

NEW HAMPSHIRE CITY VIEWS

The Value of Membership

By Jonathan G. Steiner

Maybe you are a new city official taking office for the first time, or maybe you have been involved for years, but either way, the New Hampshire Municipal Association (NHMA) and the New Hampshire Local Government Center (LGC) are here to offer your city an array of services, advice, training and products to help make the work you do on behalf of your city more efficient and effective.

On the NHMA side of the organization, the Legal Services staff provides a variety of services highly valued by our members. City officials of member municipalities can call our legal staff toll free at 800.852.3358 to pose legal inquiries relative to their duties, city activities, powers of city governments, and state and federal laws. In fact, city attorneys often consult with us as a sounding board because our attorneys are widely recognized for their breadth of experience in municipal law, municipal finance and land use issues.

Our Legal Services staff presents many workshops throughout the year, including the Elected City Officials Workshop, Budget and Finance Workshop, Municipal Law Lecture Series and more. Custom programs can be presented onsite to your city staff and officials on such topics as the Right to Know Law, charters, planning and zoning, ethics or any other issue where we can be of service.

“New Hampshire is essentially run by volunteers,” says Dover Mayor Scott Myers. “The NHMA is a key player in helping to educate and inform our elected officials and staff on the ever changing rules and laws we must comply with. We rely on them.”

Members rely on NHMA for its advocacy programs as well. Government Affairs staff members represent municipal concerns year-round at the legislature and state agencies. These lobbyists are guided by policies adopted by the membership at a

Legislative Policy Conference, where each municipality has a vote. During the legislative session, our weekly *Legislative Bulletin* offers reports on legislation and hearing schedules for important bills affecting municipalities. Whether the issue is unfunded mandates, the retirement system or the flow of money from the State back to its cities, NHMA is there representing your interests every step of the way.

“By bringing our elected officials together to speak with one voice, we are more effective,” says Myers, “and we save money as well.”

Saving money for cities is something the LGC does well with its pooled risk management programs. Through its nonprofit HealthTrust and Property-Liability Trust, LGC provides coverages and benefits that otherwise cities would have to purchase from the private sector, often at higher cost. HealthTrust offers health plans and dental benefits, while the Property-Liability Trust offers coverages for lawsuits, vehicles, crime, workers’ compensation and more. Furthermore, since the philosophy of these programs is to save money for the members, more resources are placed into training, wellness and other activities designed to prevent claims. This all leads to a safer, healthier and more productive workforce for your city.

“Concord has been an active participant in LGC’s risk programs” says Concord Mayor Jim Bouley. “I am convinced that their innovative programming has saved us money, time and lives.”

Among the resources we produce for municipalities are publications such as *New Hampshire Town and City* magazine and *City Views* as well as guidebooks on legal areas of budget law, road law, land use, welfare and governance topics. Annually, we publish more than a dozen resources on topics of importance to

Continued on next page

CITY VIEWS

NEWS FOR NEW HAMPSHIRE
CITY OFFICIALS

City Views is published four times per year providing news and information of concern to elected New Hampshire city officials.

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The New Hampshire Local Government Center (LGC) is a nonprofit organization governed by an active board of directors comprising municipal, school and county representatives, including labor, management and elected officials. A resource for local governments, the LGC provides programs and services aimed at strengthening the ability of New Hampshire municipalities, schools and county governments to serve the public. For more information, visit www.nhlgc.org.



Local Government Center

New Hampshire Municipal Association
Workers' Compensation Trust
Property-Liability Trust
HealthTrust

Membership... *continued*

local government, and our staff attorneys research countless volumes of case law to provide members with the synopsis of statutory changes and Supreme Court decisions. We do the research for you, saving you valuable time—and money.

As a city official, we congratulate you on accepting the responsibility of civic service. We welcome you to utilize our services, and become involved and engaged in our programs. We have the resources and knowledge to help you be more effective in the role you have chosen to undertake. We look forward to serving you in the months and years ahead.

For more information about NHMA services and LGC's pooled coverage programs, contact Jon Steiner, associate executive director for member relations, at 800.852.3358 or jsteiner@nhlgc.org.

NEW HAMPSHIRE
LOCAL GOVERNMENT CENTER'S

2010 Regional Dinners



Evening events at
nine locations statewide

April 8 – May 12, 2010
5:30 – 9:00 p.m.

With new leadership in place, the New Hampshire Local Government Center (LGC) is evolving to meet the ever-changing needs of our members. Since the fall, a management and operations study has been underway with staff, board members and consultants working to create efficiencies in our programs, services and products. We're continuing our tradition of excellence in service with a new vision, and incorporating new technologies to help us better serve our members.

Our 2010 Regional Dinners provide an opportunity for you to share your ideas for LGC programs and services. Join LGC Interim Executive Director Maura Carroll and LGC staff for an evening of dinner and conversation at a location near you, and help us map a new direction for future programs.

Join Us for Dinner at a Location Near You...

Rochester
Thursday, April 8
Granite Steak & Grill

Plymouth
Wednesday, April 14
The Common Man Inn

Nashua
Thursday, April 15
Estabrook Grill

Hanover
Thursday, April 22
Jesse's Steak, Seafood & Tavern

Exeter
Wednesday, April 28
11 Water Street

Concord
Thursday, April 29
The Red Blazer Restaurant & Pub

Keene
Tuesday, May 4
Best Western Sovereign Hotel

Jackson
Thursday, May 6
Eagle Mountain House

Bethlehem
Wednesday, May 12
Inn at Maplewood

A Special Thank You to Our Dinner Sponsors
New Hampshire Municipal Bond Bank
New Hampshire Public Deposit Investment Pool

Register Today!

*All members of the NH Local Government Center
are welcome to attend.*

Cost: \$10 per person, per dinner.
Pre-registration required.

Registration Deadline: One week prior to each event date.

Visit www.nhlgc.org for more information and to register online or download a registration form.

Cities Well Represented on LGC Board and NHMA Committees

NHMA Legislative Policy Process Kicks Off in April

Cities are increasingly represented on the LGC Board of Directors with the recent appointment of Dover Mayor Scott Myers. The 31-member Board comprises municipal, school and county representatives, including labor, management and elected officials. The addition of Myers brings city representation on the Board to four, along with Concord Mayor Jim Bouley, Lebanon City Councilor Karen Liot Hill and Portsmouth Director of Human Resources Dianna Fogarty bringing voice to topics of particular importance to cities.

The city viewpoint is also well represented on the NHMA Committee on Government Affairs (CGA), with seats held by officials from Berlin, Concord, Claremont, Dover, Franklin, Keene, Lebanon, Manchester, Nashua, Portsmouth and Rochester. The 75-member committee, which includes members of the Municipal Advocacy Committee (MAC), guides NHMA's legislative policy development and will soon embark on the Legislative Policy Process for the 2011-2012 biennium.

The CGA will hold its Legislative Policy Process organizational meeting on Friday, April 16, 2010, at the Local Government Center. The members will divide into three policy committees dealing with (1) municipal administration issues, (2) general government and revenue issues and (3) environment and planning issues. Within these committees, CGA members will review policy proposals submitted by committee members and other municipal officials, and formulate policy recommendations



Dover Mayor and LGC Board Member Scott Myers (right), Littleton Town Manager Chuck Connell (left) and Bedford Town Manager Russ Marcoux (center) discuss legislative policy matters at a recent meeting of the NHMA Committee on Government Affairs held February 19 at the Local Government Center.

for consideration and final vote at NHMA's September Legislative Policy Conference.

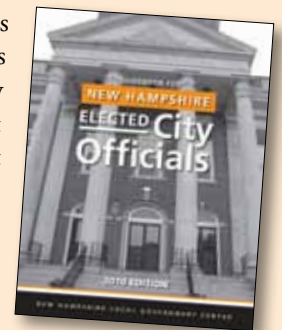
All city officials are encouraged to submit policy proposals. If you have policy suggestions, it is not too early to send them in. Policy proposals may be submitted by a board or a local official from any member municipality. A policy proposal form should accompany each proposed legislative policy. It should include a brief (one or two sentence) policy statement, a statement about the municipal interest served by the proposal, and an explanation that describes the nature of the problem or concern from a municipal perspective and discusses the proposed action that is being advocated to address the problem. The deadline to submit policy proposals for consideration is May 3, 2010.

Download the policy proposal form at www.nhlgc.org: select "NHMA Policy-Setting Process" from the NHMA menu and select the PDF form link at the bottom of the page. Submit forms via e-mail to governmentaffairs@nhlgc.org or via fax to 603.224.5406. For any questions, contact the Government Affairs staff via e-mail or call 800.852.3358, ext. 384.

Guidebook for New Hampshire Elected City Officials

2010 edition now available!

Revised every two years, this 114-page publication provides an overview of municipal law as it applies to city government issues. Topics include: the Right to Know Law, state/municipal relationship, city charters, property taxation, liability, ethics, conflict of interest and incompatibility of office. The 2010 edition includes an index and a table of cases. Elected city officials received a complimentary copy as a benefit of NHMA membership. To request additional copies, call 800.852.3358, ext. 100.



City Officials Network and Learn at Local Government Center Workshop

Twenty-four city officials including city councilors from Claremont, Concord, Dover, Laconia, Portsmouth, Somersworth and Rochester and the mayors of Concord, Keene and Rochester turned out for the New Hampshire Local Government Center 2010 Elected City Officials Workshop on Saturday, February 6. Held at the Local Government Center in Concord, the half-day workshop provided an opportunity for new elected city officials to meet and share ideas with colleagues from around the state and benefit from discussion and exchange on a variety of topics concerning city government.

Along with an overview of city charters, the Right to Know Law, conflicts of interest and ethics presented by LGC Legal Services attorneys, NHMA Government Affairs staff provided updates on legislative matters of interest to city officials. LGC Government Finance Advisor Barbara Reid provided an overview of New Hampshire Retirement System (NHES) funding, growing liability of the system accounts and status of pending legislative proposals, with emphasis on key points to which officials should pay special attention. "This is the year of the tipping point," said Portsmouth City Councilor Chris Dwyer speaking to the state of the NHRS, adding, "Legislators need to fully understand how retirement changes at the state level impact municipal financial decisions."

Attendees received a copy of LGC's 2010 edition *Guidebook for New Hampshire Elected City Officials*. Visit www.nhlgc.org for publication information. Elected city officials may request a copy by calling 800.852.3358, ext. 100.



LGC Legal Services Attorney Christine Fillmore (right) answers legal questions from Rochester Mayor Thomas "T.J." Jean (left) at the February 6 Elected City Officials Workshop.

New and Improved Website Launched for LGC Members



The LGC's new and improved website at www.nhlgc.org was designed with you—our valuable members—in mind. Using your helpful feedback gathered during the past year in focus groups and by survey, we've redesigned our site to better meet your needs. It now offers you the following:

- Ease of locating information on LGC coverage programs, services and other offerings through a page-top navigation bar with drop-down menu selections.
- An interactive Calendar of Events that lets you search for trainings and workshops by calendar date and keyword. You can even export items to your

own Outlook calendar and set up reminders for upcoming events!

- Convenient access to *New Hampshire Town and City* magazine articles—now touted on our home page—with direct links to recent articles and a searchable article index.
- A shopping cart feature for purchasing LGC Publications online, now with more detailed publication descriptions that include chapter titles.
- A scrolling, daily New Hampshire News feed with statewide news of interest to local officials.

Let us know what you think by e-mailing us at webmaster@nhlgc.org. We welcome your comments!

New Hampshire Municipalities and Schools Awarded *WELLDollars* Grants for Health and Safety Programs

The City of Claremont was recently awarded a \$4,000 grant through LGC HealthTrust's *WELLDollars* Program. The city will use the award to conduct a Health Fair and establish year-round physical activity challenges to improve the health and fitness of employees. Additional 2010 city grant awardees include the City of Portsmouth, Claremont Fire Department and Rochester Schools (SAU #54).

The *WELLDollars* discretionary grant program is made available to help municipalities, schools and counties—including police and fire departments—implement onsite health and safety activities that work to reduce employees' overall health risks. Past *WELLDollars* grants have been used to create a four-season recreational trail and equip worksite fitness rooms.

Group representatives with an idea for a health or safety activity or program for their school, municipality, county, police or fire department are welcome to apply for financial assistance. Grant amounts vary according to the size of the group but generally follow these guidelines:

- Up to \$2,000 for a group or department of up to 25 people
- Up to \$4,000 for an entire municipality or school district with 25 or more employees
- Up to \$2,000 for police or fire departments with a

grant request that includes fitness components to meet job-related fitness requirements

The deadline to submit 2011 *WELLDollars* grant applications is October 16, 2010. For more program information, call the LGC's Risk and Health Management Department at 800.852.3358 or e-mail riskandhealth@nhlgc.org.



Accepting a *WELLDollars* award on behalf of the City of Claremont are (from left) City Manager Guy Santagate, Human Resource Coordinator Bette Shattuck, Finance Clerk Pamela Dyer and General Foreman James Hanson.



The LGC Academy

Free online course offerings cover the Right to Know Law and more

Today's local governments—including schools, counties and municipalities—face increasingly complex laws, regulations and policies plus human resource, leadership and job skill challenges. The LGC Academy can help you learn how to effectively deal with them all through a variety of comprehensive trainings. It offers a convenient learning structure for today's busy employees and elected officials by offering online learning modules plus face-to-face classroom experiences with highly qualified instructors.

The LGC Academy offers many online courses *free of charge*, including:

- Right to Know Law, RSA 91-A
- Preventing Workplace Harassment and Discrimination
- Principles of Employment Law
- Fundamentals of Ergonomics
- Emergency Vehicle Liability Police/Fire

Any school or local government employee of an LGC member group who is interested in furthering their education to gain valuable, work-related skills in a user-friendly learning environment is encouraged to enroll in LGC Academy course offerings. For a complete listing of session offerings, registration information and additional details, visit the LGC Academy online at www.lgcacademy.org.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE THROUGH CARING AND INNOVATION

Important Events for City Officials



LGC's 2010 Regional Dinners: *New Vision, New Direction*

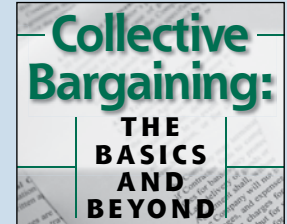
April 8 – May 12, 2010

Nine locations statewide

See page 2 for details.

Collective Bargaining: The Basics and Beyond for the Public Sector

Offered May 25 and September 9, 2010 at the Local Government Center



Watch your mailbox and your inbox for more details or visit www.nhlgc.org.

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Local Government Center

PO Box 617

Concord, NH 03302-0617

Return Service Requested

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