Meet Your New Board Member(s)

### 53 Annual Mayors' Hall of Fame

### 54 League Approves New Resolutions

### 56 103<sup>rd</sup> Annual NJLM Conference Wrap Up



# 6

## Departments

4 222 West State Street  
Michael J. Darcy, CAE

10 NJ Now  
Taran Samhammer & Amy Spiezio

15 Now & Then  
Amy Spiezio

16 Trenton Op Ed  
Assemblymen Joseph Howarth & Ryan Peters

18 Trenton Op Ed  
Assemblyman John DiMaio

44 Finance Center  
Edward J. McManimon, III, Esq.

46 Legal  
Frank Marshall, Esq.

48 Gold Dome  
Benjamin Dworkin, Ph.D.

62 Business Card Directory

64 Around the State/Supporters

# 32



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Seaside goldenrod in Barnegat Light NJ  
Photo by Ben Wurst

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**“The direction and leadership of the League Executive Board has enabled this organization to thrive both in its reputation and its contribution to good government.”**

## Up to the Challenge: NJ’s Municipal Leaders Are Moving Mountains

The focus of this issue of *New Jersey Municipalities* is leadership. As local governing officials, you are going through your annual leadership reorganization just as the League has completed its own.

Being local leaders, you provide the critical vision and direction for your community. You are to be congratulated for doing that within the parameters of New Jersey municipal government. Leadership is not easy, even in the simplest environment. Add the complexity of local government, and leadership becomes a multi-layered challenge.

To assist you with your leadership challenges, the League offers specialized education for elected officials each winter. These full-day programs include speakers who are specialists in the complex functional sections of local government. They can help you navigate those areas with the goal of helping you be an effective local leader. Other presentations focus on your leadership role in coordination with your municipal professionals. And, of course, there is the important opportunity to network and exchange ideas with your peers from other municipalities.

Because so much of your ability to implement new ideas relies on your budget, in March the League offers a specially designed program on “Budgeting for the Elected Official.” It goes beyond understanding the legal requirements to include discussions of the practical aspects of budgeting and the necessary accounting for external pressures. (For more information, visit [www.njslom.org/seminars](http://www.njslom.org/seminars))

As you continue to add to your knowledge with training that benefits your municipal leadership, I urge you to register for the Local Government Leadership Program. This voluntary League program offers you a way to structure and track your advancement in knowledge as a municipal leader. Just as important, you are recognized by the League as you achieve each of three levels. See more about the Local Government Leaders Program at the League website [www.njslom.org/lglp](http://www.njslom.org/lglp)

On another note, you should have great confidence in the leadership of your League Executive Board. For example, within two weeks of being sworn in as League President Colleen Mahr, Mayor of Fanwood, joined by 2nd Vice President Janice Kovach, Mayor of Clinton Town, convened meetings with the Governor’s office and Senate President Sweeney. They pressed the municipal perspective on several issues to ensure your views were clearly communicated first-hand. Read more from League President Mayor Mahr in this issue.

The direction and leadership of the League Executive Board has enabled this organization to thrive both in its reputation and its contributions to good government. The League is able to do that because of the Executive Board’s encouragement to find more new and effective strategies to address challenges and seize opportunities. When the Executive Board makes the tools available and sets the direction, the League volunteers and staff can move mountains.

I hope in 2019 the League can help you and your staff move mountains. 🏔️

*Michael Darcy*

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UpFront: Leadership

Q & A

with the  
**New League  
President**

Mayor Colleen Mahr  
of Fanwood discusses  
her presidential plans  
at the League



## What led you to get involved in local government in Fanwood?

I come from a family with a meaningful history of public service. My mother, Nancy, was a special assistant to two Governors, Gov. Brendan Bryne and Gov. James Florio. My father, Joseph, was president of First Savings Bank, based in Middlesex County. I grew up at the kitchen table hearing about both politics and community service, so I was bitten by the public service bug early on.

I worked for Mayor Jerry McCann at the City of City Jersey, and that's where my love of public service was born. I stayed on through the term of Mayor Brett Schundler, and it was during my time in Jersey City that I understood that there's a place for government in our lives, and if harnessed correctly, it can be transformative and do great things.

After I worked for Jersey City, I really understood the power local municipalities have—their ability to really help their residents.

When I moved to Fanwood, I was approached to be involved with the local Democratic organization, which led me to run for mayor.

## What are your goals as League President?

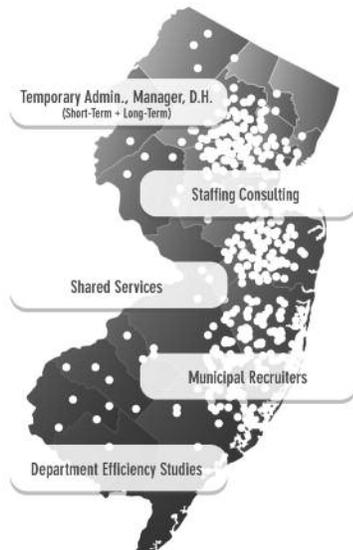
The League should be a bigger resource for our elected officials, whether they've been in office for six months or six years.

By the end of my one-year term I hope to engage a larger group of mayors—regardless of how long they have been in office—in League advocacy. Because the League is the voice of all 565 municipalities, it's extremely important that the dynamic diversity that makes up New Jersey is heard.

Diverse advocacy is important because there is a need for specific municipal input when it comes to crafting legislation that impacts local government. There are always pieces of legislation that don't necessarily have enough municipal input, and we need to change that paradigm.

One example for advocacy called for this year is the legalization of recreational cannabis: this is first and foremost a local issue. It will be municipalities that will lead the way in terms of how this new industry succeeds. This is where the participation by our mayors is really key, so that legalization, which seems to be inevitable, reflects the concerns raised by local leaders.

At the same time, there are issues we are not going to give up on and go away from, including:



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**Mayor John McCormac**  
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JPM helped us hire two members of our Senior Management Team and handled everything tremendously.



**Mayor Thomas Andes**  
Township of Denville

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Dan and his team at JPM were instrumental in recruiting exactly the right person as our first Executive Director of our newly created Business Improvement District.



**Mayor Fred Tagliarini**  
Township of Aberdeen

★★★★★  
JPM provided an outstanding Temporary DPW Director, and completed an outstanding Efficiency Study of our DPW.



**Mayor Beth Holtzman**  
City of Ventnor

★★★★★  
Best decision we made; Maria Mento and Joe Verruni are very knowledgeable and always accessible.



**Stephen Mountain**  
Manager, Township of Randolph

★★★★★  
JPM was very responsive to our needs and utilized a process that was fair and organized. They helped us select the best professional for the position.



**Mayor Richard Onderko**  
Borough of Manville

★★★★★  
Best Municipal Government Advisors I've met in 10 years in elected office. Helped us recruit a fantastic Administrator. Thanks Dan and JPM.



**George Jackson**  
Administrator, Borough of Eatontown

★★★★★  
JPM's thorough recruitment and selection process led us to just the experienced professional we were looking for.



**Mayor Dina Long**  
Borough of Sea Bright

★★★★★  
One of the best decisions we made after Sandy was bringing experienced professionals from JPM onto our team. Joe Verruni and Debbie Smith provided the expertise and guidance we needed to navigate the recovery and rebuilding.

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- **Affordable Housing:** New Jersey needs a reasonable and rational housing policy, and must involve local leaders in crafting that policy.
- **CMPTRA:** Local officials must work together to protect and get back Energy Gross Receipts or CMPTRA tax relief funding.
- **Interest Arbitration Cap:** The State enacted a permanent 2% levy cap, and local officials will continue their calls to restore the 2% cap on interest arbitration awards.

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

Call me! My advice, in all seriousness, would be to reach out to someone

like myself or to call the League. We'll come and visit, we'll come to your community. I know for a lot of brand-new officials, they take the first year to take it all in until they can find their voices. The League can be a resource so that maybe they find their voices a little earlier or that maybe they have confidence in what's going on because we help reinforce what they need to know.

Also, it's important for women who read this to know that I'm a mother of three boys—I'm raising a family, I'm working, and I'm serving—I think that's important for people to understand and see they can do it. That's not an easy balance, but the rewards of public service are so deep and meaningful—it's amazing how you can forget the stress and the anxiety and the pain! You're in the trenches and then you have that great feeling of cutting the ribbon to a new business, or bringing in a new development that makes sense, or coming in with flat municipal tax. In those moments, you realize why you're doing it.

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

Residents are tax-weary. It's a repeated theme: we are overtaxed, we are among the most expensive states in the nation, and we need to be able to keep our senior citizens and what could be seen as a dwindling middle class in New Jersey. Property taxes and affordability is the number-one reason that people are leaving our state. It's unfortunate that this is the same discussion that was going on when I was elected in 2004.

The expectation of our residents is to



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– Kathryn, 2016 graduate

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keep our towns affordable, so taxes have consistently been a concern. The quality of services and what people expect for the money they are spending to live in our communities are also important.

They expect our municipal services will be at a high level. They expect the town to be very transparent and to frequently and clearly communicate. They also expect us to be good stewards of their hard-earned money, and they expect us to keep their property taxes stable. I believe that's exactly what mayors and governing bodies do.

**“Municipalities are the collectors of the local, school, and county tax components, yet often we control what could be seen as the smallest part of the total percentage.”**

I think residents understand more today than 15 years ago that the bulk of their property taxes, in some communities as much as 65%, goes directly to their Boards of Education. As we sit here today, there is discussion of additional funding for school aid going out to our communities. I believe that there is an expectation that those additional dollars that will come into the largest portion of anyone's tax bill will help to reduce the tax levy.

Municipalities are the collectors of the local, school, and county tax components, yet often we control what could be seen as the smallest part of the

total percentage.

There is frustration trying to work within a 2% cap, to watch what state aid municipalities have gotten over the years be clawed back. For instance, our energy gross receipts/CMPTRA funding, which is rightfully ours, has been swept into the state coffers and they will not

give it back to us. There are tons of unfunded state mandates and regulations on the books; it is like death from a thousand cuts to local governments to provide what residents expect because of the burdens and regulations and the lack of property tax relief that comes back to municipalities.



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## What are the greatest strengths of local government in New Jersey?

Over the last 15 years, I have had the pleasure to know hundreds of mayors. They work tirelessly, 24/7. Whether new or long-term office holders, I have seen their passionate commitment to make their communities the best they possibly can be—we do it because we truly believe we can make a difference.

Local governments are great at responding quickly under adverse conditions and also work really hard at providing a good quality of life to the residents of New Jersey.

Mayors and Municipalities are finding opportunities to leverage their best assets, including redevelopment opportunities, shared services, and environmental leadership. Whether that's the parks, recreation programs, senior citizens, department of public works, the libraries, fire departments, or police departments, Municipalities embrace and are proud of how they do what they do. That's what really makes New Jersey unique.

## How would you describe your leadership style; what motivates you as a leader?

My leadership style has evolved over the years that I have been Mayor. Today, I'm in my fourth term, my 15th year. I view myself as someone who is very approachable—it's important to be seen and heard in my community.

I'm a big believer that there are so many good stories to tell, and that it's our first job to make sure that our residents understand what's going on within their community. We have a public access station, and, before the birth of Facebook,

newsletters and public access television were how we primarily communicated with people. As the communications tools have evolved and gotten more sophisticated, we have continuously adapted.

Since economic development is really key to the success of our town—part of the transformation of Fanwood has been its redevelopment—we do a big focus with

the show "Inside Fanwood." Going into the business community, we make two-minute videos where I visit each of the stores and talk to them about why they chose Fanwood and what they offer. My goal is to bring our business community to the people and get them excited to see what we've worked so hard to create together: a vibrant downtown. 🇯🇵

## Women in Municipal Government

From when I started to today, there are less women holding the title of mayor—our numbers have decreased, not increased. Looking back to when I took office in 2004, I was one of 86 women mayors. Today, I am one of 73. Maybe that number will rise in 2019, but the reality is that the percentage of women holding elected positions is low. Women mayors are about 13% of the whole, and women on governing bodies are hovering around 27%.

It's critically important that women see other women in positions of power. You can be a mother and a leader. I have three boys that are ages 12, 14, and 16, I have a job, and I serve my community. One of the reasons I choose to run for reelection after all these years is that I don't want the numbers to shrink any more than they have.

Happily, what I've seen in the last two years is a much louder, well-organized, grassroots movement spearheaded by women who want to see other women in office. My focus has always been on the local level, and that was a shared reason why a core group of women decided to revamp the League's Women in Municipal Government (WIMG) committee and focus on highlighting women at the League's Annual Conference. For the past two years, we've held a networking and awards event where 300-plus women took the time out of their busy conference schedules to connect and recognize achievements.

My hope is that when people read this they understand the importance of having women in municipal government, and maybe it moves someone from thinking about it to actually running for office. It's very important that women are represented and are elected.





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## League Welcomes New Officer, Executive Board Members

At the League's reorganization meeting on December 5, new 3rd Vice President Mayor William Chegwiddden of Wharton was sworn in by new NJLM President, Mayor Colleen Mahr of Fanwood (photo 2). In addition, new executive board Members Mayor Guy Pischerchia of Long Hill Township and Mayor Thomas Bianco of Clayton Borough (photo 2), and Mayor Craig H. Wilkie of Florence Township (photo 1) were sworn in and welcomed to their first meeting of the League's Executive Board (see more on page 52).

The League thanks them for their service and looks forward to a successful year. 🍀



## Become a Municipal Pioneer!

Be a part of the Local Government Leadership Program

The New Jersey State League of Municipalities is proud to offer a voluntary recognition program that recognizes Elected Governing Body Members who complete additional training and advocacy. The program has three tiers: Municipal Leader, Municipal Innovator, Municipal Pioneer. Each tier has an assigned number of points. Once an Elected Governing Body Member has earned the required points, they are awarded one of these tiers. The award will be a certificate of competition mailed to them and recognition at the Orientation



Session during the Annual League Conference in Atlantic City. Elected Governing Body Members can achieve each level by attending trainings, seminars, writing articles for *NJ Municipalities* magazine, and advocating for municipal interests. When an Elected Governing Body Member has completed a program, they will receive a certificate of completion indicating the points earned. Once Elected Governing Body Members have acquired the necessary amount of points and send in copies of their certificates with the online application form, they will receive a certificate in the mail. Then at the Orientation session on Tuesday at the Annual League Conference in November, they will be recognized by NJLM leadership. Officials who submit application forms after September 1 will be recognized at the next year's Conference. 🍀

@ For more information on this program, visit the Local Government Leadership page on the League's website, [www.njslom.org/lglp](http://www.njslom.org/lglp).

# Calling All New Jersey Women Leaders



**R**eady to Run® New Jersey 2019 training for women, a bipartisan program of the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP) at Rutgers University, will be held March 15-16 at the Douglass Student Center, Rutgers-New Brunswick.

Designed to encourage women to run for elective office, position themselves for appointive office, work on a campaign, or get involved in public life in other ways, the program features experts on topics ranging from digital strategies for campaigns, working with the media, navigating the political parties, and fundraising.

Track 1, “I’m Ready to Run, Now What?”, is for women who have decided to run for office immediately and Track 2, “I’m not Ready to Run Yet, But...”, is designed for women who want to learn about getting involved in politics.

Ready to Run® also features a half-day Diversity Initiative pre-conference for women of color March 15. 📍

@ For more information, visit [www.cawp.rutgers.edu/ReadytoRun](http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/ReadytoRun).

# Garden Statements

## South Toms River Launches Polling Effort

**T**he Borough of South Toms River decidedly entered untested territory that can be compared to a 24/7 non-binding referendum and civic engagement platform to transform the way the Borough’s residents engage in local decision making and interact with their elected officials.

Utilizing PlanetCivic, the Borough creates initiatives that are structured comparably to an online poll. The difference? Voters must confirm themselves as residents (or business owners) of the municipality. This provides greater validity to the poll,

ensuring only local opinions are taken into consideration, and removes the threat of fake accounts and citizens who may not have vested interest. Votes will be tabulated and feedback provided to Mayor and Council to make actionable items.

The Borough has several large-scale projects transforming the municipality, and believe Planet Civic will greatly assist throughout the planning phases and beyond. “As we move into redevelopment planning, we will engage this new platform for resident and business feedback, to get it right the first time,” stated Councilman and Redevelopment Liaison, Tom Rolzhausen. 📍



## In Trenton...



Mayors from around the state met with Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin to discuss the legalization of recreational marijuana. Shown l to r: NJLM Past President and NJ Urban Mayors Association President, Mayor Albert Kelly of Bridgeton; NJLM Executive Board Member Mayor Ras Baraka of Newark; Coughlin; NJLM President, Mayor Colleen Mahr of Fanwood; Mayor Ravinder Bhalla of Hoboken; and NJLM Executive Board Member, Mayor Steven Fulop of Jersey City. 📍

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# Municipal Court Reforms



At the Dec. 6 League seminar, Strengthening the Bench—A Discussion of the Municipal Court Reform Proposals, attendees gathered in Tinton Falls to catch up on the latest details of the NJ Supreme Court Committee on Municipal Court Operations, Fines, and Fees’ 49 reform recommendations. Despite the “many significant concerns” highlighted in the report, “the Committee concluded that New Jersey Municipal Courts compared very positively with similar courts around the country.” Audience members noted the details presented by Presiding Mayor Thomas F. Kelaher of Toms River, NJLM Executive Board Member, and presenters Steven A. Somogyi, Assistant Director, Administrative Office of the Courts; Annette DePalma, Esq., President, NJ State Municipal Prosecutors Association, Municipal Prosecutor, Maplewood Township; Walter Molineaux, CMCA, President, Municipal Court Administrators Association of NJ, Municipal Court Administrator, Livingston Township; and Samuel “Skip” Reale, Esq., Helmer, Conley & Kasselmann, NJLM Associate Counsel.

## JANUARY

**January 12**

**Orientation for Newly Elected, Reelected, and Experienced Municipal Officials**  
Hilton Hotel, East Rutherford

**January 26**

**Orientation for Newly Elected, Reelected, and Experienced Municipal Officials**  
Westin Hotel, Mt. Laurel

## FEBRUARY

**February 28**

**Everything Elected Officials Should Know About Immigration Law**  
DoubleTree Hotel, Tinton Falls

Visit [njslom.org/seminars](http://njslom.org/seminars) for changes and updates. For more information on seminars, contact Danielle Holland-Htut at [dholland@njslom.org](mailto:dholland@njslom.org) or 609-695-3481, Ext. 118.

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# NOW & THEN



Amy Spiezio  
Managing Editor

## Making New Year's Resolutions, Following Many Paths

**A** year into a new governor's administration and as the Governor himself said at the League's Conference in November, "No one doubts the challenges we face as a state. There are many still to conquer." We share more highlights from his speech at the League Luncheon held during the 103<sup>rd</sup> Annual League Conference in Atlantic City (page 20).

And in this month's issue of *NJ Municipalities* we strive to help you make the best possible resolutions for your community's happy new year. Highlighting the topic of leadership, we share insights from our newly elected NJLM President, Mayor Colleen Mahr of Fanwood (see page 6). Mayor Mahr has the goals of increasing outreach from the League and seeking new voices from municipalities all over the state to create an advocacy network for local leaders.

In this spirit, NJLM rolls out a new program, New Jersey Local Government Week (see page 39). From April 7 to 13, we invite municipalities to engage citizens while celebrating the work of local government. We've included suggested activities, and at [www.njslom.org/localgovt](http://www.njslom.org/localgovt) we have customizable logos, press releases, and resolutions. Read about it here to determine how your current activities can dovetail with Local Government Week and how you can add new interactions with your community encouraging civic spirit.

The New Year offers new opportunities to act on the education and information gleaned at the League Conference (see highlights on page 56), take a moment to meet our new board members (page 52), honor our long-serving Mayors' Hall of Fame inductees (page 53), and review our 2019 Legislative Priorities (page 50), as well as the Resolutions adopted by our members at the League Business meeting on Nov. 15 (page 54).

Consider how you can share the successful paths you have followed to success...maybe through an article in the magazine. We'd be honored to share your insights. Have questions and concerns your peers in other municipalities might address? Send in your questions and concerns and we'll do our best to track down stories to publish in the year to come. The best leaders use all resources to map their route, and we hope to be one of those resources.

We welcome your queries; please email [aspiezio@njslom.org](mailto:aspiezio@njslom.org)

### TIMELINE



**1939**

Reduction of the real property tax burden is a long hard battle...We must not forget that after all the owner of real property is more important than the real property itself. If by relieving the tax upon real property we increase the tax burden upon the owner of real property, we have made

no gain. On the contrary we have made a loss. Can anything be done to stop Increasing This Tax Burden? –The Taxpayer's Viewpoint by Donald R. Stevens, President, NJ Taxpayers' Association.



**1958**

I have briefly reviewed the highlights of the 1957 legislative enactments affecting municipalities. You have been provided with much legislation that will help your communities to develop, grow and prosper, and for your citizens to enjoy better living.

–1957 Laws Affecting Municipalities by the Hon. Pierce H. Deamer, Jr., Chairman, 1957 Assembly Committee on State, County and Municipal Government.



**2009**

If we "keep going" thoughtfully and strategically, we can hope to make the trip less painful and come out on the other side—stronger and better prepared for recovery. We must recognize...these days of deep economic recession are unrivaled in severity except by the Great Depression. ...

But the real challenge of this economic meltdown is borne by our fellow citizens.

–Governor Corzine's Remarks to the League of Municipalities.

# TRENTON



## Time to Hunker Down and Get Our Finances In Order

By Joseph Howarth, Assemblyman, District 8,  
and Ryan Peters, Assemblyman, District 8

**T**here's a hole in the boat in New Jersey, and we're not going to plug it by stuffing it with more money.

Eight percent—that's how much spending is going up in 2019; a total of about \$2.66 billion. Tack on another \$1.4 billion and you have the entirety of Delaware's budget.

Tax and spend has become this state's identity. Growing up, it was our four-season attractiveness—with mountains for skiing, beaches for swimming, and amazing local farms for pumpkin picking—or the lure of being so close to New York and Philadelphia while maintaining our own rural and suburban identity. Those beautiful layers of New Jersey are still there, but now you have to pull back high property taxes, high business taxes, and burdensome regulations to see them.

It's time to rip those layers off for good. We can't let party politics get in the way of reality. People live within their means every day in order to keep the water running, the lights on, and food on the table. We're living in a state that is not living within its means. Now is the time to hunker down and get our finances in order.

In a perfect state, we'd have managed our money properly for the last couple of decades and be in the position to expand services that have been discussed by the new administration, while not having to raise new taxes, but that's just not our reality.

Republicans often get labeled uncompassionate for looking at the more practical side of the coin. Pragmatism has become a sin. Working hard and wanting to keep more of your paycheck is seen as selfish instead of a self-sustaining virtue. We refuse to let people get bullied because they'd rather invest in their families than put more and more of their paychecks toward our highest-in-the-nation property taxes.

People need the freedom to make their own decisions, but when the government keeps taking a bigger percentage of their money, they don't have the financial capabilities to do so. We've introduced two constitutional amendments that we believe will help give the freedom of choice back to the people of New Jersey.

One would bar Trenton politicians from using certain municipal property tax relief funds to balance the state budget, and the other would cap state spending at 2%.

The first one is simple, when your state has the highest property taxes in the nation, you should not divert property tax relief aid away from towns. But for decades, the state has used funds like energy tax receipts and local business taxes to pay for its shortcomings.

These taxes used to be paid by businesses, like utility companies, directly to municipalities for the right to use the town's rights of way and services. To make the process easier for utility companies, the state started collecting the funds and administering them back out to the towns. It didn't take long for Trenton to start skimming from the top. In the last 10 years alone, \$368 million has been taken out of one property tax relief fund—Consolidated Municipal Property Tax Relief Aid or CMPTRA.

This practice has been bipartisan, as both Democratic and Republican governors have used property tax relief aid as a lifeline to fix Trenton's budget ailments. History has proven that we must put a lock on this aid and constitutionally force politicians to stop taking from it.

There are many reasons why property taxes have ballooned so high in New Jersey and wrestling revenue away from towns is certainly one of them.

That brings us to our next point. If year in and year out the state needs to perform budget magic and pull more money out of different sleeves in order to pay for its added expenses, maybe it's time to stop wild spending increases.

Every year, municipal governments and school districts must sit at the table and make tough decisions. They have to do this because the state told them they cannot raise their tax levy more than 2%. You're telling us that while Trenton is telling towns they can't go above 2%, the state can raise its appropriations bill by 8%? Where's the fairness in that?

We can't keep spending other people's money. Our amendment to cap state spending at 2% closely mirrors the tax levy cap placed on municipalities and would force everyone in Trenton to make tough decisions.

A smooth sea has never made a skilled sailor. Right now the waters are choppy. We're going to need to work hard and make sacrifices to get through this, but the people of this state will be better for it when we do. 🍷

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# TRENTON



## New Funding Formula

A chance to give residents a break; for many, still not enough

By John DiMaio, Assemblyman, 23rd District, Assembly Republican Budget Officer

**W**ith great fanfare we will soon have a new school funding formula that will increase state aid to hundreds of districts when the FY20 state budget kicks in. Yet, there is a disagreement over whether or not the increases are enough, or actually even fair as many suggest.

Even though a good number of districts will see some sort of increase, being considered a winner is what is questionable. Yes, we all agree that an increase—any increase—is better than none after playing on a totally uneven playing field for so many years based on numbers and figures that had been outdated for far too long. For districts that had declining enrollment, their aid was not reduced while districts with increasing enrollment did not see an increase.

This new formula is helpful, for sure, but does not truly meet the needs overall, particularly when it comes to tax relief in the suburbs. At least it is (perhaps a baby) step in the right direction. Many years ago, State Senator Michael Doherty began a

fair school funding push that raised many eyebrows and helped to bring statewide attention to the inequity of our system. I sponsored the Assembly version of the bill. Former Gov. Chris Christie pushed for a similar plan that, in essence, would have given equal amounts to every student in the state, regardless of where they lived. For the suburban schools, that would have translated into huge increases in aid.

Recently, State Senate President Steve Sweeney aggressively pushed his own version, using a modification of the old formula. And now, finally, while clearly not perfect, we do have a plan to give at least some relief to many districts that have been squeaking by with an old funding formula that is no longer applicable. Some districts, such as Bound Brook, have been especially hard hit by the old formula. Bound Brook is now bursting at the seams with a much higher student enrollment over the past few years, but has been stunted in its budget by an underfunded formula. Additionally, some school districts have raised local taxes to meet their needs thus putting the onus on residents to foot the bill. More on that later.

### General Notes of Interest:

- The FY 19 budget includes language that attempts to reform the current formula by out phasing adjustment aid (hold harmless aid) and the state aid caps, and redistributing aid from districts the Democrats? Legislature? deem as overfunded (e.g., due to decreasing enrollment) to those that are underfunded (e.g., enrollment growth).
- Current state aid brings all districts up to 58% of full funding (defined as running the SFRA without adjustment aid and the state aid caps). The total increase in K-12 aid is \$351 million.
- A separate bill was signed into law to allow Jersey City to institute a 1% payroll tax on non-residents to help with the loss in FY19 state aid.
- There are about 1 million students in districts receiving aid increases. Overfunded districts that are getting less

aid in FY19 include Jersey City (a \$3.5M decrease) and Asbury Park (\$1.3M decrease).

### S-2

- S-2-Sweeney goes into effect beginning with the 2020-2021 school year. The law immediately eliminates the growth caps and phases out adjustment aid over a 7-year period.
- The law does not require districts to provide property tax relief if they receive an increase in state aid.
- The 31 former Abbott districts are permitted to exceed the 2% property tax cap to fund their local share through 2025.
- The law creates the vocational expansion stabilization aid category to ensure county vocational schools either see an increase or flat funding.

## Increases and decreases

A majority of school districts will see small to modest increases, some larger increases, with many others seeing a decrease as their student enrollments have gone down and, in some cases, plummeted.

In my legislative district, the 23rd, which encompasses parts of Warren, Hunterdon, and Somerset counties, I am very happy to see that many of our school districts are going to finally get an increase of some degree in funding from the state. Hackettstown, Frenchtown, Bridgewater, South Bound Brook, Bedminster, and Lebanon Borough, in addition to Bound Brook, are among those receiving long-awaited increases.

The net change in state aid for my District 23 (accounting for both increases and decreases) is estimated at \$5.861 million after the first year, \$17.8 million with the full phase in after seven years.

Around the state, districts in Hammonton, Greater Egg Harbor Regional, Bernards Twp., Kenilworth Borough, Newton, Dover, and Montville Twp., to name a few, are seeing some light at the end of the tunnel as well.

When all is said and done, nearly 400 school districts are expected to see an increase in school funding, 180 are expected to see a decrease. Fourteen districts will have no change at all. Again, the reality is that the increases are a help but not necessarily enough for numerous school districts, and so we must continue to find ways to make funding for school districts fair for all.

It's probably not going to be an easy transition for school districts seeing a decrease in funding, but they've had some time already—and more to come—to work on it so as not to impact their schools.

## Taxpayer impact

What kind of taxpayer impact will there be in school districts that are seeing an increase in funding from the state? Time will tell, but I firmly recommend that those school districts that have been asking the taxpayers to help augment their budget all these years consider cutting some of those school taxes to give residents some welcome relief. Fair school funding

should also mean a fair share back to taxpayers. Do school districts have to do this? Is there a requirement?

Nothing in Sen. Sweeney's bill prohibits a school district from giving money back to the taxpayers; however, there is no requirement either. Pursuant to the school funding act, a district that wants to give back cannot already be taxing

below its local fair share (the amount the DOE has determined a district can contribute based on property wealth and income) and the levy reduction cannot go below the local fair share.

So while some districts may be limited in what they can do in terms of giving back, those that can **SHOULD!** It's only fair. 🍷

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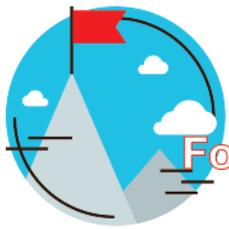
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# Governor Murphy Addresses League

## Speaks at League Conference Luncheon on achievements and priorities

*Governor Phil Murphy addressed a full room at the Annual League Luncheon, held on the final day of the 103rd Annual League Conference. The Governor spoke about his concerns, priorities, and hopes for working with municipalities for the year to come. Following are highlights from his speech.*

A year ago, I came before you as governor-elect and spoke of the need for us to begin, in earnest, to build a foundation upon which would rest a stronger and fairer state. I come back proud of the accomplishments we have made over the past year to do just that. We are not spiking any footballs, but so far, so good. I come back here confident that we are moving New Jersey in the right direction and with the right focus, and that the people of New Jersey agree with this new direction. I come back just as optimistic about the year ahead.

### Change in tone

No one doubts the challenges we face as a state. There are many still to conquer. But, I do believe that the people who elected us want us to be open and honest about those challenges, and how we would go about meeting them. They want us to stop looking for scapegoats and boogymen. They want us to speak to them as adults.

I am proud that, for the last year, we have. This change in tone started on Day One of our administration. And, it was the tone which I brought to nearly one-dozen mayors meetings we hosted in the opening months of this year—small sessions we held in places like Chester, Wayne, Newark, Chesilhurst, West Long Branch, and Mount Laurel, among others, for me to listen to you, and for you to get to know me. In total, more than 250 mayors attended, from communities large and small, and red and blue. I thank you for coming out to be part of the discussion.

We all know that when it comes to the efficient delivery of essential services, and to standing up for our community values, party takes a back seat to partnership.

This has been the tone we have set. It is a tone you have collectively reciprocated. And, through doing so, we have been able to accomplish much more than many expected.

### NJ-centric steps

But we have taken other steps, purely New Jersey-centric steps, to improve, in other ways, both life for our residents and of our communities.

Six weeks ago, I proudly put forward an economic plan that changes, entirely, the economic direction of our state and allows all of our communities to become places where new businesses can grow and flourish. We have a new focus to become a world leader in innovation and technology, reclaiming the space that Hamilton, Edison, and Bell Labs, among so many others, carved out.

Economic growth, above all, is the ticket to our better future. And, a plan for economic growth is not optional. The economy we inherited in January enjoyed the following national rankings in the previous decade...job growth, we were 42nd in the nation...poverty rate, 47th...wage growth, 49th.

I got elected to fix our economy and that is how I spend most of my time as governor.

So, among other steps, we designated 169 Opportunity Zones across 75 municipalities, at least one in every county. These zones, areas with great unrealized promise, are where we will focus new private business investments to create new jobs.



## Governor Murphy Addresses League

We know that spurring new job growth and smart development is not just good for our economy, it's also our best point of attack against the property tax menace.

### Much needed reforms

We worked in collaboration with our public employee union partners to enact much-needed reforms to the way we provide health care. Through these reforms, we will save taxpayers roughly half-a-billion dollars over the next two years. But, moreover, we are reducing the upward pressure on what is one of the most pressing cost drivers of property taxes.

This was a smart move for everyone. Our public workers, from municipal employees to educators, will maintain the high-quality care they deserve and at a savings to our working families, and our communities will realize savings that they can pass along to property taxpayers.

And, we know that the benefits will not just stay in these communities, but will radiate outward into neighboring municipalities, raising entire regions and creating broad prosperity.

Our economic plan also proposes the creation of a new statewide historic preservation tax credit, so we can better knit together our past and our future. Practically every one of our downtowns

has a historic building that is crying out for a new purpose, and together, we can do this.

And, we are creating new financing tools to convert our brownfields and other underutilized properties into new ratables, where we can create new places for businesses, or for sorely needed affordable housing opportunities for our working families.

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## “Funding our public schools

We also made a long-overdue commitment to properly funding our public schools, starting ourselves on a ramp-up for fully satisfying our school funding formula, and—through the work of Senate President Steve Sweeney—we also reformed that formula to better meet the realities of New Jersey in 2018.

We had to do this. School taxes make up the lion’s share of the property tax burden in the overwhelming majority of our communities. Properly funding our schools is what is needed to alleviate that weight from the shoulders of our working and middle-class families, and our seniors.

## “I thank you for all you do for your communities, and for our state.”

And, through our budget, we restored the direct property tax relief these families deserve and need. I would like to thank Speaker Craig Coughlin for his efforts to ensure we did so.

## “Overhauling NJ Transit

We have begun the long process of overhauling NJ Transit and restoring it to respectability and reliability—starting with a dramatic increase in state operating assistance in this year’s budget. I know many of you have heard the same complaints I have from your commuting residents. And, yes, there have certainly been some impediments thrown on the tracks over the past year. But, with new leadership, a new customer-minded focus and path forward, and a commitment for restored state assistance, I am confident we will get there. In fact, I promise you we will.

## “\$15 minimum wage

I also remain committed to putting us responsibly on a path to a \$15 an hour

minimum wage. Doing so will mean so much to the hundreds of thousands of working families who—despite clocking 40-hour weeks at their jobs—still can’t earn enough to stay afloat. Raising the

## Shared Services

We need to look, once again, at the potential for smart shared service agreements to further benefit our communities and taxpayers.

I listened to you on shared services. And, I asked two individuals—one a Democrat, one a Republican—who know these issues first-hand to take the lead for our administration. Former Summit Mayor Jordan Glatt and former Harding Mayor Nicholas Platt agreed to serve as our “co-czars” in the effort to further promote shared services.

They have spent the past six months traveling across the state, meeting with many of you and your colleagues. And, later this month, we will institute our first shared services symposium to move from conversations to action. I thank Mayors Glatt and Platt for their hard work and commitment.

I have said many times before that there is a time and a place for top-down decision-making. The same goes with shared services. You know your communities best. You know where sharing services can make sense, and where it may not. And, where they do, our administration is committed to getting more of you to say, “yes” to your neighbors.

This spirit of collaboration is how we move forward on these sticky issues. And, if you want an example of how that spirit can work, I ask you to look no further than this city we are in right now—Atlantic City.

I was critical of the state takeover of Atlantic City in 2016. I do not believe in the state coming in and big-footing local control. But, I also accepted that Atlantic City needed help from the state. So, we created a new model for partnership. Instead of the state putting its foot on Atlantic City’s neck, we picked the city up so we could stand together as partners. Instead of dictating, Shelia Oliver and I asked Jim Johnson to come in, take a deep dive, and create the path forward so the city can stand again on its own feet.

As a result, we have a new plan for returning Atlantic City to full local control. Already, the city’s bond rating has been upgraded, and its future prognosis is looking brighter by the day.

That’s the leadership we wish to bring to these tough issues, especially when it comes to property taxes. I want to work together with you, not to roll in over top of you. And, I ask you to join me, and Mayors Glatt and Platt, in this process.

wage will mean more money in their pockets to spend downtown, which will help keep our local economies strong.

## “One New Jersey

One of the things that makes New Jersey special is that we are a state of 565 unique municipalities. It may not make governing easy. And, throughout the year I have been reminded that we will never have perfect agreement on anything.

That’s to be expected. But, if we take the time to listen to each other, and reach across borders as we reach across the aisle, we can do great things as one New Jersey.

I thank you for all you do for your communities, and for our state. And, I look forward to working alongside you in the year to come! 🇯🇵

## “Opioid epidemic

We are putting in place new strategies, based on statistical research and careful data analysis, to focus our efforts and combat this at its roots. We are not yet close to declaring victory, but every day, we inch a little bit closer.

Any notion that tackling this epidemic has become a lesser priority is completely and utterly wrong-headed. Solving this is a daily, evidence-based grind.

## “Adult use marijuana

I remain equally committed to sensible legislation to legalize adult use marijuana, and to continue to expand our medical marijuana program, which can also be an important tool to fighting our opioid epidemic.

I know that some of you have already taken steps in your communities to prevent such sales once I sign a legalization bill into law—and, make no mistake, assuming the Legislature gets it to me, I will.

Our current prohibition has utterly failed. We have branded countless thousands of our fellow residents—mostly residents of color—as criminals for low-level possession crimes, impeding their ability to get jobs or an education. These crimes have crowded our jails, while leaving the bad guys in place on the street corner.

Legalization is the right thing to do, for safer communities, for protecting our kids, for erasing the stain that is keeping so many of our fellow New Jerseyans from a better future. Moreover, the overwhelming majority of New Jerseyans agree. We should listen to them. I am ready to work alongside the Legislature, and each of you, to get this done.

Please remember, if you remain skeptical—we are not inventing marijuana. What we are doing is restoring social justice, putting the bad guys out of business, protecting our kids, and regulating and taxing the industry as we should.

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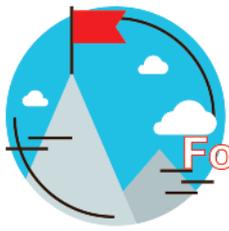
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# Creating Better Communities

2018 Innovation in Governance Awards winners named

**R**epresentatives from Highland Park, Gloucester, and Mt. Olive have been recognized for their hard work and achievements as winners of the 2018 Innovation in Governance Awards program.

The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs and the New Jersey State League of Municipalities continue to recognize Innovation in Governance through their annual awards program, which was presented as part of the Mayors' Lunch and Executive Briefing on November 14 during the League of Municipalities' Annual Conference in Atlantic City.

The 2018 judges were League Past Presidents Paul Matarera and Plainsboro Mayor Peter Cantu; Division of Local Government Services Director Melanie Walter; 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 16 months. The participants responded with a range of submissions that underscore the variety of challenges municipalities solve. These awards highlight exemplary local government programs that provide innovative and practical approaches to solving municipal problems and concerns.

Following, we share these innovative approaches. They can also be found in the National League of Cities' "Best Practices" database and on the League's website, [www.njslom.org](http://www.njslom.org).

## **Township of Gloucester: Building Community Trust Beyond Body Cameras**

The deaths of Michael Brown in Ferguson MS, Freddie Gray in Baltimore, and Tamir Rice in Cleveland, as well other encounters with police throughout the country through the years 2014-2016, brought tremendous unrest, concern, and a lack of trust between the police and their communities. This nationwide epidemic of distrust created a dangerous environment for everyone.

It is clear that the foundation of effective policing and overall community safety is embedded in the principle of confidence in law enforcement. It was imperative that community leaders take drastic measures to ensure that all community members have faith not only in their police departments, but also the local government leaders who are charged with managing the law enforcement officers that serve their communities.

Fortunately, in the community of Gloucester Township, the Gloucester Township Police Department and the Gloucester Township local government invested in community policing in 2010 long before the country focused on community partnership models. The Gloucester Township Police Department's new policing model focused heavily on being more visible and interactive with community members, assisting at-risk populations, and so much more.

However, despite the strong relationships that existed with community members, there was no denying that the controversies surrounding police departments and their communities all over the country affected every police department. It was paramount that elected officials and local police leaders acknowledged the controversy and implemented strategies to ensure that their constituents have faith in the local government and their police department.

Many police agencies believed, and some still do, that the answer to building trust was simply placing a body camera on an officer's shirt. The Gloucester Township Police Department quickly recognized that a body camera alone does not build trust with the community. Beginning in the late summer 2017,



David R. Mayer, Mayor, Gloucester



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## Better Communities

the department launched a specific campaign to build community trust in very unique ways in addition to outfitting all Gloucester Township Police Officers with body worn cameras. The police body camera is simply a tool, and tools do not change mindsets. Policy, education, understanding bias, fostering community partnerships, and creating strategies to fight crime that involve more than arrest changes mindsets.

### Community outreach vehicle

The flagship of the Building Community Trust Beyond Body Cameras Initiative was the deployment of the department's Community Outreach Vehicle, a re-purposed, 25-foot mobile command vehicle. With the support of Gloucester Township Mayor, David Mayer, and Gloucester Township Council, the department turned the former command vehicle into a rolling community center. The vehicle was wrapped in a community theme, outfitted with video games, has an interior meeting room, and is filled with hands-on outdoor games.

As a result of this new initiative, Police Officers visit neighborhoods and attend community events on a regular basis with the outreach vehicle and while on general patrol. This initiative was about changing

### Gloucester



the mindsets of both the citizens of the community and the officers. Neighborhoods are chosen at random and also are selected based on recent occurrences of criminal incidents or police operations.

For example, if a drug search warrant is executed in a neighborhood or apartment complex, door hangers are left on residents doors, lawn signs are placed on comers, and social media postings all announce that the Community Outreach Vehicle and officers will be in the neighborhood the next day. The images are powerful—at one moment SWAT Officers are storming a home arresting a person selling drugs and within 24 hours children in the very same neighborhood are playing lawn games with officers and parents are talking with a Community Relations Officer in the mobile meeting room. These are relationships that cannot simply be built with a body camera.

In addition to being equipped with games, the Community Outreach Vehicle is also equipped with phone charging stations and visits neighborhoods to help residents charge their phones during power outages—both during the winter storms of 2018 and this summer's storms.

### Training for understanding

An often overlooked absolutely necessary component of building trust is the development and training of police officers in understanding the communities in which they serve. The entire Building Trust Beyond Body Camera Initiative focused not only on residents getting to know the officers, but also the officers getting to know the community members.

It is so important for police officers to have positive experiences with the communities they serve as it alters their perspective and humanizes the people they are serving.

The overall Building Trust Beyond Body Camera Initiative not only ensured that the Gloucester Township Police Department maintained its positive working relationship with the community, but also has helped developed a new generation of officers who are more culturally competent, better trained, and ultimately safer as they perform their duties. The feedback from community members, civic groups, and neighborhood leaders has been greatly positive. It is understood that police must make arrests, but when a police agency focuses solely or heavily on arrest and ignores or diminishes the role of building relationships and the value of non-enforcement contact they lose their capacity to most efficiently fight crime. Every police agency needs the community to help them fight crime and this initiative has resulted in continued drastic reductions in crime. Overall crime in Gloucester Township

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## In Your Town

Although some communities may have difficulty acquiring a Community Outreach Vehicle, they can easily accomplish the same goals of community interaction, increased non-enforcement contact, and neighborhood visits after crime activity or criminal incidents with much less expense. An older patrol vehicle designated for the same purpose would easily suffice in a start-up program. As noted, the Community Outreach Vehicle was only one piece of this initiative, the many other actions as noted on page two, can be done by any police agency at little or even no cost.

has decreased 34% and violent crime has decreased 53% (2009-2017) with even further reductions on pace for 2018. Crime reductions in a community transcend into great economic savings as businesses find the community attractive, homeowners seek a safe community, and there is a general atmosphere of safety which is critical to a community's success.

This effort is not a campaign but a long standing change in policing policy and practice.



The **New Jersey Municipal Management Association (NJMMA)** is a statewide professional association made up of municipal managers and administrators. Founded in 1954, the NJMMA has been a valued resource for local government for more than 60 years. The members of this proud association know all about municipal government, and here is what you need to know about them:

- NJMMA's membership currently represents over 250 full-time professional managers statewide.
- Members are responsible for many of the essential services that are delivered daily to more than four million New Jersey residents.
- The Association's primary objective is to ensure members are well prepared to deliver local government services, efficiently and effectively, working in conjunction with the elected officials who serve in local government.
- NJMMA's leadership are the primary advocates and spokespersons for professional local government management across the state.
- The Association is recognized by elected officials throughout the state for its members' expertise, contributions to the enactment of sound public policy, and the delivery of public services.
- NJMMA has been affiliated with Rutgers University for the past nine years, providing members with the assistance, technical training, and support that comes with a partnership with a nationally recognized state university.
- The Association maintains ongoing relationships with other New Jersey professional associations, which collectively represent nearly all licensed officials working in local and state government.

For more information on the NJMMA, or to become a member, please contact Executive Director Alan Zalkind at [zalkind@docs.rutgers.edu](mailto:zalkind@docs.rutgers.edu).

## Better Communities

### Highland Park: Civics for the Community

In Highland Park, we've seen repeatedly that residents don't always make the fine distinctions between activities on the state, county, and municipal level. When a new mandate or increased cost affects their lives, and they feel unprepared for the change, residents often get frustrated and may not know the most effective ways to make their voices heard.

In the interest of fostering a more informed and engaged citizenry, in fall 2017 Highland Park started a series of workshops designed to inform residents about how state and local governments work and the best ways to interact with them. Titled "Civics for the Community," the series has thus far held four free and open-to-the-public non-partisan events.

Each event averaged 40 attendees for a 45-minute presentation followed by a question and answer period; Q&A sessions ran 45 minutes long and were lively and thoughtful (a few speakers remarked afterwards to the organizers that the volume and level of inquiries were quite high). The events were held in Borough buildings and were promoted via emails, on the Borough's website and Facebook page, and in other forms. Attendees came from the town and from neighboring communities.

After allowing for a summer break, the Civics for the Community series resumed in fall 2018 with a workshop on the topic Stabilizing Property Taxes:



Gayle Brill Mittler,  
Mayor, Highland Park

#### Are Shared Services a Viable Solution?

Civics for the Community is spearheaded by Beth Stevens, Ph.D., a Highland Park resident with a background as a sociology professor at NYU and researcher for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and for Mathematica Policy Research. Dr. Stevens was assisted by an active committee of fellow residents and received logistical and promotional support, as well as regular encouragement, from Highland Park Mayor Gayle Brill Mittler.

Civics for the Community has greatly benefited the Borough of Highland Park by responding to a groundswell of interest in learning more about how government at all levels works. The educational workshops have engaged many of our residents in constructive and well-informed discussions about the functions of government, the challenges state and local elected officials face in setting policy, and the best approaches to influence government decisions.



Highland Park

### In Your Town

The Borough of Highland Park looks forward to continuing this educational series and believes that it can be replicated across New Jersey—especially in towns near one of our state's fine colleges and universities (as they are a wonderful source of informed experts on the topics).



### Mt. Olive's Private-Public Community Pool Partnership

For the summer of 2018, Centercourt Club & Sports and the Township of Mount Olive entered into a private-public partnership for a community pool. For years, the community had an interest in a town facility, notwithstanding residents already had access to a lake beach and splash pad, a community pool was missing. The governing body explored the possibility of purchasing land, building and operating its own pool, but the cost was substantial. Purchasing the existing facility owned by Centercourt was also looked into but never came to fruition. Recent negotiations with Centercourt led to the current pool lease agreement, which is a win-win for the township. The summer of 2018 was our pilot program with hopes of making this a long-term relationship.



Mt. Olive's community pool

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## Better Communities

Centercourt Club & Sports was established in 1974 offering membership tennis clubs, soccer, lacrosse, field hockey, ninja warrior training, as well as eight sports training facilities throughout the state of New Jersey. One of those facilities was located in the Township of Mount Olive. The Mount Olive Sports Training Center is centered on a 13-acre multi-sport campus with facilities and programming to support the highest levels of competitive play. Situated on site is a 5,933 square foot, 188,871 gallon modified “Z” shape heated pool equipped with lanes, deep area diving and slides. A baby pool with water features, locker rooms, concession stand, sand volleyball court, and grassy picnic areas are also available.

Over the past several years, since Centercourt took ownership of the facility in 2016, we have noticed a decline in activity, especially with the underutilized pool facility. Due to the nature of Centercourt’s business model, the pool was



Robert Greenbaum,  
Mayor, Mt. Olive

only slightly used for small summer camps with declining membership and not open to the general public. The Township took this opportunity to approach the firm for the possibility of leasing the pool facility.

Centercourt was open to the idea as the added traffic would highlight the property and the Township would take the marketing burden off by supplying memberships. The one caveat being we already adopted our budget and needed to structure the agreement whereby the Township took on as little financial

responsibility and risk as possible. Ultimately, an agreement was made whereby Centercourt is supplying the pool, staff, lifeguards and operating responsibilities to be in compliant with the NJ Public Recreation Bathing Code and the Township sold the memberships to their residents. The only out-of-pocket expense that could be observed in the budget was purchasing pool tags and an on-site pool monitor. In return, the Township has agreed to turn over a percentage of the revenue to offset the cost of operating the pool.

The pool has been a great new addition to the Township of Mount Olive and we are excited for a long partnership with Centercourt Club & Sports. The Township was able to leverage an underutilized private facility and offer a great public service to its community without increasing taxes. This is a great example of a private-public partnership and how two entities can work together for the benefit of the community. ♻️



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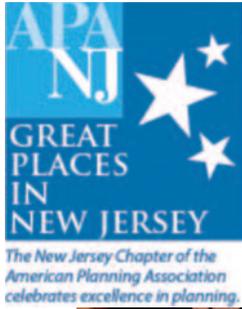
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# Smart Planning Recognized

2018 Great Places in New Jersey Designations

By Sheena Collum, Executive Director, New Jersey Chapter of the American Planning Association; Village President, South Orange



**G**reat Places in New Jersey recognizes unique and exemplary downtowns, public spaces, streets, and neighborhoods, the four essential components of exceptional communities. These places thrive as testaments to forward-thinking planning that promotes community involvement, showcases unique natural features and diverse architectural styles, fosters economic opportunity, and inspires a vision for tomorrow.

Since the program's inception, 35 locations throughout the state have received the designation by the New Jersey Chapter of the American Planning Association and can be accessed online at [www.GreatPlacesNJ.com](http://www.GreatPlacesNJ.com), where viewers can identify locations on an interactive map and learn more about the history of these unique destinations. Following are this year's winners.

**Downtown: Cranford**

Vitality, walkability, dining, shopping, art, history, architecture, and transportation are just some words to describe Downtown Cranford which was New Jersey's first "Special Improvement District."

Nestled in the heart of the township and designed around the train station, Cranford's downtown boasts over 800 apartments where residents—along with shoppers, employees, and commuters—provide the density and vitality to activate the

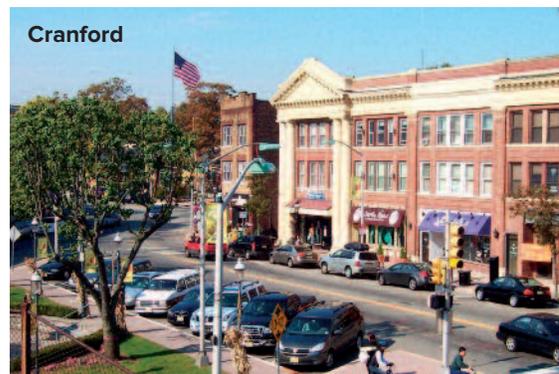
downtown during all hours.

As a shopping destination, customers have options between homemade crafts, household goods, and antiques. One can also get the latest in clothing fashion, accessories, and jewelry.

To augment a day of shopping, there is a robust restaurant scene where international cuisine options are offered at over 50 locations, including an award-winning ice cream parlor.

Eastman Clock Plaza and the Post Office Plaza serve as community gathering spaces for live music, theatre performances, and even a Lego night.

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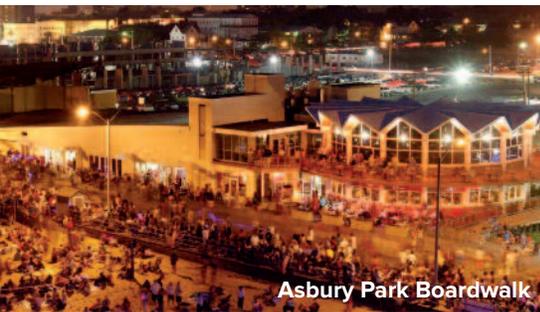


NJ GMIS is an association of New Jersey public sector technology leaders. We provide organizational structure, networking and activities to enhance coordination among state, county and local governments along with public school agencies.

**Public Space:  
Asbury Park Boardwalk**

A truly welcoming public space that attracts culturally and socioeconomically diverse individuals, stimulating interaction between people while possessing a character that lets wanderers know they have arrived somewhere special.

Be it for a simple stroll along the seashore, a weekend of fun, or a snack at lunch-time, the Asbury Park Boardwalk provides entertainment for locals and visitors alike. Home to more than just a beautiful and active beachfront,



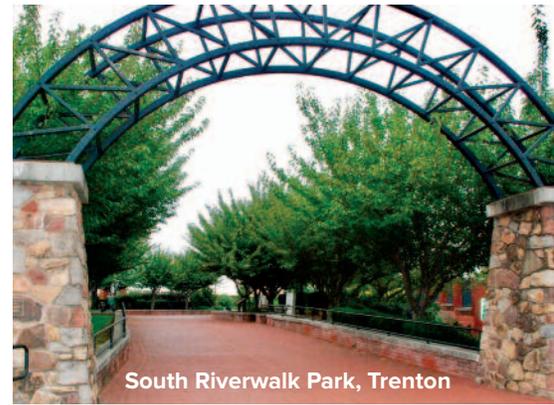
Asbury Park Boardwalk

there are amusements for individuals of every age and background.

With an emphasis on art and music, the Asbury Park Boardwalk highlights everything that the City of Asbury Park and its residents have to offer. Anchored by the architectural treasures represented by Convention Hall, the Carousel building and the former Casino building, the historic nature of the Asbury Park Boardwalk sends one back in time while still evolving to keep pace with the changing tide of history instead of falling victim to it.

**Public Space:  
South Riverwalk Park,  
Trenton**

An urban park that connects the community with the environment while offering pieces of history, South Riverwalk Park is a vibrant, 6.5-acre public space that has served residents and visitors alike in Capital City of Trenton since 2002.



South Riverwalk Park, Trenton

Built on top of the Route 29 tunnel as a part of a significant rerouting New Jersey Department of Transportation initiative, the planning and design elements to address the city's Master Plan objectives required innovative construction techniques in order to reclaim and restore pedestrian access to the Delaware River Waterfront, increase safety with traffic calming measures all while offering streetscape and environmental enhancements.

Features include lawn areas, walking paths, three pavilions, benches, a water-side pedestrian esplanade, two playgrounds, and an open space for public events such as the South Riverwalk Park Festival. This special and uniquely designed space is now home and host to art fairs as well as weddings, walk-a-thons, and family events.



Spring Street, Newton

**Great Street:  
Spring Street, Newton**

Spring Street between Water Street and Union Place runs through the heart of Newton's central business district building upon the community's motto: "City Style. Country Cool."

Brimming with historic charm and locally owned shops and restaurants, Spring Street has been Sussex County's economic, governmental, and cultural epicenter for over 250 years.

Through thoughtful and concerted planning efforts, the town continues to



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foster a vibrant and varied experience along this historic corridor. Recent developments include a switch to one-way traffic, new pedestrian safety and traffic calming techniques, and a 65-unit affordable housing development.

Vintage lampposts, colorful hanging plantings, commercial sidewalk displays, street trees, brick-lined sidewalks, blade signage, and handsome wrought-iron benches help enhance downtown Newton's inviting feel and bring a dose of cohesion to a street that runs the gamut of architectural style.



Hamilton Park

**Neighborhood:**  
**Historic Hamilton Park**

The Historic Hamilton Park Neighborhood is perhaps best known for its namesake park at the center of the neighborhood, and the historic brownstones that surround the park and line the streets.

The neighborhood has witnessed steady growth over the past decade that includes new multi-family buildings, dozens of eateries and shops, and a growing, diverse population. Under the watchful eye of the neighborhood association, residents have worked with officials to make sure that new development serves residents' needs, but is carefully introduced to perpetuate the location's historic charm.

Most impressive, day-to-day needs can be met primarily by walking to a variety of food options, salons, fitness studios, healthcare providers, houses of worship, schools, and a local library branch. The 5.4-acre park has huge shady trees, vast open spaces for free play, a central gazebo, playgrounds, walking paths and dog runs, and there's hardly a week where special events aren't offered. 🌿

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# EDA Calls on Municipalities

Group explores Innovation Challenge in support of Governor's plan

By Tim Sullivan, Chief Executive Officer, NJ Economic Development Authority



New Jersey was once a home for innovation, with some of the modern world's greatest inventions—the light bulb, the computer, cell phones, and much more—having roots here in the Garden State.

However, over the past decade, our status as an innovation leader has slipped and neighboring states have gained ground.

## State of innovation

Since taking office in January, Governor Murphy has worked tirelessly to re-envision New Jersey's economy. By leveraging New Jersey's strengths, including our world-class higher education institutions and talented workforce, our state economy can be propelled forward, and we can begin to reclaim our status as a leader in innovation.

In early October, Governor Murphy unveiled a bold vision for a stronger and fairer economy—one in which small businesses, local entrepreneurs, multi-national corporations, and workers can thrive. This plan, the State of Innovation: Building A Stronger and Fairer Economy in New Jersey, will ensure that New Jersey's economic growth is inclusive and collaborative, rather than isolating and divisive. The Governor believes, as do I, that our state's ingenuity is made possible by our commitment to diverse people, ideas, and businesses.

Governor Murphy's economic plan is centered around four strategic priorities: Investing in people, investing in communities, making government work better to improve New Jersey's competitiveness and business climate, and making New Jersey the State of Innovation to create more and better paying jobs for New Jersey residents.

## Issuing a challenge

As the Chief Executive Officer of the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (EDA), I am proud that our agency

## Innovation at Work

Several of the Innovation Challenge communities, in partnership with nearby higher-education institutions, are receiving funding to advance plans for the development of technology hubs in their areas.

**Atlantic City and Stockton University** are planning a Center for Marine & Environmental Science designed to forge a State-higher education partnership and spur new businesses and research. The partners envision the Center to be a multi-story, multi-tenant building serving as the home of the Center for Marine and Coastal Sciences, office and lab space for the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, and a coastal resilience/Blue Economy Coastal Research Incubator.

**Atlantic County** is working with the Atlantic County Economic Alliance, Atlantic Cape Community College, and the Atlantic County Improvement Authority to plan for the development of an Aviation and Technical Academy near the Atlantic City International Airport to serve as a workforce development center to equip local workers with the skills to service the aviation industry.

**Monmouth County**, where more than 5,000 jobs were lost following the closure of Fort Monmouth in 2011, is partnering with the Fort Monmouth Economic Revitalization Authority and the New Jersey Institute of Technology to further grow the Fort's emerging technology cluster, which already includes companies such as Commvault, TetherView, and AASKI Technology, who collectively employ more than 1,000 people.

**The City of Trenton** will partner with all five institutions of higher education in Mercer County—Mercer County Community College, Princeton University, Rider University, The College of New Jersey, and Thomas Edison State University—to plan for the creation of the Trenton Production and Knowledge Innovation Campus (TPKIC). TPKIC is envisioned to be a collaborative, research-driven incubator and a co-working space for existing and startup businesses, anchored by a buildout of Mercer County Community College's James Kerney Campus near the Trenton Transit Center.

**Township of Union (Union)** Another exciting incubator plan is a proposal submitted by the Township of Union, which expects to use the Innovation Challenge funding to plan for the expansion of the Institute for Life Science Entrepreneurship (ILSE) at Kean University—an 8,000-square-foot technology accelerator and a science-driven research institute.

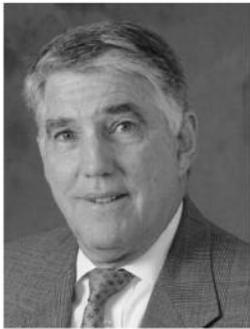
**The City of New Brunswick** plans to work with Rutgers University and other strategic partners to address two significant issues as part of its overall Innovation Initiative. The Center for Advanced Infrastructure & Technology at Rutgers University will direct a project

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## EDA

will play a key role in our state's economic resurgence by developing and administering many of the initiatives outlined in Governor Murphy's plan.

One example where we have already made exciting progress is the Innovation Challenge—a call on municipalities and counties to establish partnerships with higher-education institutions and other strategic partners to develop plans to build or augment local innovation ecosystems. Through the Innovation Challenge, the Governor invited local leaders to challenge old ways of thinking and consider creative and groundbreaking approaches to building public-private and community partnerships, nurturing entrepreneurship, and upgrading infrastructure.

Because of an overwhelmingly positive response to the challenge, nine communities will each receive \$100,000 from the EDA to advance their plans. These communities are: Atlantic City, Atlantic County, Bridgeton, Camden County, Monmouth County, New Brunswick, Passaic County, Trenton, and Union Township (Union).

Encouraged by the quality of planning proposals submitted in the first round of the Innovation Challenge, the EDA launched a second round of the Innovation Challenge to encourage even more collaboration and innovation among community partners. We look forward to announcing those results.

Innovation is happening in every area of our state and the uniqueness and quality of the proposals we received illustrates New Jersey's spirit of innovation. We look forward to working with these communities as they turn their plans into reality. 🇯🇵

focused on improving mobility through universal connectivity. Additionally, the partnership will work with an architect and lab planner to design a prototype "Lab of the Future" for startup companies that require availability of flexible lab spaces. The proposed plan follows the transformational Hub initiative already announced in New Brunswick, which will be a critical component of the State's innovation ecosystem.

**City of Bridgeton** will partner with the Rutgers Food Innovation Center to create a facility dedicated to developing, testing, and training on the latest cutting-edge technology to make food production, processing, and packaging safer and more efficient.

**Other winning proposals** focus on improving infrastructure to address transportation challenges and better attract and support entrepreneurs and emerging-sector employers:

**Camden County** is working with Rowan University's College of Engineering, Cooper's Ferry Partnership, Verizon, and the City of Camden to evaluate an integrated approach to improving downtown Camden's transportation system to produce best practices to improve public safety within the City of Camden.

**Passaic County** officials will develop a needs assessment with various partners to analyze and evaluate options to install a high-speed 5G fiber network in the commercial and industrial areas of Paterson and Passaic.

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# NJ LOCAL APRIL 7-13 GOVERNMENT 2019 WEEK

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## Celebrate Local Government!

This year, the New Jersey State League of Municipalities is kicking off the inaugural **NJ Local Government Week**.

We invite you to join in with municipalities across the Garden State **April 7-13, 2019**, to engage citizens while celebrating the work of local government.

**NJ Local Government Week** is a time for municipalities to encourage civic education, community collaboration, volunteerism, and local pride. Municipalities throughout the Garden State are encouraged to participate, and the NJ State League of Municipalities (NJLM) suggests you get the celebration started with the following:

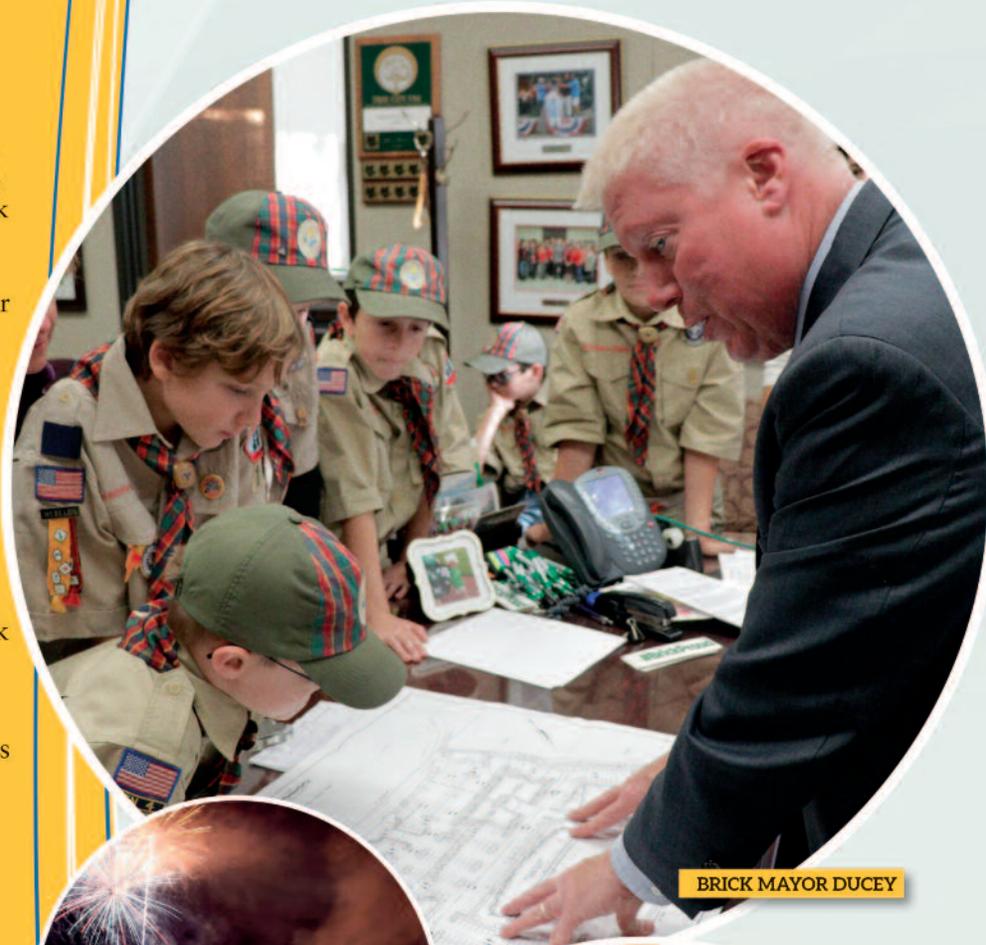
**Showcase.** Highlight the programs and services you offer, showcasing the hard work of local government and the value residents receive on a daily basis.

**Coordinate.** Tap into local resources such as community service and volunteering events in partnership with local organizations to cross-promote NJ Local Government Week.

**Exhibit.** Encourage citizens to share their civic pride with an essay, photography, or design showcase/contest. Why not make it a feeder program for your entry for the League's Show Off Your Municipality photo contest for next year?

### Wondering Where to Begin?

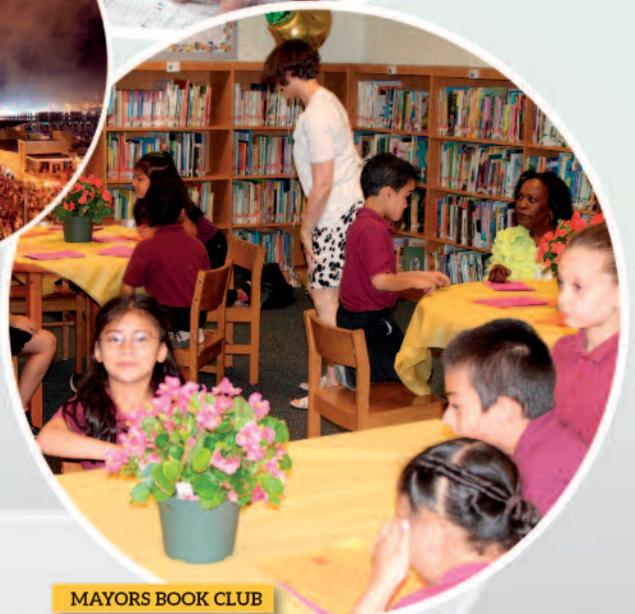
This packet includes ideas and materials for celebrating **NJ Local Government Week**, publicity tips and strategies, and links to a sample press release and resolution. More information and resources, as well as a downloadable NJ Local Government Week logo, are available at [www.njslom.org/njlocalgovt](http://www.njslom.org/njlocalgovt).



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## IDEAS FOR CELEBRATING NJ LOCAL GOVERNMENT WEEK

### Getting Started: Low to No Cost Activities

📌 **Adopt a resolution.** Explain the importance of NJ Local Government Week to residents at a council meeting and adopt a resolution to recognize the week. (View a sample resolution at [njslom.org/njlocalgovt](http://njslom.org/njlocalgovt).)

📌 **Offer tours of city hall and/or individual departments.** Host an open house at city hall or city facilities/departments (e.g., fire department, police department, wastewater treatment facility). Hold tours so attendees can meet local employees to learn about the services their hometown provides. For students, coordinate with schools for group tours and work with teachers to prepare students for the events.

📌 **Showcase city equipment.** Try a Touch a Truck this spring, displaying police, fire and/or utility vehicles in one location for the general public to view, or bring them to area schools, recreation or senior centers. Have personnel on hand to educate and answer questions.

📌 **Send out guest speakers: elected officials and/or staff.** Contact local schools, afterschool programs and civic clubs to coordinate general or specific information sessions based on audience age, from youth to senior citizens.

📌 **Host a “coffee with a council/commission member or the mayor” at city hall.** During this meeting, residents and business owners can ask questions and hear updates on local projects and issues.

📌 **Connect your Mayor’s Wellness activities to NJ Local Government Week.** Whether at a Walk with a Mayor, a healthy cook off, or a Health and the Arts program, time your Mayor’s Wellness Campaign activities to coincide with NJ Local Government Week to spotlight your community’s healthy efforts.

📌 **Host a volunteer recognition ceremony.** During a council/commission meeting or a special event, honor residents who have volunteered their time for the betterment of the city.

### Picking Up the Pace: More Complex Efforts

📌 **Hold town halls.** Advertise and coordinate these meetings away from city hall. This is a great way to meet face to face with residents who may not normally participate in city activities. Introduce elected officials and staff and the roles they play. Address current and future city projects and seek citizen input.



VERONA LIBRARY

When your event is over, please share photos and a summary of your activities with the League using the submission form at [www.njslom.org/njlocalgovt](http://www.njslom.org/njlocalgovt), so we can include them online and in *NJ Municipalities* magazine.



CHATHAM MUNICIPAL BUILDING



TRENTON HISTORIC PRESERVATION CELEBRATION



📌 **Sponsor an essay or poster contest.** Coordinate with area schools for an essay or poster contest. Are your community's high school students participating in the League's Louis Bay 2nd Future Municipal Leaders Scholarship contest? This is a great time to get started or to promote your towns' young scholars by recognizing them at council meetings and their schools, and posting their winning entries on social media and municipal websites.

📌 **Coordinate a Mayors' Book Club.** Encouraging young students to read and connecting community members to the schools and their municipal leaders, the Mayor's Book Club program is a success story in building literacy and good relationships. Invite schools to participate and have the mayor visit schools to reward their efforts. An instructional booklet is available for free at [www.njlmef.org/mayors-book-club/](http://www.njlmef.org/mayors-book-club/)

📌 **Hold photo contests on your social media outlets.** Create a unique hashtag for an Instagram/Facebook photo contest to serve as a kind of entry form. Be sure to have a theme and set start and end times when photos may be submitted before judging.

📌 **Enter Your Winning Images to the League's Show Off Your City contest.** Whether from municipal employees and officials or from residents, send the League the best images representing life in your municipality for entry in the Show Off Your Hometown contest. The winner will be featured on the cover of the April issue of *NJ Municipalities* magazine and participants will be highlighted on the League's website and social media throughout the year.

📌 **Nominate your community for an Innovation in Governance Award.** The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs and NJLM acknowledge and promote Innovation in Governance through this annual recognition program. This is a great opportunity to showcase innovative problem solutions and prevention. [www.njslom.org/249/Annual-Innovation-in-Governance-Awards](http://www.njslom.org/249/Annual-Innovation-in-Governance-Awards)

📌 **Reach out to the business community.** Host an open house in partnership with the local chamber of commerce's "business after hours" program to highlight city services and upcoming projects, and for input on city initiatives.

## Up and Running: Activities with Lots of Moving Parts and Planning

📌 **Sponsor a community service day or week.** Coordinate with municipal staff and elected officials, local groups such as Clean Communities, charity and nonprofit organizations, and schools for clean-up projects at local parks, a workday at the animal shelter, or beautification efforts through the arts or gardening.

📌 **Create an "adopt-a-school" program.** Coordinate various municipal departments to "adopt" a school or school department promoting interaction with local government throughout the year.

📌 **Allow for shadowing.** Work with teachers to match students with city leaders and department heads. Provide materials to help students prepare for and understand job requirements.

📌 **Hold mock city council meetings.** Have city officials go into the schools, or invite students into council chambers, to tackle a real-life issue. Coordinate ahead of time with teachers so that students familiarize themselves with the procedures and rules for running a council meeting and the roles of elected officials, department heads, and residents.

📌 **Host a career fair.** Advertise career opportunities and invite adults and students at local colleges and universities who may be interested/qualified to apply for the job(s). Have municipal staff on hand to answer questions.

📌 **Host a trivia contest/scavenger hunt.** Folks love games, and what better way to showcase municipal facts and services than by testing their knowledge in a fun way? It could be set up as a trivia quiz competition with competitors spend time on your website to answer riddles about local government and their city and discover the hidden gems in the community.



# #NJLocalGovt Week:

## Spread the Word!

Show off your municipality and celebrate #NJLocalGovt with friendly outreach. Consider the following paths to promote NJ Local Government Week.



### LINK IT!

- Include links to your social media outlets via your website to further promote NJ Local Government.

**BONUS:** New followers now will boost communication giving you a further outreach to residents in weather emergencies and other more serious matters.



### PUBLICIZE IT!

- **SEND** a press release with event info and/or an Op Ed or article by the Mayor or town officials. (Check out our sample press release and [njslom.org/njlocalgovt](http://njslom.org/njlocalgovt).)
- **DESIGNATE** a contact for media inquiries.
- **SCHEDULE** interviews about Local Government Week with community media about your project on a local television or radio talk show and your cable-access channel.
- **SAVE THE DATE** of your activities on the community's calendars.
- **SHARE** photographs with print/online outlets throughout the week.
- **SEND** thank you letters to newspaper and others who assisted in publicizing NJ Local Government Week events.



### HASHTAG IT!

Use the NJ Local Government Week hashtag, #NJLocalGovt, when promoting your activities on social media. Encourage all involved in related activities to use the hashtag. Using hashtags connects your posts with similar content and allows cities to view a running list of #NJLocalGovt content from across the state and locally in real time, which can be shared or reposted.



### SOCIALIZE IT!

- Create individual, public Facebook event pages and encourage citizens to share via their personal pages, “tag” friends who may be interested in attending and to “RSVP” on event pages.
- Ask partners, local businesses, and sponsors to share your activities and to tag your city in the process.
- Tag them back with public thanks.



Download the customizable event logos @  
[njslom.org/njlocalgovt](http://njslom.org/njlocalgovt)

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The New Jersey Building Officials Association was established in 1929. We are a not-for-profit organization recognized as a chapter of the International Code Council, and are devoted to protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the public, by promoting professionalism, education, and ethics.

NJBOA's Active Membership is comprised of licensed Code Officials and Inspectors of all disciplines, as well as Technical Assistants. We have Associate, Subscribing, and Honorary memberships available to others engaged in the building industry, including housing, planning, zoning, and manufacturers' representatives. Our annual scholarships, totaling over \$30,000.00, have benefited dozens of worthy college students. As always, we welcome people from many career backgrounds to consider joining our organization, or come to any meeting as our guest.

As we celebrate our 90th Anniversary, **NJBOA** is proud to be the **only** statewide association, inclusive of Code Officials, and members of other diverse backgrounds, that is recognized by the Department of Community Affairs. **NJBOA** will continue to actively support and participate in the Building Safety Conference of New Jersey, as we have done for over 35 years. **NJBOA** is an organization that remains strong in membership, welcoming new applicants each year. **NJBOA** is a tried and true brotherhood whose success is written in its legacy. The **NJBOA** Executive Board would like thank our members, Past Presidents, and communities, for their unwavering support, which has helped pave the way to its success thus far. **NJBOA** will continue to forge ahead with strong leadership and the proven confidence of its members, through this decade and beyond.

<i>Jerome Eger</i>	<i>Charles Lasky</i>	<i>John Fiedler</i>	<i>John Tracy</i>	<i>Lawrence Scorzelli</i>	<i>Pat J. Naticchione</i>	<i>Bob LaCosta</i>
President	1st Vice President	2nd Vice President	Secretary	Treasurer	Immed. Past President	NJSLOM Rep.



## Municipal Deposits and Investments: What's Legal?

By Edward J. McManimon, III; Partner, McManimon Scotland and Baumann;  
League Bond Counsel

Over the past several years, interest rates on deposits and investments of public funds have been so low that it has caused municipalities and their advisors to look at options and alternatives to determine if there is a better rate of return on the deposit or investment of their public funds than the more traditional historical route. Some of those, particularly as it relates to deposits, are not legally viable and some that may be legal are more structurally complex than desired. The suggested alternatives often depend on the amount of money involved. During this time, the State Legislature has amended the Local Fiscal Affairs Law to broaden those alternatives. This article will briefly examine those alternatives.

### Deposits of Municipal Funds

Initially, it is important to understand the difference between a “deposit” and an “investment.” That distinction is often lost when looking at unique structures surrounding certificates of deposits from out of state banks, some of which are collateralized in effect making the structure appear to be an “investment.” They are not. Fundamentally, pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 40A:5-15*, all public moneys received from a source by a municipality in New Jersey must be “deposited” within 48 hours of receipt in a “designated legal depository.”

Pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 40A:5-14*, the designated depository or depositories must be included in the municipality’s adopted cash management plan. A “legal depository” is defined in *N.J.S.A. 17:9-41* and *17:9-44*. This is commonly referred to as the Governmental Unit Deposit Protection Act (GUDPA). In essence without going into the statutory detail, the only depositories eligible to receive such municipal deposits must be those subject to the banking laws and regulations in New Jersey and must be in compliance with the collateralized requirements of GUDPA. Many such depositories have found complying with the collateral requirements to be onerous, particularly with regard to collateralizing such deposits with United States governmental securities and, as a result, some banks have declined such deposits.

These are not considered investments and, as a result, cannot be found in *N.J.S.A. 40A:5-15* which sets forth the actual authorization of the types of investments that are permitted for public funds and these are described below.

“ There has also been evolving activity of local units using their own funds, whether general, capital, or utility funds, to purchase their own notes initially or upon renewal of outstanding notes at maturity believing that the financial effect is better than the interest rates in the note market itself.”

### Investment of Municipal Funds

The Local Fiscal Affairs Law, *N.J.S.A. 40A:5-15*, specifically sets forth the types of investments that are permitted for municipal funds (which now include the authorization to invest in bonds or notes of other local units with certain limitations).

In general, these include:

1. Bonds or other obligation of or guaranteed by the United States of America
2. Government money market mutual funds
3. Obligations of a Federal agency or Federal instrumentality issued in accordance with an act of Congress with a maturity of 397 days or less that bear a fixed interest rate
4. Bonds or other obligations of the local unit or the school district of the local unit
5. Bonds or other obligations having a maturity date of not more than 397 days issued by New Jersey school districts,

municipalities, counties, and entities subject to the Local Authorities Fiscal Control Act or other obligations with a maturity of not more than 397 days otherwise approved by the Division of Local Government Services

**6.** Local Government Investment Pools (e.g., New Jersey ARM)

**7.** Deposits with the New Jersey Cash Management Fund

**8.** Fully collateralized repurchase agreements (with discretely identified securities and terms defined therein, including a limit of 397 days for the “maturity”)

This statute lays out a number of the requirements in defining what some of these terms mean and should be referred to before making any such investments.

The Division of Local Government Services has issued Local Finance Notice Notice 2017-24 (November 29, 2017) and 2017-24 R (July 11, 2018) that, in

addition to listing a number of other obligations issued by specific governmental entities whose statutes authorize local governments to purchase the bonds or other obligations of such entities, also identify the policies involved in the purchase by New Jersey local governmental units of short-term notes (or bond maturities within 397 days) issued by other local governmental units. This has become a significant activity over the past year, not only for small tax-exempt issues and taxable notes, but also for more traditional note issues since the interest rates often turn out to be better for both the issuing local unit as well as the purchasing local unit.

In addition, there has also been evolving activity of local units using their own funds, whether general, capital, or utility funds, to purchase their own notes initially or upon renewal of outstanding notes at maturity believing that the financial effect is better than the interest rates in the note market itself.

This needs to be undertaken with caution since the Internal Revenue Code presumed in these circumstances that if the local unit has such funds available to invest, it may not need to issue notes for those purposes at all. When such internal notes mature, reissuing or renewing them in the market may result in the interest on such notes to be deemed federally taxable. There needs to be an internal note prepared, as well as either a resolution or certificate of the Finance Officer, for the record to rebut the IRS presumption of taxability that reflects that such funds used for the internal note are only available for a temporary period while being held for their designated use and the internal investment is a better return to the local unit during the temporary period than other alternatives.

As always, the judgment as to the appropriate investments should be based on an understanding of the process and risks. 

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By William M. Cox

**Revised & Updated By**  
Stuart R. Koenig (2011-12),  
Jonathan Drill & Lisa John-Basta

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## OPRA & Dog Licenses; BYOB Decision's Impact

By Frank Marshall, Esq., NJLM Staff Attorney

**Q** Our municipal clerk recently received an OPRA request for all dog license applications submitted to our municipality within the last year. For privacy and safety reasons we believe that these records should not be disclosed. Must we provide the requestor with this information?

**A** Under the circumstances I must rely on an attorney's favorite answer—it depends. This issue has been brought before the Government Records Council (GRC) and the courts on various occasions. But, every time the facts were so specific that it prevents applying the holdings more generally.

For example, in *Bernstein v. Borough of Allendale*, a GRC decision from 2005, an OPRA requestor

sought the names and addresses of dog license owners and intended to use the information to solicit business. The GRC conducted a balancing test and determined that, "the records should not be disclosed because of the unsolicited contact, intrusion or potential harm that may result."

However, in 2009 an unpublished appellate court decision reached a different conclusion. In *Atl. Cnty. SPCA v. City of Absecon*, the appellate court used a similar balancing test and determined that the names and addresses of dog and cat license holders must be disclosed. A major factor in reaching this conclusion was the intended use of the information. Given the ASPCA's mission to investigate alleged animal abuse, the need for the information was given more consideration as opposed to the need for soliciting business.

Once again in 2014 the Appellate Division issued another unpublished opinion relating to the release of dog and cat license information in *Bolkin v. Borough of Fair Lawn*. Again, in this case an OPRA request was submitted seeking the names and addresses of dog and cat license holders which the requestor intended to use to send pet owners political literature informing them of policy positions espoused by various candidates for office. The court using the same balancing test determined that the information should be disclosed. This time the court took into consideration that a discussion of views held by political candidates was "surely in the public interest," which helped to tip the scales in favor of disclosure.

As you can see from the various rulings, my answer of it depends is justified. The need to disclose seemingly depends on who is requesting the information—and for what use. Because records custodians have a responsibility to provide government records, and protect individual privacy, each request you get

for such information should be individually reviewed and a determination made. You should rely on your municipal attorney to assist with these determinations.

**Q** I understand that there was a recent court decision affecting the state's "BYOB" laws. Does this court case have any impact on municipal authority to regulate BYOBs?

**A** The court case you are referring to is *GJJM Enterprises, LLC. v. NJ Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control* and while it does affect certain aspects of New Jersey's BYOB law (*N.J.S.A. 2C:33-27*) it doesn't necessarily impact municipal authority to regulate. To better explain a brief review of NJ's BYOB laws are in order.

For the most part, State law regulates the consumption of alcohol in establishments that sell or serve food and liquid refreshments but do not possess a liquor license. Regulations include: allowing patrons to bring only wine or malt beverages (hard liquor is prohibited), a prohibition against charging a cover or service fee related to the BYOB, and up until the GJJM decision, prohibiting an establishment from advertising that they offer BYOB.

Given that the State heavily regulates liquor laws, municipalities are for the most part preempted from passing their own regulations. However, municipalities are free to prohibit BYOBs or to limit their location through objective and rational regulations. Enforcement of BYOB laws is primarily left to local officials.

The GJJM decision handed down by a federal judge found that the State's law prohibiting BYOB establishments from advertising their BYOB status violates constitutional free speech rights. The ruling effectively allows any BYOB establishment in NJ to begin advertising that they offer BYOB. Before this ruling, establishments were prohibited from advertising their BYOB status, both on and off premises, any violation of which would be a disorderly persons offense.

The GJJM ruling only impacts the component of the State's BYOB law which prohibited advertising. It does not affect other aspects of the law such as a municipality's ability to set reasonable standards for BYOB establishments or a municipality's authority to prohibit BYOBs entirely. Nor does the ruling provide BYOBs with an exception to other restrictions on advertising such as sign and leafletting ordinances, although these restrictions may have their own free-speech concerns. You should review this ruling with your municipal attorney for further information on potential impacts. 🍷

# Does This Look Familiar?



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# GOLD DOME



## First-Year Report Card: Grading the Governor

By Ben Dworkin, Ph.D., Director, Rowan University  
Institute for Public Policy & Citizenship

It's been a year since Phil Murphy came to office, and as such, it's an appropriate time to offer some initial grades and reflections on the past 12 months.

For this kind of report card, there are two major subjects: Policymaking and Politics. And for Murphy, these are two very different stories.

### Policymaking: A-

What is amazing about Murphy is that he is as popular as he is despite leading what is arguably the most progressive administration in Trenton in 50 years. His job approval hovers between 43% and 54%, with his disapproval number about half that. These would be the envy of any politician.

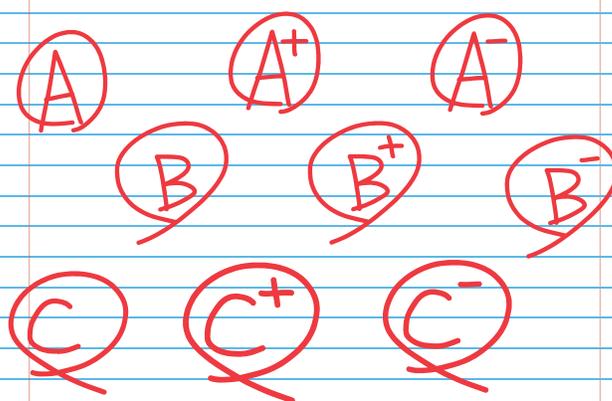
Murphy signed an equal pay law and paid medical leave. He expanded voter registration, approved a half-dozen new gun control measures, re-funded Planned Parenthood, put New Jersey back into a regional greenhouse gas initiative (RGGI), and raised over \$1 billion in taxes to pay for it all.

“Today, the Murphy administration is in the vanguard of state government resistance, and voters approve.”

Credit certainly goes as well to the Democratic-controlled legislature, especially Senate President Steve Sweeney and Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin, who have marshalled their considerable forces on behalf of this agenda. But one of the perks of being governor is that you get to take the credit, and the public seems pretty happy to give it to him.

No governor operates in a vacuum. Murphy's policymaking success and popularity is assisted by three overlapping factors.

**The Predecessor** The incredible unpopularity of Governor Chris Christie in his last year of office paved the way for Murphy's agenda. The Democrats passed the same bills, but now they were signed, and not vetoed.



**The President** Donald Trump is such an all-consuming force in American politics that he has become a touchstone for our increasing political tribalism. In New Jersey, where Trump's approval is in the mid-30's, opposition to the president on various policies is a winning formula. Today, the Murphy administration is in the vanguard of state government resistance, and voters approve.

**The Progressives** After eight years of Republican rule, a new Democratic governor raises over \$1 billion in taxes to pay for a progressive agenda. When this happened in 1990, Jim Florio was vilified. But when it happened again in 2018, Murphy remains popular. How?

Two reasons: New Jersey has become much more Democratic, and those Democrats are becoming more progressive. Murphy is riding this wave of political transition and it will continue to help him with his progressive policymaking.

### Politics: C-

Governor Murphy's poorest mark comes when grading his relations inside the proverbial "Trenton beltway," among elected officials and state government insiders, such as lobbyists and association advocates.

The administration is subject to constant complaints, ranging from a lack of communication and coordination to frustration with basic elements of competent governance and organizational management—lists that don't get updated, relationships that are neither cultivated nor maintained, delays in decision-making, etc.

That Democrats fight among each other is no surprise. They belong to “no organized political party,” as Will Rogers quipped. But what comes across in conversation after conversation with Trenton insiders is a general lack of respect for the political skills of the Murphy administration.

The governor will need to work hard on earning it if he wants this grade to improve.

There are three big reasons for the Governor’s poor grades with the Trenton insider community.

**The No Coattail Effect** While the Murphy campaign deserves the highest marks for successfully navigating what was shaping up to be a historic primary battle in 2017, winning in November was largely seen as inevitable. Democrats took advantage of the public desire for change, their numerical superiority, and the shadow of the widely unpopular Chris Christie and rode them to victory.

But since it was so expected, no one really gives Murphy credit for winning. He won big without any coattails. So no one in the legislature feels that they owe

him anything.

**The Experience Gap** Every administration that replaces one of the other party is filled with new talent. There is always a learning curve. This lack of experience, especially when compared to the battle-hardened Senate and Assembly Democratic staffs, who cut their teeth during pitched battles with the Christie team, has been frustrating to even some Murphy diehards.

The question is whether there will be some kind of a house cleaning in 2019 to bring in more experienced staff who have strong relationships with legislative leaders, or if the current Murphy crew is going to “up its game.” For better or worse, the governor is an awfully loyal and proud sort. He seems to be sticking with his current people.

**Ambition** Fundamentally, the tension between Murphy and Sweeney is that both want to be governor. Much of the sparring, if not outright fighting, that goes on in Trenton today is a result of this fact.

The political fights for control of powerful Democratic county chairmanships and the legislative battles between North and South Jersey for government resources are part of the constant dance between the man on the throne and the top political leader who wants it himself.

### Concerns for the Future

The coming year will tell us if Murphy has a second act worthy of his first. He says his aim is to grow the economy, which is absolutely critical because it is really the only way he’ll find the revenue to fund his ongoing progressive agenda. The tensions with Sweeney, and even more cautious Assembly members who are up for re-election next year, are likely to prevent any new broad tax increases. The money will need to come from somewhere.

But this is why we give our governors a four-year term. They gain some experience, learn from their mistakes, and hopefully play the game better with each passing year. Not everyone pulls it off, but that’s what next year’s report card can assess. 📊

## MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS

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# League President's Legislative Priorities



**L** league President Colleen Mahr, Mayor of Fanwood, plans to focus attention on a number of League priorities for 2019. Some of the items listed below may sound familiar, which is why we need your engagement to address these long-term issues that negatively impact our municipalities. Now, more than ever, New Jersey's local elected officials must work together.

Below is a listing of taxpayer concerns that the League will prioritize in 2019. Please add your energy and your insights to those of Mayor Mahr by communicating your concerns on these issues to State-level officials.

 **AFFORDABLE HOUSING REFORM** The Executive and Legislative branches have abdicated their responsibilities on this issue and municipalities are confronted with a dysfunctional, costly, and inefficient court process. Many towns have or will settle with litigants, but there needs to be bipartisan legislation that will provide, at the very least, an administrative alternative to the courts, needed tools and financial resources to facilitate municipal compliance and a recognition of already existing housing that is affordable.

 **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: LIQUOR LICENSE REFORM** The State's current regulatory structure governing alcoholic beverages remains relatively unchanged for generations and creates impediments for economic growth and development. Reform is needed to modernize these laws; for example, municipalities should be able to permit neighborhood restaurants to provide patrons with alcoholic beverages on a limited basis.

 **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: PILOTS** Policies that give municipalities the ability to promote redevelopment is essential. We must guard against efforts to inhibit municipalities from encouraging economic development by entering into Payment In Lieu of Taxes agreements with willing business partners.

 **LEGALIZATION OF CANNABIS** Municipal governments must be given the power, the personnel, and the revenues that will be needed to address

concerns that will be created by this new industry. We are reasonably confident that State-level policy makers will ensure that the new law and regulations will address State-level issues. We will, however, need to focus their attention on local needs, such as adequate funding for local purposes, social justice and expungement, and municipal involvement in the regulatory structure.

 **OPIOID EPIDEMIC** No municipality is immune from the opioid epidemic. A real solution needs to involve Federal, State, and County governments listening to and working with local officials on strategies and programs designed to prevent the spread of the epidemic, effectively treat current victims, and address the burdens that inflict our families and other caregivers.

 **PATH TO PROGRESS** Senate President Sweeney's NJ Economic and Fiscal Policy Workgroup has issued a report that will begin the discussions on how we can address some of our State's chronic budgetary problems. Further public employee pension and benefit programs reforms must be pursued. Civil Service laws and regulations, which often hamstring local shared services efforts, need to be reformed. And consolidation of some school district administrative functions should be considered.

 **RESTORATION OF MUNICIPAL PROPERTY TAX RELIEF** In 2007, the State distributed \$1.631 million to New Jersey municipalities. Last year, municipalities shared in only \$1.428 million. If the 2007 total had been adjusted for inflation (as required by statute), then municipalities statewide could have provided residents with \$1.957 million of relief.

New Jersey's two main formula-driven general municipal property tax relief programs are the Energy Tax Receipts

Property Tax Relief program (Energy Tax) and the Consolidated Municipal Property Tax Relief Act program (CMPTRA). Though often referred to as “State Aid” programs, both are actually revenue replacement programs, intended to replace property tax relief funding that was formerly generated through taxes assessed and collected specifically to fund municipal programs and services.

**SCHOOL FUNDING** This is a so-called “third rail” issue but we must, at the very least, recognize that school budgets comprise, on average, over 60% of the local property tax burden. Many districts are and will be receiving additional funding through the upcoming years. There’s no easy solution, but urban, suburban, and rural communities should work together to identify means to pay for schools in a more equitable manner. There should also be a conversation that at least some of this additional funding can be used to reduce the property tax.

**TAX EXEMPT PROPERTIES LEASED FOR FOR-PROFIT ACTIVITIES** Tax exempt properties, such as not-for-profit hospitals, private schools, and government properties, provide essential services to the public. However, when properties are leased to for-profit entities, tax fairness for property taxpayers requires that those entities make some contribution to cover the public services, on which they depend.

**FEDERAL LEVEL ACTIONS** With several new Congressional representatives for New Jersey, we need to focus the new Congress on America’s need for major investments in our aging infrastructure. And we need the people in Washington to see the National significance of our region’s needs. The Gateway Project, which will not happen without Federal cooperation, must be fast-tracked. We also need to focus the Federal Executive Branch on local needs,

including local rights to regulate the use of the public’s rights-of-way.

Over the course of the next year, your League of Municipalities will continue its robust advocacy for policies that will allow you to better serve your hometowns. We need all local officials to

join in these efforts. Our citizens expect and deserve to have of all their elected officials, at all levels of government, working together to address clear and present needs, and to to build a better future together for our children, and our children’s children. 🦄

When researching grants, visit NJLM’s  
**Grant Resource Center**  
 @njslom.org/grants



One of the most critical challenges facing municipalities today is finding resources needed to operate without raising taxes.

There are thousands of funding opportunities in the grant making world, but you need to find them first!

NJLM’s online Grants Resource Center provides:

- Direct links to open opportunities
- Grant News
- Tips and tools
- Option to subscribe to the Grants Newsflash



# Meet Your New Board Members

The members of the New Jersey State League of Municipalities elected four new Executive Board members during the business meeting held at the 103rd Annual League Conference. These new members of the League's Executive Board will help lead the association of New Jersey's 565 Municipal governments. Mayors Thomas Bianco of the Borough of Clayton; Anthony Fanucci of Vineland; Guy Piserchia of Long Hill, and Craig H. Wilkie of Florence Township will represent the interests and needs of New Jersey's local elected officials to County, State, and Federal governments.

## Mayor Thomas Bianco



Thomas Bianco is the Mayor of the Borough of Clayton, serving his second four-year term. He previously served as the Borough's Council President, and he is also former Clayton Council liaison to Clayton Veteran's committee and School Board liaison. In addition, he was formerly Clayton School Board president. Presently, the Mayor is the Gloucester County Director of Economic Development.

He also serves on the Gloucester County United Way board and is the Chair of Gloucester County Disability Advisory Committee and Chair of Gloucester County Animal Shelter Advisory Committee.

A member of the Gloucester County Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee, Mayor Bianco also serves on the board of the Rutgers Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Advisory Committee. He is a former Clayton youth soccer and baseball coach.

Mayor Bianco is a graduate of Boston University. He is married to wife, Lynn, and has four children along with a granddaughter, Aria.

## Mayor Anthony Fanucci



Anthony R. Fanucci is serving his first term as Mayor of the City of Vineland, having been elected in November of 2016. He previously served one term as City Council President, and is also a former two-term member of the Vineland Board of Education. He is a member of the Greater Vineland Chamber of Commerce, and the United Way Foundation Board, the Urban Enterprise Zone Board, Planning Board, South Jersey

Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPO) Policy Board, and the Vineland Development Corporation Board.

Additionally, Mayor Fanucci is a Cultural Award recipient and member of the St. Augustine Prep Hall of Fame. He is also the recipient of the Spirit of Achievement Award from the Italian Cultural Foundation of South Jersey, and a Greater Vineland NAACP Unit 2115 Community Award, and an American Red Cross Champion Award.

Fanucci is a life-long resident of Vineland, having graduated from St. Augustine Prep and attended Cumberland County College and St. Peter's University. He is married to Stacey and has three children, Vincenzo, Giavanna, and Adrianna.

## Mayor Guy Piserchia



Guy Piserchia is in his second term as Mayor of Long Hill Township and has been active in the Township Committee since 2010. In his work as Mayor, he is a member of the Planning Board, Township representative at Inter-Municipal, County, State and Federal meetings, and member of the Local Emergency Planning Council. Piserchia is on the Legislative committees of both the New Jersey State League of Municipalities and the New Jersey Conference of Mayors. He is the

2nd Vice President of the Morris County League of Municipalities Executive Board.

His environmental efforts include serving as Vice Chairman of the Morris County Open Space Trust Fund Committee; member of the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge Municipal Alliance; and Executive Board/Treasurer of the Great Swamp Watershed Association Board of Trustees. He is also on the New Jersey Prayer Breakfast Steering Committee and was formerly on the Seton Hall University Stillman School of Business Finance Advisory Board, where he served as a Guest Lecturer.

Mayor Piserchia earned his undergraduate and graduate degrees from Seton Hall University. He is married to wife, Sandy, and has a daughter, Chelsea, and son, Guy.

## Mayor Craig Wilkie



Craig Wilkie has been Mayor of Florence Township since January 1, 2012, and is currently serving his second term. The Mayor is actively engaged in economic development, recreation, and projects that will improve the quality of life for all residents of his community. Born and raised in Florence Township, he proudly followed in his father's footsteps when he became Mayor.

The Mayor was previously an elected Councilman. He also served as a member of the Planning Board, and as a member of the Florence Township Housing Authority.

Mayor Wilkie has been a member of the Florence Township Fire Department since 1990 in multiple capacities, including president, vice president, and as a member of the Board of Trustees.

Mayor Wilkie has a Bachelor of Science Degree from The College of New Jersey and a Master's Degree from Rider University. Mayor Wilkie is very involved in the community, his church, and the Florence Township Civic Association. He is married to Tammy and has two daughters, Abbey and Amy. ♡

# Annual Mayors' Hall of Fame

**A**t the 103rd Annual New Jersey League of Municipalities Conference in Atlantic City, then League President Mayor James Cassella of East Rutherford 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.

"One, two, or three decades or more of service as mayor is a tremendous commitment of energy and time to the process and promise of leading local governments through improvements to become better communities," said League Executive Director Michael Darcy, CAE. "We salute their service."

The members of the 24th induction class of the Mayors' Hall of Fame were honored during a special ceremony during the Mayors' Box Luncheon on Wednesday, November 14, in Atlantic City.

## 2018 Inductees

### White - 30 or More Years

Mayor Joseph R. Smith, East Newark Borough

### Gold - 20 or More Years

Mayor Paul H. Tomasko, Alpine Borough

Mayor Russell W. Felter, Jefferson Township

Mayor Randy George, North Haledon Borough

Mayor John P. Watt, Teterboro Borough

### Silver - 10 or More Years

Mayor David McLaughlin, Allenhurst Borough

Mayor John A. Morgan, Andover Borough

Mayor William W. Curtis, Bay Head Borough

Mayor Carmen F. Amato, Jr., Berkeley Township

Mayor Kenneth Paris, Delran Township

Mayor Joseph P. Stemberger, Elmer Borough

Mayor Paul Anzano, Hopewell Borough

Mayor Nicholas Russo, Longport Borough

Mayor Ellen B. Pompper, Lower Alloways Creek Township

Mayor Jonathan Hornik, Marlboro Township

Mayor Raymond Heck, Millstone Borough

Mayor Michael Giordano, North Plainfield Borough

Mayor Wilda Diaz, Perth Amboy City

Mayor Mohamed T. Khairullah, Prospect Park Borough

Mayor Pasquale Menna, Red Bank Borough

Mayor Denis McDaniel, Springfield Township (Burlington)



**Gold Honorees:** Mayor Russell W. Felter, Jefferson Township (left), and Mayor Paul H. Tomasko, Alpine Borough.



**Silver Honorees:** Standing (left to right) Mayor Denis McDaniel, Springfield Township (Burlington); Mayor Pasquale Menna, Red Bank Borough; Mayor Wilda Diaz, Perth Amboy City; Mayor Ellen B. Pompper, Lower Alloways Creek Township; Mayor Jonathan Hornik, Marlboro Township; Mayor Raymond Heck, Millstone Borough; Mayor Nicholas Russo, Longport Borough  
Seated (left to right): Mayor William W. Curtis, Bay Head Borough; Mayor John A. Morgan, Andover Borough; Mayor David McLaughlin, Allenhurst Borough; Mayor Paul Anzano, Hopewell Borough; Mayor Joseph P. Stemberger, Elmer Borough; Mayor Mohamed T. Khairullah, Prospect Park Borough.

# 21 Resolutions Adopted at the League's Annual Conference

On Thursday, November 15, in Atlantic City, 21 resolutions mapping the new policy and legislative priorities for the League of Municipalities were adopted at the Annual Business Meeting held during the League's 103rd Annual Conference.

Proposed by current municipal office holders, the Resolutions are general in nature, specifically focusing on municipal government interests. Prior to being adopted at the Business Meeting, the League Resolutions Committee screened these resolutions. The Committee was chaired by the newly elected League President Colleen Mahr, Mayor of Fanwood.

Moving into 2019, these newly adopted resolutions will be key priorities for the League, and NJLM staff will be communicating with Resolution sponsors to begin working with State and Federal legislators to introduce necessary legislation, as well as taking other steps to see the implementation of these resolutions. 🗺️



Colleen Mahr, Mayor, Fanwood; then NJLM 1st Vice President

## Index of Approved Resolutions

- No. 2018-01** Resolution of Support for the Gateway Project

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- No. 2018-02** Resolution Calling for a Renewed State Commitment to Making Municipal Property Tax Relief a Priority

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- No. 2018-03** Calling on State Lawmakers to Take Measures to Enact Comprehensive Reform to the "Fair Housing Act"

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- No. 2018-04** Resolution Urging the State Legislature to Reinstate the 2% Cap on Police and Fire Arbitration Contract Awards

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- No. 2018-05** Opposing FCC preemption of municipal authority over rights-of-way and property in developing 5G and other communications networks

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- No. 2018-06** Regarding the Disclosure of Certain Information from the Division of Taxation

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- No. 2018-07** Calling for State Authorization to Utilize Liquor Licenses for Economic Redevelopment

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- No. 2018-08** Recognizing April 7, 2019 - April 13, 2019, As "Local Government Week"

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- No. 2018-09** Resolution Calling for the Consent of Stakeholder Municipalities for New Jersey Department of Transportation Projects

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- No. 2018-10** Resolution Calling for the Creation of a Study Commission to Examine the Open Public Records Act

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- No. 2018-11** Resolution Urging Special Considerations for the Impact Any Municipal Court Reform Would Have on the Ability of Municipalities to Effectively Continue Their Role in Adjudicating and Enforcing the Law

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- No. 2018-12** Resolution in Favor of Continued In-Lieu-Of Tax Payments for Municipalities to Encourage Open Space Acquisition which is Critical to New Jersey's Water Supply

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- No. 2018-13** Urging Action to Provide Municipalities with Relief from Increased Recycling Cost

---

- No. 2018-14** Resolution Calling on Federal Lawmakers to Forge Bipartisan Legislations Preserving a Free and Open Internet

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- No. 2018-15** Urging the Legislature to Act to Allow Municipal Discretion in Establishing Residency Requirements for Police Officers

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- No. 2018-17** Resolution Supporting Direct Federal Funding to Municipalities to Provide Substance Use Disorder Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Services

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- No. 2018-18** Calling on the Legislature to Perform a Comprehensive Reform of State Law Providing Property Tax Exemption for Nonprofit Organizations

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- No. 2018-19** Regarding Recent Amendments to the Uniform Construction Code

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- No. 2018-20** Calling for Legislation that will Permit Municipalities to Withdraw from Civil Service

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- No. 2018-21** Resolution in Support of the New Jersey State League of Municipalities Establishing a Committee Tasked with Examining Possible Legislation Regarding Residential Dwelling Tax Exemption for Interior Structural Improvements and Exterior Aesthetic Improvements

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- No. 2018-22** In Appreciation of League President James Cassella, Mayor of East Rutherford

# SHOW OFF YOUR CITY!

→ Enter to win!

Send us photos of your municipality!  
Help us showcase our beautiful state by sending photos of your tourist attractions, downtown areas, economic development initiatives, parks, city halls, community groups and new projects.

All entries will be posted on the League's Facebook page, website and some featured in the April issue of *NJ Municipalities*, and possibly other issues. A winner will be chosen and receives a free League publication of their choice!

Photos should be high resolution JPEGs, at least 1MB in size. Please provide photo credit if necessary.

Photos can be submitted to [aspiezio@njslom.org](mailto:aspiezio@njslom.org), or mailed on CD or flash drive to 222 West State Street, Trenton, NJ 08608.

**Deadline to submit is February 1.**

Entry details: Unfortunately stockphotos and images that are too low resolution will not be considered. By submitting a photo you are agreeing that you own the rights to the photo and that NJLM has permission to use the photo in *NJ Municipalities*, on NJLM's social media and website, and on other printed materials. A winner will be chosen on February 15. Please include your Facebook profile name and we will tag your photo on Facebook!





# Conference Connections

# Municipalities Leading the Way

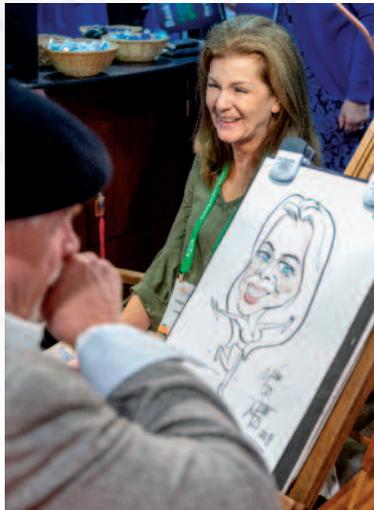


## Municipalities Join Together, Leading the Way

The 103rd Annual League Conference examined the years' biggest issues and how municipalities can best navigate changes on the horizon.

The 2018 Conference was a success for the League and attendees alike. Sessions on the many pressing issues of the day created opportunities for delegates to get up-to-date on the latest topics from the leading information resources in the state. Officials and experts shared their insights on the latest out of Trenton and Washington and delegates shared their problems and concerns with these direct lines of communication to the sources of policies and projects.

Delegates lived the theme of **"Municipalities Leading the Way"** with their strong attendance at sessions and on the exhibit floor, making the most of the three-day program. The loaded schedule from the League and its 21 Affiliates hit on hot topics from Court Reform to marijuana legalization. Whether delegates were first-time attendees or multi-year veterans, there were subjects to satisfy their curiosity about legislation, processes, procedures, and services promising to be of help now and into the future.



In addition to the sessions, delegates visited booths presenting the latest products and services in the Exhibit Hall, including the returning Smart Cities Pavilion of tech-centric vendors.

The League officials took the opportunity to gather members together to determine its direction for 2019 in the form of a new slate of League Resolutions (see page 54) and to vote on the year's new officers and Executive Board Members at the League Annual Business Meeting.

The League thanks the 16,000-plus delegates as well as the teams making up the 1,000-plus space exhibit hall vendors. Meeting up with your fellow local government officials not only supports the League, but also your peers around the state.

Following are highlights of the annual event, including the sights and activities packed into three days.



@ Visit [njslom.org](http://njslom.org) for a full photo album of each day at the Conference.



**Republican. Democrat. It doesn't matter. At the League, we work together for what's best for Municipalities."**

—Mayor James Cassella, East Rutherford; then NJLM President

**Day One of the Conference, Tuesday, Nov. 13**, started with a full exhibit floor and the preliminary discussion of the Conference Resolutions for 2019 at the League's Resolutions Committee meeting (visit page 54 for the final report). The sessions started with a League Orientation and well-attended Using Humor in Governance talk with Assembly Republican Leader Jon Bramnick and also included Liquor License Reform with Assemblyman Burzichelli, Path to Progress: A New Vision for Pension & Health Benefit Reforms, and Schools & Municipalities: Working Together for Students Safety.



**Left to right from top:** **1** Then-Acting Director Melanie Walter of the Department of Local Government Services speaks at the Budget Audit & Update session. **2** The Exhibit Hall drew delegates seeking information on the latest goods and services. **3** Camden Mayor Frank Moran and his team visit the Exhibit Hall. **4** At the Orientation session, then Immediate Past President Mayor Al Kelly of Bridgeton, then 2nd Vice President Committeeman Jim Perry of Hardwick, then President Mayor James Cassella of East Rutherford, and NJLM Executive Director Michael J. Darcy, CAE. **5** Then first VP Mayor Colleen Mahr of Fanwood conducts the League Resolutions Committee meeting. **6** The Sustainable Jersey Luncheon recognized achievements by Municipalities.



**Day Two of the Conference, Wednesday, Nov. 14,** was jam-packed with sessions, meetings, opportunities to network, and more. Current hot topics, including SALT Changes, Marijuana Legalization, Tax Reform, Ethics, and the Budget were all presented. In addition, state officials including the directors of the Departments of Health, Transportation, and DLGS, as well as Government Records Council staff, former NJ Treasurer David Rousseau, and Former Executive Director and Budget Officer David Rosen shared their unique outlooks on the subjects most impacting Municipal officials every day.

Always a popular event, the Mayors' Box Lunch enjoyed discussions with Lt. Gov. Sheila Oliver and NJ Attorney General Gurbir Grewal. Recipients of the League and Department of Community Affairs' 2018 Innovation in Governance Award were recognized with the mayors from Mt. Olive, Highland Park, and Gloucester accepting certificates from then League President Mayor James Cassella and Lt. Gov. Oliver. In addition, Mayors who have served 30, 20, and 10 years were inducted into the NJLM Mayors' Hall of Fame.

Wrapping up the day, the League's Women in Municipal Government Committee held its networking and awards event, during which Committee chairs Mayor Sue Howard and then NJLM 3rd Vice President Mayor Janice Kovach, along with then NJLM 1st Vice President Colleen Mahr, were joined by Lt. Gov. Oliver to recognize Outstanding Women in Municipal Government Award winners Janice Mironov, East Windsor Mayor and League Past President; Carol Bianchi, Bernards Committeewoman; Tency A. Eason, Orange Councilwoman; Jillian C. Barrick, Morristown Administrator; and Susan Jacobucci, Paulsboro Administrator/Chief Financial Officer.



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***I know that the vast majority of people in government are good and decent, whether they're police officers or desk clerks or elected mayors. They're doing their jobs—day in and day out—because they care deeply about their communities and they perform their work honorably and responsibly. But that's exactly why we need to address this problem head-on. We must return the public's attention to the good people in government who are trying to make their lives better.***

—NJ Attorney General Gurbir Grewal

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**1** Accepting the 2018 Innovation in Governance Awards from Lt. Gov. Sheila Oliver and then NJLM President Mayor James Cassella of East Rutherford are (A) Gloucester Mayor David Mayer; (B) Highland Park Mayor Gayle Brill Mittler, and (C) Mt. Olive Mayor Robert Greenbaum. **2** NJ Urban Mayors Association's Innovation Cities: Advancing the Quality of Urban Living session: (l to r) Mayor Frank Moran of Camden, Mayor Ras Baraka of Newark, Barbara George Johnson of Thomas Edison State University, Mayor Frank Gilliam of Atlantic City, Amy McIlvaine, AT&T Business Development Manager, AT&T Smart Cities; and Michael Monxhwedey, VP Products and Services, Savory Technology Partners. **3** At the Marijuana Legalization: A State & Local Perspective session: (l to r) NJLM Executive Board member Mayor Michael Venezia; NJLM Past President Mayor Tim McDonough; Mayor Wilda Diaz; NJLM Executive Board Member Mayor Gary Passanante; Todd Hay, Regional VP, Pennoni; then NJLM 1st VP Mayor Colleen Mahr; Jeff Brown, Assistant Commissioner of the Medicinal Marijuana Program, NJ Dept. of Health; Hugh O'Beirne, President, NJ Cannabis Industry Association. **4** Attendees take in the details at an informative session. **5** NJLM Executive Director Michael J. Darcy (l) with Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver, NJLM Executive Board Member Mayor Raymond Heck, NJLM then 2nd VP Committeeman Jim Perry, and NJLM Assistant Executive Director Mike Cerra. **6** The NJLM Legislative Team with the Legislative Leaders panelists (l to r) NJLM Sr. Legislative Analyst Lori Buckelew, Assembly Republican Leader Jon Bramnick, Senator Robert Singer, NJLM Assistant Executive Director Mike Cerra, NJTV Chief Political Correspondent Michael Aron, Senate President Steve Sweeney, NJLM Staff Attorney Frank Marshall. **7** Then NJLM President Mayor James Cassella of East Rutherford with New Jersey Attorney General Gurbir Grewal. **8** Newark Council President Mildred Crump, Mayor Janice Mironov, and Lt. Gov. Sheila Oliver. **9** WIMG 2018 Outstanding Women in Municipal Government Winners Jillian C. Barrick, Morristown Administrator; Janice Mironov, East Windsor Mayor and League Past President; Carol Bianchi, Bernards Committeewoman; Tency A. Eason, Orange Councilwoman; and Susan Jacobucci, Paulsboro, Administrator/Chief Financial Officer. **10** Former US Attorney General for NJ Paul Fishman with Susan Jacobucci, CFO for Paulsboro speaking about ethics at the Arthur J. Holland Ethics in Government Program session, Gray Areas in Local Ethics & How to Navigate Them.



## The final day of the Conference, Thursday, Nov. 15,

remained active despite the pending early snowstorm. **The League Luncheon** featured a speech from Gov. Phil Murphy (see highlights on page 20), which featured a review of his first year in office as well as his plans for the future of the Garden State. During the Luncheon, **NJ Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Tom Bracken** accepted the Distinguished Public Service Award on behalf of Forward NJ for the work for the state's citizens and Municipalities to improve investments in infrastructure. Rounding out the week of education, sessions included an Update on Interest Arbitration and Negotiations, Public Contracts Law with DLGS and State Comptroller representatives, Planning for Tomorrow's Infrastructure with Senator Bob Smith, BPU President Joseph Fiordaliso, DEP Commissioner Catherine McCabe, and DOT Commissioner Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti; a Shared Services Forum with NJ State Shared Services Czars Jordan Glatt and Nicolas Platt; and the State of Innovation with Lt. Gov. Sheila Oliver, NJ EDA CEO Timothy Sullivan, Labor Commissioner Robert Asaro-Angelo, and Acting Secretary of Higher Education Zakiya Smith Ellis.

This year's Conference ended with the League's Business meeting, where the new slate of Officers and Executive Board members were sworn into office for the year and the League's policies were set for 2019 with the vote approving 21 new resolutions.



### At the League Business Meeting

**from top:** Committeeman James Perry and Mayor Janice Kovach were sworn in as 1st and 2nd Vice Presidents, respectively. Scotch Plains Mayor Al Smith joined newly elected President Mayor Colleen Mahr of Fanwood and Immediate Past President Mayor James Cassella of East Rutherford with his wife, Janice, and 1st VP Committeeman James Perry of Hardwick. The League Officers and NJLM Executive Director Michael Darcy recognize the service of President Cassella.



**Above: 1** Gov. Phil Murphy addresses the attendees at the League Luncheon. **2** Shared Services Forum panelists, (l to r) Marc Pfeiffer, Assistant Director, Bloustein Local Government Research Center, Rutgers University; Gregory C. Fehrenbach, Principal, Government Management Advisors; Village President Sheena Collum, South Orange; Jordan Glatt, Shared Services Czar; Mayor Liz Lempert, Princeton; Nicolas Platt, Shared Services Czar. **Facing page: 3** NJLM's Michael J. Darcy, Committeeman James Perry, Mayor Colleen Mahr, Gov. Phil Murphy, Mayor James Cassella, Mayor Tim McDonough, Lt. Gov. Sheila Oliver, Mayor Janice Kovach, NJLM's Mike Cerra, Mayor David DeVecchio. **4** NJLM President and Past Presidents. Standing: Mayors James Cassella, Albert Kelly, Joseph Tempesta. Seated: Mayors David DeVecchio, Brian Wahler, J. Christian Bollwage, and Peter Cantu. **5** Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin with honoree NJ Chamber of Commerce/Forward NJ's Tom Bracken. **6** Bridgeton Police Chief Michael A. Gaimari, Sr., with Newark Mayor Ras Baraka at the Police-Community Relations: Avoiding Conflict & Assuring Cooperation session. **7** State of Innovation Session panel (l to r) Tim Sullivan, CEO, NJ EDA; Robert Asaro-Angelo, Commissioner NJ Dept. of Labor and Workforce Development; Lt. Gov. Sheila Oliver; Zakiya Smith Ellis, Acting Secretary, NJ Office of Higher Education; NJ BPU President Joseph Fiordaliso.



**The role of the League is, basically, to be the biggest advocate for the 565 municipalities. Our job is to bring officials together—elected leaders, anyone that actually works on the local level—down here to network, to educate, and to advocate.”**

–Fanwood Mayor Colleen Mahr, then NJLM 1st Vice President, from Comcast Newsmakers Interview on Exhibit Floor at 2018 League Conference

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## Budgeting for the Elected Official: Everything you Need to Know to Create, Balance, and Approve Your Municipalities' Budget

**Saturday March 2, 2019 • 8:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.**  
The Conference Center at Mercer  
1200 Old Trenton Rd • West Windsor, NJ 08550

The League has created a special half day program geared towards Elected Officials to help them in understanding the Municipal Budgeting Process. The day will be broken into four parts that include:

- Budget Law Overview
- History of State Aid and Other Issues
- What is Budgeting and Why is it Important?
- Planning for the Future

**Please join us for this informative program!**

**REGISTRATION FEE: Member \$75.00\* Non-Member \$100.00**

*\*Member Rate: Includes Municipalities, State, County, Local Governments and Municipal Utility Authorities*

For more information,  
click the QR code or visit  
[njslom.org/seminars](http://njslom.org/seminars)



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# Around the State

## Paterson's Great Falls Kicks Off Restoration

Governor Phil Murphy and DEP Commissioner Catherine McCabe joined Paterson Mayor Andre Sayegh to kick off the restoration of the Great Falls Quarry Lawn at Great Falls National Park in Paterson.

This is the most recent step in the reclamation of the natural wonder that made Paterson a logical location for the first planned city in the United States (thanks to the efforts of Alexander Hamilton) in 1792, as well as an industrial powerhouse in the following centuries. While the Silk City's

production may have faded, the Great Falls' natural beauty has been the focus of preservation efforts, becoming a National Natural Landmark in 1967 and a National Park in 2011. In 2017, a groundbreaking ceremony for the Overlook Park Rehabilitation and Improvement Project marked the ongoing efforts to preserve the space. This next phase is a 2.5-acre project that will establish a great lawn and address the former Allied Textile Printing (ATP) industrial complex. The work is a combined effort of Local, State, and Federal teams. 📍

Photo credit: Edwin J. Torres/Governor's Office

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