

# NEW JERSEY MUNICIPALITIES

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98<sup>th</sup> Annual  
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Preview Inside!

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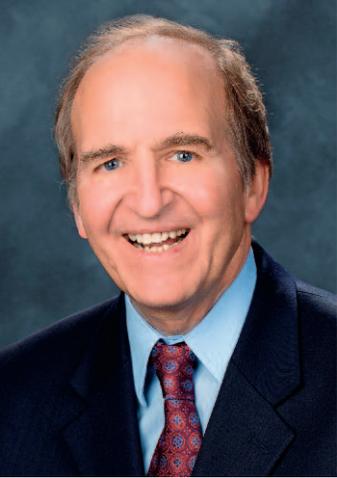
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FROM 222 WEST STATE STREET  
BILL DRESSEL, LEAGUE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

# SPEAK OUT AGAINST STATE USE OF ENERGY TAXES

**A**t one time the state's role was to manage and collect taxes that energy providers had once paid locally. For years, the state has determined how much of this money it will relinquish to municipalities—and how much to siphon off for its own budget.

The current State Budget (FY 2013) anticipates using \$340 million from the sales tax on energy utilities and \$63 million from the Corporate Business Tax for state purposes. For FY 2014, the state plans to use \$365 million from the utilities' sales tax and \$95 million from the CBT.

[ THE TOTAL STATE SKIM  
FROM ENERGY TAXES WILL  
GROW, OVER THE NEXT  
YEAR, FROM \$403 MILLION  
TO \$460 MILLION. ]

In other words, the total state skim from these energy taxes will grow, over the next year, from \$403 million (in the budget adopted last June) to \$460 million.

The following quote is from ***Appropriating Energy Tax Receipts: The New Normal for New Jersey***, by Angie McGuire and Alan Zalkind, The Center for Government Services, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.

The main problem with this allocation shift was that the state's role was prescribed to be manager of the funds, not municipal benefactor. While a benefactor might decide how much to allocate for local property tax relief, the state was reallocating dollars taxpayers expected to have used for another purpose. The courts have ruled that this taking is allowable, but a reasonable question needs to be asked: who should be involved in a policy discussion when tax monies are repurposed?

In answer to that last question, we believe that New Jersey local government officials absolutely deserve to be involved in that policy discussion. This is money that should be contributing to property tax relief.

Now is the time to speak out! Contact your state representatives before the June 30 State Budget deadline and ask them to support our efforts to address this long-standing inequity. ▲

# NEW JERSEY MUNICIPALITIES



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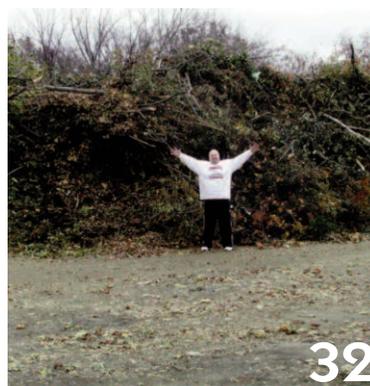
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Out of more than 500 municipal websites, Middletown's site ranked number one based on a combination of content availability and ease of use.

# The Secrets of Middletown's Winning Website

I'm proud to report that our township's website was named the Best Municipal Website in the state in an E-government poll conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute. Out more than 500 municipal websites, Middletown's site ranked number one based on a combination of content availability and ease of use.



Brian Anderson Photography

By Gerard P. Scharfenberger  
Mayor, Middletown Township

The township also earned top marks in the individual categories of ease of use, citizen interaction and content. We're very proud that Monmouth University's findings confirmed our assertion that we're on the right track in using the web as a primary tool to interact with our citizens.

Fifteen years ago, the township communicated through printed newsletters, sent several times a year. Otherwise, residents stopped by Town Hall or called if they needed assistance.

Today we live in the age of the 24-hour news cycle, social networking and smart phones. E-mail and texts often trump phone calls and almost no one waits for the morning edition of the newspaper to get the latest news. Middletown has worked hard to keep up with the times. Now the township's website is the primary portal through which we communicate and interact with our citizens.

We've found that by taking certain steps, we've improved the effectiveness of our site. Although they are not really secrets, I consider them the secret to our success.

**Do an Overhaul** In 2010 township leaders decided to overhaul our website. After years of adding information and features, the site had become unwieldy with well over 500 pages, a cumbersome site map and a cluttered home page. The goals of our redesign included enhancing government transparency, making the site more user-friendly, and highlighting interactive components. In addition, we wanted to encourage residents to use the website as their first avenue for communication, since it is available 24-7.

**Organize Based on the Users' Perspective** The website was previously organized based on the township's organizational structure. While we know which departments manage various services, many of our residents don't. For example the Clerk's Office manages parking permits, the Health Department handles animal control and marriage licenses, Public Works collects brush and leaves, etc. The departmental structure made it difficult for the public to quickly locate the information they were seeking.

After attending several seminars and reviewing many government websites, township staff collaborated with our website provider, Gov-I, to develop a new website design that offered vertical navigation by subject and horizontal navigation by broader-based topics such departments and government. The new website would also use "breadcrumbs" on each page to aid in navigation up and down the site's hierarchy.

**Provide Links** The center of the homepage offers recent news and notices and a calendar. The calendar section provides highlighted events, links to keyword calendars such as 'meetings' and 'recreation.' Our site also provides links to popular event calendars such as those for the library and Middletown Arts Center. Keyword pages such as 'senior services' and 'marriages' were also created to help users easily find all the information related to a single subject.

## ONCE A DRAFT DESIGN WAS DEVELOPED, THE TOWNSHIP ORGANIZED A FOCUS GROUP OF RESIDENTS AND EMPLOYEES TO REVIEW THE NEW SITE.

**Use Fewer Pages** In addition to a whole new look, the total number of pages was reduced by more than half. With related information on fewer pages, users had to click less to find the information they needed.

**Listen to Focus Groups and Feedback** Once a draft design was developed, the township organized a focus group of residents and employees to review the new site. Our goal was to get the end-user's perspective.

Thanks to their insights, the township was able to fine-tune our design. Among the group's many suggestions was to place the search at the very top of the homepage and to list topics alphabetically, instead of using a subjective hierarchy.

The new website was launched in 2011. We continue to make changes based on user feedback.

One popular move was to add 'Middletown Marvin,' a prominent button that takes users to the township's service request system. By simply telling people this was a place to get help with a problem (as opposed to the place to file a municipal service request), use of the online request system blossomed. No one knew what a municipal service request was, but everyone understood 'click here' if you have a problem.



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We've also added a few more subjects to the homepage such as 'Township Maps' and 'Public Safety' after learning that residents could not readily find the information.

**Provide Alerts and Social Media** More than 11,000 people have registered with the website to receive emergency alerts via email and text.

In response to the growing role that social media has in society, especially among young people, the township created a presence on Facebook and Twitter in 2012. Over 1,000 people receive township updates through Facebook and more than 800 follow us on Twitter.

However, we also still print the township newsletter, though less frequently than we did a decade ago. We believe it is important to maintain a variety of communication resources to meet the needs of as many residents as possible. Many of our seniors, for example, still prefer printed information.

**Automate the Update Process** Despite having a small IT department and one Public Information Officer, the township is able to keep the website, Twitter and Facebook updated. Each time an item, such as an important notice, is posted to the website the web software automatically turns each posting into a tiny url on Twitter. We then use Twitter's 3rd party app to post the information directly to Facebook.

We also know that it's important to post new information as soon as it becomes available so residents remain confident they can rely on it, especially during emergencies. For township staff, the key to keeping communication resources current is the use of web portals through which updates can be made from anywhere with a laptop and an internet connection.

**Plan for Emergency Communications** One of the township's first real-time web postings was during the Blizzard of 2010. Weather and snow plowing updates were posted throughout the night and the following day by the Public Information Officer, who was in regular communication with the Public Works Department. The postings were well received and appreciated by the community.

In the wake of Superstorm Sandy, Middletown sent more than 1,250 messages using all available communi-



Pictured (left to right) at the awards ceremony for Monmouth University's website poll are Patrick Murray, Director, Monmouth University Polling Institute; Kathryn Kolby, Director, Monmouth University Graduate Program in Public Policy; Middletown Mayor Gerard P. Scharfenberger; Township Administrator Anthony Mercantante; Municipal Information Services Director Todd Costello; and Public Information Officer Cindy Herrschaft. Middletown officials accepted the plaque for the Best Municipal Website in New Jersey.

cation resources. This included the Mayor posting nightly recovery updates on YouTube. For many residents, the smart phones on which they received township emails and texts were their only access to information in the days immediately following the storm.

While the website remains the cornerstone of the Middletown's communications package, we also use Reverse 911, a government and school cable access channel, an emergency AM radio station and a printed newsletter. The Reverse 911 system is completely integrated within the website portal and allows staff to use map-based, ESL (Eligible Subscriber List) and custom dial lists that are directly linked to our database of registered users.

With the increased need for more electronic communication, you have to be able to monitor as well as gauge how much and how fast your data can be distributed. Our provider has worked in conjunction with township staff to find the most optimum speeds for sending Reverse 911 calls and distributing messages. Staff can also use this system for SMS alerts

to our police officers for emergency situations and crossing guards in case of inclement weather.

Middletown's government and school access cable station can be updated from anywhere via a web portal. The station also broadcasts the community bulletin board through the website in case residents don't have cable service. The small-band, emergency AM radio station can also be updated from anywhere using a cell or landline telephone.

**Keep Looking Ahead** Our latest communication endeavor is to create our very own app. We hope to make it available soon.

We're very proud that our website was named the best in the state by Monmouth University, but we know the job is far from done. We're sure we'll continue to make changes to the site as the interests and needs of residents evolve. ▲

Township Administrator Anthony Mercantante, MIS Director Todd Costello and Public Information Officer Cindy Herrschaft contributed to this article.

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# Evaluating New Jersey's Municipal Websites



By Patrick Murray, Director,  
Monmouth University Polling Institute  
& Kathryn Kloby, Director,  
Monmouth University Graduate  
Program in Public Policy

**M**unicipal websites may now be the single most important tool for citizens to find local information. A 2011 Monmouth University poll of New Jersey residents bears this out. When asked where they would look first to get information about their town government or local services, the top answer was the internet at 41 percent, with most going directly to their town's official website. In fact, nearly 6-in-10 said they have looked up information about their town on the internet—about the same number who say they have paid a visit to their town hall. Garden State residents report being far more likely to visit a municipal website than to call or write a town official.

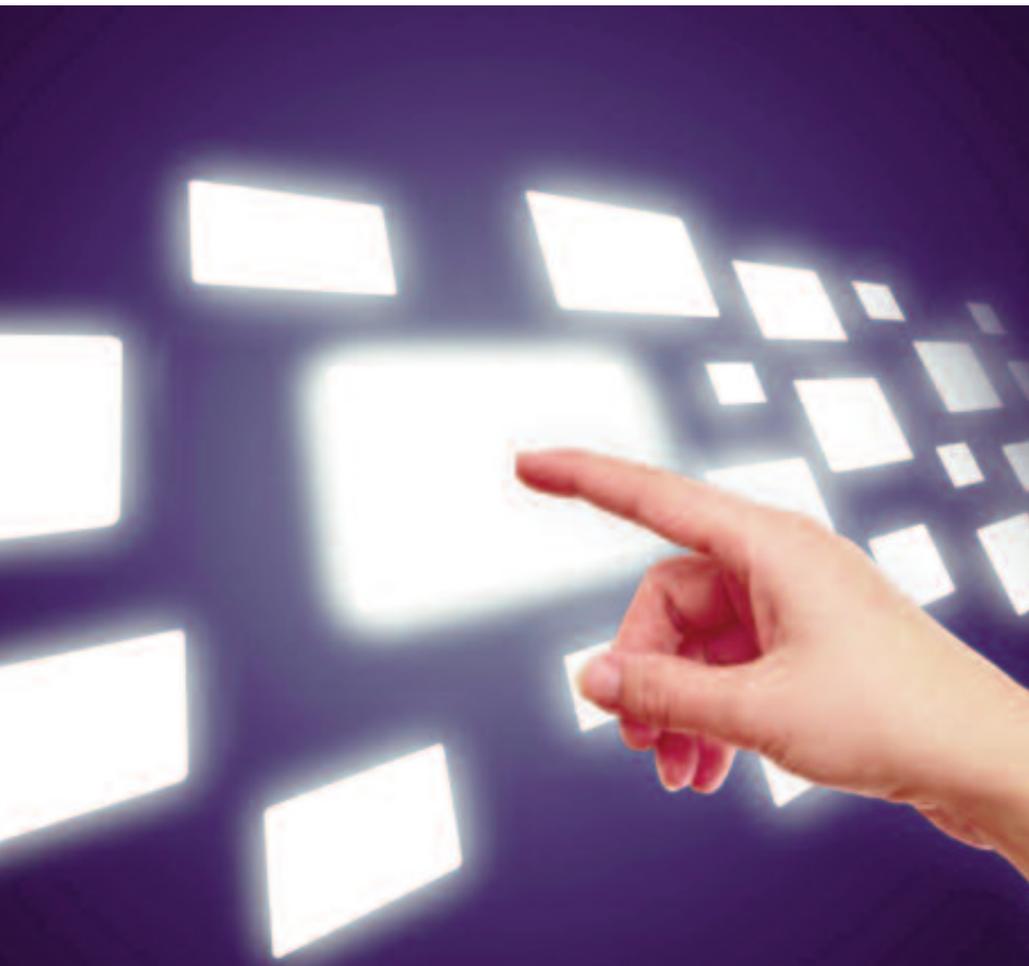
Suffice it to say that these poll results would have been very different just a few years ago. This shift in how residents interact with local government poses both challenges and opportunities for municipal officials. The information age has raised the public's expectations of information access. Being proactive in meeting those expectations improves public confidence in an era when trust in government is at an all-time low. Moreover, a good website decreases the burden on municipal staff by reducing the amount of time they spend on the phone dealing with constituent issues.

Monmouth University's Polling Institute and the Graduate Program in Public Policy recently released the results of their joint study of 540 municipal websites in New Jersey. The project set out to identify best practices in order to assist municipalities in enhancing the effectiveness of their websites.

The project evaluated each website for the inclusion of 86 different content items in four categories: information for citizens, citizen interaction, online government services, and social networking. The research team also assessed each site for "ease of use." This measure was based on the amount of time it took to find four key pieces of information: (1) mayor's or mayor-equivalent's contact information, (2) building permit form or information, (3) municipal budget, and (4) trash/recycling information.

The study found that nearly all municipal websites in New Jersey provide the names of their town's mayor, council and clerk. Fewer than two-thirds, though, provide an email link or message function to directly reach those officials, and just under half provide department emails. It is also worth noting that our evaluation could not readily locate municipal budgets on 15 percent of the state's websites.

To better learn how their websites can be improved, local officials must first understand residents' unique expectations when they seek informa-



Garden State residents report being far more likely to visit a municipal website than to call or write a town official.



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tion online. According to our 2011 poll, New Jerseyans search for a wide range of municipal information online, such as contact information for town personnel, recycling schedules, school information, permit rules, and tax information to name a few.

Our evaluation also found wide variations in the availability of municipal services content. For example, trash and recycling schedules are among the most requested pieces of information. About 8-in-10 municipal websites provide recycling information, and just over 6-in-10 provide information about trash disposal. Even if trash pick-up is not a municipal service, residents expect to easily find information about private contractors on the municipal website.

WELL-DESIGNED  
MUNICIPAL WEBSITES  
INFORM AND ENGAGE  
THE PUBLIC, WHILE  
CREATING EFFICIENCIES  
IN THE PROVISION OF  
PUBLIC SERVICES.

This is just one example where some minor adjustments in web content and design can serve a significant number of constituents. The extent to which this type of information is readily available on a town's website can enhance constituent satisfaction and reduce frustration, which can be further exacerbated when a constituent calls town hall after a fruitless web search.

Middletown Township, the top-scoring website in our evaluation, offers one example of a best practices approach. Their website redesign process included a series of group discussions with residents. Most municipal officials realize that front-line service providers and IT professionals don't always speak the same language. Middletown also recognized that their staff—whether in a direct service capacity or IT—don't always speak the same language as the residents they serve.



Patrick Murray, Director of Monmouth University's Polling Institute, presents the findings of a joint study with the Graduate Program in Public Policy of 540 municipal websites in New Jersey. The project set out to identify best practices in order to assist municipalities in enhancing the effectiveness of their websites.

As a result of their constituent feedback, Middletown created a graphic link on their home page to contact "Middletown Marvin"—an avatar in work clothes carrying a wrench. Rather than use official "municipal service request" language, the link asks residents whether they are "Having a Problem?" Clicking on that link takes users to a page where they can either file a specific service request—which is described in clear language—or submit a general comment or concern. According to Middletown Township MIS Todd Costello, the prominent placement of their Middletown Marvin link reduced phone calls to the mayor's office by 70 percent!

Our evaluation of New Jersey's municipal websites found that the amount of content available on any given site correlates significantly to municipal population—the larger the town, the more content the website is likely to provide. However, there was no significant correlation between the size of the town and its resources with the ease of finding key pieces of information on each site.

Towns that contract with external vendors specializing in municipal web-

site design generally have better performing sites. Using a third party designer, though, does not guarantee results. Town officials must be proactive in understanding what content they can and should provide online, their ability to keep that information up to date, and their capacity to respond promptly to online requests and comments.

Websites can be vehicles to increase public sector transparency, facilitate open government, and increase public trust. They can also streamline citizen interaction with local government and reduce the burden on municipal staff. Well-designed municipal websites inform and engage the public, while creating efficiencies in the provision of public services. Efforts to incorporate this technology into public sector service delivery and public interaction need to be supported in order to promote best practices statewide. ▲

Our report on this evaluation, *New Jersey E-Government: Best Practices for Municipal Websites*, can be found at [www.monmouth.edu/polling](http://www.monmouth.edu/polling). The complete list of municipal rankings and scores is included in this report.

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## Preserve Our Open Space and Farmland

By Janice S. Mironov  
NJLM President; Mayor, East Windsor Township



Whether it is preserved open space, farmland, the protection of vital environmental resources or parkland, all New Jersey residents enjoy the benefits of the state's active and successful preservation efforts. These efforts enjoy broad bipartisan political support and strong public support, and for good reasons. Good land planning and environmental policies have long term beneficial results.

Preservation efforts are investments in our communities, where we live and work, creating balanced land planning and greening our surroundings. Preservation actions are vital in preserving and safeguarding precious environmental resources, including protection of our drinking water supply, as well as reducing flooding. Preservation also constitutes good economic policy, assisting the agricultural and tourism industries. Substantial unmet needs and significant, worthwhile projects remain for land acquisition, farmland preservation, water protection and park development for the health and welfare of our communities and residents.

In fact, New Jersey has a lengthy and laudable history of preserving open space and farmland. The New Jersey Green Acres program has helped to preserve over 650,000 acres of land and supported more than 1,100 park development projects over the past 50 years. The State Agricultural Development Committee has preserved 200,000 acres of farmland over the past 30 years. Municipalities and counties have been key partners and direct beneficiaries of these valuable state preservation programs.

Between 1961 and 1995, New Jersey voters approved nine Green Acres bond referendums. A 1998 referendum authorized the dedication of \$98 million annually for a ten year period from the state's general fund for open space, historic and farmland preservation. New Jersey voters subsequently approved additional referendums in 2007 for \$200 million and in 2009 for \$400 million. Underscoring

the broad citizen support for this goal, it is noted that in the past 30 years no state ballot measure to fund open space preservation has been defeated.

In late January, Governor Christie signed a package of bills providing \$123 million in Green Acres and Blue Acres projects statewide. Since those actions allocated the remaining funds under the Green Acres, Water Supply and Floodplain Protection, Farmland and Historic Preservation Bond Act of 2009, this is now a significant priority for local governments.

In early February, the New Jersey State Senate Environment and Energy Committee began consideration of various proposals to achieve the goal of implementing a long-term, sustained funding source for preservation programs. Among the concepts discussed, but not yet acted upon, are a water tax/user fee dedicated for preservation and dedicating a portion of an existing funding source such as the sales tax or a bond referendum for voter approval. In the coming days and weeks, other options may emerge and be discussed and considered as well.

Preserving our green spaces and natural resources should remain a vital public policy objective of our state. These goals enjoy bipartisan, statewide support. There are more than 175 organizations around the state which have joined the New Jersey Keep It Green Campaign to advocate for the renewal of sustained state funding for the preservation and stewardship of New Jersey's natural and recreational treasures for generations to come.

The League has long supported the establishment of a renewed long-term dedicated source of state funding to preserve open space and farmland in our state.

Our residents support keeping the garden in the Garden State. Now officials at all levels should work together and with groups such as the League, the Keep It Green Campaign and other interested stakeholders, to identify the funding source and continue to invest in our state's future. ▲

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NATURAL RESOURCES  
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PUBLIC POLICY OBJECTIVE  
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# How a Consolidated Princeton Is Doing More with Less



By Liz Lampert  
Mayor, Princeton



Consolidation of the two Princetons paved the path for a better way. With a single government, a single administration and a single police force, we are now delivering better services to our residents, with a lower price tag.

Local governments everywhere are facing a tough challenge: how to manage increasing costs, especially with respect to health care and pensions, without cutting back on important services or burdening residents with ever ballooning property taxes.

Before our historic merger earlier this year, Princeton Borough and Princeton Township did what many other communities have been doing to get by—we shrank the size of our staffs (by nearly 20 percent through attrition over the past seven years), we cut back on services, and we dipped into our surpluses. For a few years, those efforts helped to stem the tide of rising property taxes. However, if we continued down that road, eventually our surplus would dry up and we'd cease being able to provide the services that our residents want and expect. Worse, we would face the prospect of raising taxes and decreasing services.

AFTER THREE YEARS,  
WHEN CONSOLIDATION IS  
FULLY PHASED IN, WE EXPECT  
TO SAVE APPROXIMATELY  
\$3 MILLION ANNUALLY.

Consolidation of the two Princetons paved the path for a better way. With a single government, a single administration and a single police force, we are now delivering better services to our residents, with a lower price tag. After three years, when consolidation is fully phased in, we expect to save approximately \$3 million annually from what we would have spent had we not consolidated. That estimate is conservative, and does not include expected savings from our operating and capital budgets.

For this year, we are already exceeding projected savings by 40 percent. At the same time, we've managed not only to maintain service levels, but to increase them in some areas. Trash collection is

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now offered to all residents, whereas before consolidation township residents had to pay for private hauling. The new, leaner public works department now has the staff available to refurbish the benches along Nassau Street in the downtown. A more efficient deployment of equipment and manpower has also resulted in quicker snow removal and cleaner streets.

Service has also expanded under our smaller, consolidated police force. Through attrition, we have reduced the size of the combined force from 60 to 54 officers. The road map set out by the Consolidation Commission will have us at 51 officers by 2015. Savings from these reductions represent \$2 million of the \$3 million projected annual savings from consolidation. When we had two separate departments, we needed two chiefs and two sets of management. Now with one department, we have a single, less costly command structure and more flexibility in deploying officers.

Surprisingly, despite the smaller force, we are able to place more cops on the



Princeton has been able to expand services under its smaller, consolidated police force. Through attrition, the town has reduced the size of the combined force from 60 to 54 officers.

street. In the first few months of the new government, a number of residents have remarked that the police seem more visible than ever. The concern raised during the consolidation debate—that combining and shrinking the force would lead to reductions in police services—has largely disappeared. Our new patrols are deployed to cover the entire town with an officer in each quadrant, and additional coverage in the central business district.

Princeton is not a high crime town, but we do attract many visitors, and we do have a problem with traffic and speeding. In recent years, both borough and township forces had cut back on their traffic patrols due to budget constraints. The borough eliminated their traffic bureau; the township had whittled down their traffic unit to one sergeant with no officers. Today, the combined force has a dedicated traffic unit, led by the former township sergeant. They're able to respond to residents' concerns more quickly and are better positioned to enforce the town's speed limits.

Restructuring the department has also enabled us to reinstate a dedicated safe neighborhoods unit. Community policing—working cooperatively with residents to proactively identify and resolve issues—is central to the department's mission, and every officer is trained in community policing techniques. However, officers on patrol

duty are often preoccupied with responding to calls. By having a dedicated unit, the force can spend the time and effort to develop and maintain personal relationships with residents, schools, businesses and community groups to enhance the quality of life for all Princetonians. The new unit recently launched a resident survey to identify areas of concern in the community to improve the service the department provides.

The old township and borough police forces had different cultures and traditions, but like the community at large, they had more in common than not. The new force has come together well, with old township and borough officers now working together as partners. A remaining symbol of the past is the old township and borough police cars, which we chose not to repaint with the new logo in order to save money. They are a reminder that we are not erasing our past by consolidating. Rather, by combining resources, we have found a way to reuse and repurpose.

Consolidation has moved Princeton from a bleak choice between diminishing services or higher taxes, to a promising future with opportunities to enhance services and save money. In this era of financial stress, I encourage other communities to look at Princeton's experience and consider whether consolidation might work for them, too. ▲

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New Brunswick Tomorrow

# Bringing Revitalization to the People



By Jim Cahill  
Mayor, New Brunswick  
& Jeffrey Vega, President,  
New Brunswick Tomorrow

Recently, leaders involved in the redevelopment of Atlantic City were guided by a state commission report recommending the “New Brunswick model” as the example to follow. We’re happy that this report acknowledges the success of the public/private partnership that we’ve developed in New Brunswick over the past four decades.

Unfortunately, at times those who hail the success of our model focus exclusively on the city’s physical transformation. Granted, the brick-and-mortar projects are impressive, and particularly to those familiar with how the city looked 20 to 40 years ago. But perhaps even more significant are the social initiatives that have transformed the lives of our residents. It is this “social” revitalization that makes the New Brunswick model so effective.

When revitalization began in the mid-1970s, the founding leaders created two separate, complementary non-profit organizations to deliver comprehensive revitalization. The New Brunswick Development Corporation would focus on brick-and-mortar development projects; while

New Brunswick Tomorrow would focus on improving the lives of residents through social, health, and human service initiatives. Both organizations would address their missions separately, but complement each other strategically.

A recent example was the opening of a new supermarket. New Brunswick Development Corporation secured the financing, the construction partner, and the operator. New Brunswick Tomorrow, through its school based youth employment program, facilitated the hiring of over 40 young city residents at the supermarket.

New Brunswick Tomorrow, like the New Brunswick model itself, takes a unique approach to redevelopment. The organization works to identify the needs of residents, build strategic partnerships, and find ways to help people move forward.

**Understanding the Community** A critical aspect of the organization’s work is to identify the community’s social, health and human service needs. New Brunswick Tomorrow uses data from both survey studies and insights gathered from stakeholder partners.



Hassana Rivera, a junior at New Brunswick High School, works as a cashier at the Fresh Grocer. She received job preparation skills from the New Brunswick School-Based Youth Services Program. The program is funded by the NJ Department of Children and Families, and operated in partnership by New Brunswick Tomorrow, the New Brunswick Public Schools and PRAB.

According to the Eagleton Institute's Center for Public Interest Polling, New Brunswick Tomorrow has the longest running community survey in the nation. It has tracked residents' views on revitalization since 1978. The organization asks residents about their perceptions on issues; such as crime, education, health, and community development. These surveys inform and drive the city's planning process. We've discovered that the experience and views of those representing schools, hospitals, and faith-based organizations are important, because these leaders interact with residents on a daily basis.

IT IS THE EMPHASIS ON  
"SOCIAL" REVITALIZATION  
THAT MAKES THE  
NEW BRUNSWICK MODEL  
SO EFFECTIVE.

**Building Partnerships** With over 1,000 stakeholder partners, more than 200 local social programs, and the investments of many private and public funders, having one organization coordinate the effort makes sense. It helps us to avoid duplication of efforts and maximize resources to improve the lives of families.

In addition, many regard New Brunswick Tomorrow as a credible and neutral organization. It is uniquely positioned to bring together diverse partners. In this way New Brunswick Tomorrow encourages dialogue and action on a broad range of social needs. The organization regularly convenes three action-oriented task forces in the areas of youth, families, and health, along with other coalitions and work groups.

A great example is the New Brunswick Faith Based Coalition, jointly facilitated by the Office of the Mayor and New Brunswick Tomorrow. The Coalition brings together members and leaders from over 40 houses of worship to share their views and ideas. Convening this group is more than just a

good idea: according to a 2011 New Brunswick Tomorrow survey, 60 percent of residents said they receive their information through word-of-mouth from their house of worship or their child's school. Therefore, to reach and engage city residents effectively, it makes sense to listen and communicate with this significant segment of the community.

The generous support from funders and donors, such as Johnson & John-

son and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, empower New Brunswick Tomorrow to create partnerships that explore social innovations. For example, we've implemented and evaluated new policies to reverse the trend of childhood obesity.

The most critical part of finding effective innovative solutions is sustaining them. Too often, soon after a program begins to make real progress, grant support is reduced or eliminated. Sadly,



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the result is a less effective program or increased barriers for families seeking to better their lives. New Brunswick Tomorrow's challenge is to find ways to sustain community-based efforts. The following are a few brief examples of how our city has collaborated to sustain initiatives.

**Youth Development** Over 20 years ago, the City of New Brunswick prioritized after school services for children. New Brunswick Tomorrow, in partnership with the city, developed the Youth Services System to provide after school services to over 2,000 children each day. During the summer, the program converts into a day camp. New Brunswick Tomorrow provided the initial funding to seed the pilot program and the city has sustained the program ever since by fully absorbing the costs within its budget.

**Health and Wellness** In 2000, the Rutgers Center for State Health Policy conducted the New Brunswick Health Needs Assessment which identified as the top priority access to medical and wellness services. New Brunswick Tomorrow shared the data with the City of New Brunswick, and in response, both organized the Mayor's Health Summit to bring together health care and community leaders to develop a vision and potential strategies. One of the many successful outcomes was the creation of a state of the art Fitness & Wellness Center, developed by the New Brunswick Development Corporation and managed by the Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital. Currently, 60 percent of the 6,200 plus enrolled members are New Brunswick residents.



New Brunswick City Council President Rebecca Escobar prepares to participate in a neighborhood meeting. She is an alumni of New Brunswick Tomorrow's leadership development programs, Leadership Tomorrow and Leadership Now.

**Neighborhood-based Revitalization** Twenty years ago, the City of New Brunswick, the New Brunswick Development Corporation, and New Brunswick Tomorrow collaborated with the First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens to initiate the Renaissance Project. This neighborhood development project included housing development programs and a family resource center.

The church's community development corporation has sustained its effort to this present day, helping many who are facing foreclosure. Presently, New Brunswick Tomorrow and the City of New Brunswick are collaborating with PRAB, a 40 year-old local Hispanic community based

organization. They've begun another neighborhood-based project that will impact 8,600 residents by providing access to social and health services and home ownership opportunities. New Brunswick Tomorrow will assist PRAB with its fund development process.

**Leadership Development** Over ten years ago, New Brunswick Tomorrow, in collaboration with Rutgers University, implemented a strategy to develop the next generation of revitalization leaders. The result was two programs—Leadership Tomorrow, which builds the leadership capacity of the individual through self-assessments, simulations and team projects, and Leadership Now, which invites Leadership Tomorrow alumni to engage for one-year in a community change project. Alumni of the two programs are beginning to ascend into leadership positions, including the current City Council President and a member of the Board of Education.

These brief examples demonstrate the importance social revitalization and how it complements New Brunswick's physical, economic and cultural arts revival. The lesson for other communities is to place an equal importance on social revitalization and brick-and-mortar development—just as our founding leaders did almost 40 years ago. ▲

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## Sandy Progress Report: Many Needs Still Unmet

By Frank Pallone  
Congressman, Sixth District (Democrat)

It has now been more than seven months since Superstorm Sandy hit our coast. The process of recuperating from the storm has been slow and frustrating, but we are moving forward and we will rebuild.

Federal funding that is so critical to rebuilding from Sandy's devastation was held up for far too long in Congress, but slowly some money is beginning to flow into the state. Thanks to the outstanding work of the mayors throughout the state and bipartisan efforts to help get New Jersey back on its feet, we are forging ahead.

One area where we are seeing some progress is getting our iconic Jersey Shore landmarks and tourist towns back in working order. Tourism is an important economic driver for New Jersey. It brought in 7 percent of the state's GDP last year and supported 300,000 jobs. Thanks to the persistence of our mayors, The Shore is "Open for Business" this year. Boardwalks up and down the coast, in towns such as Belmar and Asbury Park, have been rebuilt.

Additionally, long-needed flood control and beach replenishment projects are finally moving forward with funding from the Sandy aid package. Army Corps of Engineers projects in Keansburg, Port Monmouth and from Sea Bright to Manasquan represent huge investments and more than \$200 million worth of work. The project from Sea Bright to Manasquan is the largest beach replenishment project ever undertaken by the Army Corps of Engineers. These projects represent just some of the repairs and investment that the Army Corps of Engineers is making in our state. Their work will make New Jersey better prepared for the next storm than we were for Sandy.

Funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is also beginning to roll out; reimbursing municipalities for costs incurred for emergency measures and clean up. As of this writing, \$259 million has been given to our towns and counties. Atlantic Highlands Harbor received \$14 million from the aid package to rebuild their marina, and New Brunswick and Piscataway recently received \$1 million and \$1.8 million respectively for their efforts.

Though this progress has been encouraging, many needs remain unmet. For those in flood prone areas, Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) will help fund buyouts,

help homeowners raise their homes and assist businesses with repair costs not covered by insurance or FEMA grants.

Supporting small businesses is critical to New Jersey's overall recovery. The Small Business Administration has been on the ground working with business to rebuild and the Sandy bill included \$520 million to support up to \$5 billion in low-interest disaster loans. This funding has been slow in coming, but will be helpful to the rebuilding process.

Sandy decimated New Jersey's fisheries and threatened to cripple our state's fishing industry, which accounts for millions of dollars in revenues from both commercial and recreational fishing. The initial Sandy aid package passed in the U.S. Senate included \$150 million for fisheries disaster assistance, but Republicans in the House slashed that amount down to \$5 million. Sadly, that amount does not even begin to match the damage our fishermen face. The National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) estimates total uninsured losses of \$78 million to \$121 million for New Jersey's fishing industry and coastal communities due to Sandy. The impact on the commercial fishing industry, which contributed

\$2.4 billion to New Jersey's gross state product in 2011, is estimated to be \$14 million.

I introduced a bill to plug this shortfall, and also led a letter to the Appropriations Committee requesting funding. Congress must support our fishermen by taking into account the full amount of the damage they suffered and providing them with the emergency aid they need.

It is of the utmost importance that we stay vigilant in making sure that New Jersey gets the necessary tools to rebuild, especially in the wake of the across the board budget cuts that went into place March 1. The sequester slashes FEMA's Disaster Relief Fund by 5 percent and could impact not only our recovery from Sandy, but also our ability to cope with future storms.

As a result of climate change, we know that storms like Sandy will be more frequent and more severe than in the past. Now is not the time to skimp on disaster relief. Rather, we need a full recovery, along with measures to mitigate future damage.

New Jersey was hit hard by Sandy, but we are responding in the only way we know how, with strength, grit and determination to come back even better than before. ▲

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TO SKIMP ON  
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Hammonton and New Jersey Manufacturers

# The Blueprint for a Model Partnership



By Steve DiDonato  
Mayor, Hammonton  
& Bernie Flynn, President and CEO,  
New Jersey Manufacturers

**M**any towns would like to attract a responsible, community-minded company to town. Such businesses create jobs and the prospect of enhanced municipal revenues. Larger companies can provide economic benefits to an entire region. If your municipality is looking to benefit from a corporate relocation, it must be business friendly and prepared to develop a mutually beneficial partnership.

While it is not always possible to quantify the impact, the relationship between the town of Hammonton and New Jersey Manufacturers Insurance Company (NJM) shows every indication of a successful merger. Our partnership benefits both entities and provides employment and other economic opportunities that benefit the entire region. A great deal of good can come when private business and government work together effectively. The Hammonton/NJM story is a prime example of this phenomenon at work.

It all started with an idea from Sam Pignatelli, a Vice President at South Jersey Energy and a longtime friend of New

Jersey Manufacturers. Pignatelli suggested Hammonton as a potential location in South Jersey for NJM in 1997. The relationship between the town and NJM has evolved steadily ever since, culminating in NJM's 147,000-square-foot facility in late 2010.

In 2000, NJM opened customer service, claims and sales operations at a leased facility on South Whitehorse Pike. NJM quickly outgrew the confines of this space, leading to expansions in 2001 and again in 2002. NJM moved to more spacious offices on South Grand Street in 2004, where the company remained until the permanent facility opened its doors.

"We went from 22 employees on the first day in 2000 to 246 today," said Frank Galloway, NJM's Director for Building Services, who has been at the various Hammonton offices since the very beginning. "The town of Hammonton has been with us every step of the way."

The public/private partnership reached its apex with the opening of the company's permanent South Jersey office. The project generated hundreds of construction jobs, in



The relationship between Hammonton and New Jersey Manufacturers has evolved steadily, culminating in NJM's 147,000-square-foot facility in late 2010.

addition to the permanent, professional staff in place today. Hammonton realized lasting benefits and worked closely with the company throughout the planning process to help ensure its success.

"We had a good relationship with Hammonton, thanks largely to the commitment of the town's professionals," said John Regan, NJM's Construction Project Administrator. "I've had a lot of experience dealing with municipal governments, and Hammonton is one of the best in terms of cooperation and expediency."

Maintaining consistently open lines of communications helped the project proceed smoothly, Regan said.

"Early in the process, we offered the town an opportunity to be a part of the planning, to review drawings, etc.," Regan explained. "They enthusiastically took us up on our offer. They took the time to go through page turns (detailed review of the plans). It is a very proactive community. Everybody in local government is connected with the project."

Regan also lauded the "transparent relationship" the town maintained with NJM throughout the process.

"It cultivated a relationship with a lot of integrity and respect," Regan said. "Solving problems in that kind of environment is not difficult."

Attracting businesses to a community is a key factor in helping to keep taxes stable. In addition to the company's role as an active employer, the building has provided a clean ratable for the town's tax rolls, from which all residents benefit. At the same time, the 246 people working at NJM's Hammonton office, many of whom are town residents, feel fortunate to have a job with a stable employer in a safe, clean environment. NJM benefits these employees; in turn, their efforts benefit the company and its policyholders, as well as neighboring businesses.

The company's presence in town has also helped attract other high-profile employers to Hammonton, including AtlantiCare and Richard Stockton College.

It wasn't always like that, however. When Whitehall Manufacturing shut down its research facility in Hammonton in the 1990s, the town experienced a reduction in the number of professional jobs. Now, NJM and some of

the other major employers in town provide professional job opportunities, meaning young people can leave to attend college knowing they can come back to their hometown to pursue fulfilling careers.

## ATTRACTING BUSINESSES TO A COMMUNITY IS A KEY FACTOR IN HELPING TO KEEP TAXES STABLE.

For NJM, Hammonton has proved to be a place with a high-quality workforce and welcoming municipal and civic leadership. Hammonton is a small town of 15,000 residents, where people tend to know one another. On visits to local eateries or town celebrations, residents see a lot of familiar faces. Its downtown is reminiscent of a Norman Rockwell painting. And its location, between Atlantic City and Philadelphia, presents compelling advantages to businesses looking to relocate.

New Jersey Manufacturers has been a good neighbor in Hammonton. They've raised the town's profile

across the entire state. In addition, NJM has helped fund and support public events such as Green Day and the Red, White and Blueberry festival.

NJM and NJM Bank, the company's wholly owned financial subsidiary, are also active partners in the Façade Improvement Drive spearheaded by Main Street Hammonton. "Thanks in part to NJM, we have an ability to provide design grants to new businesses, allowing them to have a quality façade design," Cassie Iacovelli, Executive Director of MainStreet Hammonton Iacovelli, said. "Having that grant be available is a large part of the success of our downtown, which is the economic center of our community."

The company is also the prime sponsor of "Hammontonopoly," a version of the famed real estate trading game that provides incentives to patrons of local businesses. Sales of the Hammontonopoly game represent the biggest single fundraiser MainStreet has. The group uses the money to support business-building initiatives like the façade program.

NJM and the town of Hammonton are most proud of the benefits their partnership has helped provide to the community at-large. In working together for the greater good, they've demonstrated the power of an effective public/private sector partnership and hope theirs will serve as a thriving example for others to follow. ▲

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New Jersey's Statewide Sandy Fraud Working Group

# Protecting Those Who Lost Property to Superstorm Sandy



By Jeffrey S. Chiesa  
Attorney General

**W**hile most New Jerseyans responded to Superstorm Sandy with resilience and generosity, our state also has seen some unscrupulous individuals, who seek to profit illegally from the misfortune of others. This group includes fly-by-night, unregistered home repair contractors and questionable solicitations from bogus charities.

My office is committed to protecting those who lost their homes and property to Superstorm Sandy, to ensure they will not be victimized again.

To that end, we created New Jersey's Statewide Sandy Fraud Working Group to serve as the state's clearinghouse for investigations and prosecution of criminal and civil fraud related to Sandy and the post-disaster recovery process.



The Attorney General's Office is committed to protecting those who lost their homes and property to Superstorm Sandy, to ensure they will not be victimized again.

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The working group consists of representatives from the Divisions of Criminal Justice and Consumer Affairs, State Office of the Insurance Fraud Prosecutor, New Jersey State Police, and the Atlantic, Middlesex, Monmouth, and Ocean County Prosecutor's Offices; and is overseen by the State Directors of Criminal Justice and Consumer Affairs. It coordinates all investigative and enforcement efforts at the state, county, and local levels to ensure all cases are referred and pro-

secuted efficiently and effectively.

Any victim or witness of fraud committed in the aftermath of Sandy, including but not limited to home repair fraud, insurance fraud, and fraudulent charitable solicitations, should contact New Jersey's Statewide Sandy Fraud Working Group at 855-SANDY39 (855-726-3939) or [www.StopSandyFraud.org](http://www.StopSandyFraud.org).

We will need to continue to watch out for fraud, especially as New Jersey moves toward the next phase of disaster recovery. The Division of Consumer

Affairs received a total of 1,528 complaints about home improvement issues during the entire 12 months of last year—and we expect home improvement complaints to increase. Indeed, we have seen an influx of new contractors entering New Jersey since the storm. While many of these contractors have registered with the state, our investigators have identified and contacted hundreds more who have not.

## CONSUMERS AND ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS ARE URGED TO CONTACT NEW JERSEY'S STATEWIDE SANDY FRAUD WORKING GROUP WITH TIPS AND COMPLAINTS.

The Attorney General's Office prepared for a surge of fraud-related complaints in the days before Sandy made landfall. We mobilized criminal and Consumer Affairs investigators immediately after the storm struck the Jersey Shore, and took strong enforcement action against businesses and others seeking to illegally take advantage of those displaced by the storm.

All told, we received more than 2,100 price gouging complaints. We filed lawsuits against a total of 24 hotel and gas stations accused of increasing their prices to prohibited, excessive levels during the state of emergency, in violation of state law.

More recently, we assigned a team of investigators to scour the hardest-hit areas of Atlantic, Monmouth, and Ocean counties, and speak directly with home improvement contractors working to rebuild homes in those areas. The team directly contacted a total of 1,303 contractors. They instructed those who were not registered to register with the Division of Consumer Affairs as well as to comply with New Jersey's Consumer Fraud Act



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and all other applicable laws and regulations. Since Sandy, the division has received registration applications from more than 4,000 home improvement contractors—a 119 percent increase over the same period last year. Any contractors who fail to register will face notices of violation and civil penalties.

The Office of the Attorney General has also been diligent in enforcing the state's charitable solicitation laws. In February, we filed suit against an allegedly deceptive Superstorm Sandy charity for numerous violations. The Division of Consumer Affairs also issued warnings to more than two dozen newly created groups that appeared to be soliciting donations in the name of Sandy victims, and is closely monitoring their activities to ensure compliance with New Jersey's Charities Registration Act and the Consumer Fraud Act.

We have also taken action in other areas. We filed a success lawsuit to block a "Superstorm Sandy Reconstruction Summit," whose organizer, we believe, falsely implied he and his

forum were affiliated with or endorsed by federal, state, or local government agencies. As noted in the lawsuit, the organizer's background includes a personal bankruptcy filing that was opposed by the U.S. Bankruptcy Trustee due to alleged fraud, and approximately 20 outstanding judgments, many stemming from post-disaster "summits" he held in other states.

## THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE CONTINUES TO FIGHT HARD AGAINST ALLEGED SCAMMERS IN SANDY'S WAKE.

The Division of Consumer Affairs partnered with the New Jersey Motor

Vehicle Commission to create an easily searchable database, at [www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov/floodedcars](http://www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov/floodedcars), that now includes approximately 30,000 vehicles that have been processed by the MVC as either flood-titled or salvage-titled since Sandy made landfall.

Consumers and enforcement officials are urged to contact New Jersey's Statewide Sandy Fraud Working Group with tips and complaints. The working group will provide all information to the appropriate agency, share across jurisdictional lines, and will not hesitate to bring criminal charges where appropriate.

There is no excuse, legally or morally, for any business or individual to attempt to illegally victimize and profit from those who suffered losses due to a natural disaster. The Attorney General's Office continues to fight hard against alleged scammers in Sandy's wake, and we are sending a clear message to any out-of-state or homegrown con artists, of all stripes and varieties: Either stay out of New Jersey, or comply fully with our criminal and consumer protection laws. ▲

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# *Under the Gold Dome*

## *Figuring Out the Unemployment Numbers*



By Darryl Isherwood

**G**overnor Chris Christie hit a milestone of sorts earlier this year when the unemployment rate dropped to 9 percent, the lowest rate of his 38 months in office.

The rate was announced with the usual fanfare touting private sector job growth and a glowing quote from the state treasurer's office. But presumptive Democratic gubernatorial candidate Senator Barbara Buono quickly countered the praise, highlighting the 415,000 residents that remain unemployed and pointing out that the state has recovered just 40 percent of the jobs lost during the recession.

Since unemployment is likely to play a huge role in the gubernatorial election, it's helpful to determine what's true and what's not.

An old source from my days as a Hamilton Township beat reporter used to constantly remind me to view any numbers about taxes and employment with a cynical eye. "Figures lie and liars figure" he would say anytime I'd ask him about the latest press release from the Democratic administration or the Republican council.

So, is somebody lying in the debate over unemployment? No. It's all about perspective. The governor is right to celebrate the dip in the unemployment rate. It shows progress and if you're one of the newly employed, you're probably pretty happy with the governor these days.

But things change if you're one of the 415,000 Senator Buono talked about in her statement. That's a big number no matter how you slice it, and that 9 percent represents 1 out of every 11 workers in the state. To put that in perspective, next time you're at an event, look around. Chances are one of the people standing within 10 feet of you needs a job.

So let's check out some other claims made by both sides.

The governor touts the private sector job growth his administration has shepherded in. Concentrating on the private sector lets him advertise his small government bona fides, while talking up the various incentives and programs he's handed out to businesses over the past three years.

According to the latest release from the treasurer, the state has added 127,800 private sector jobs since February 2010, Christie's first full month in office. The figures I dug up showed an additional 118,000 private sector jobs, but with revisions etc. we'll give the governor the benefit of the doubt.

But during that same period, more than 23,000 public sector workers lost their jobs. While that reduction in gov-

ernment size fits the general GOP narrative, if you're one of those employees, you're probably not patting Christie on the back. It's also important to note that number includes teachers.

The governor's battles with the teachers' union are legendary. The debate over the quality of education is a topic for another column, but I think even Christie would be hard pressed to explain how fewer teachers benefits anyone.

So let's talk about the actual number of unemployed. There are a lot of factors that go into the unemployment number and remembering my source's words, I'll try to parse them.

Let's look at Senator Buono's claim that we've only recovered a little over 40 percent of the jobs lost during the recession.

The National Bureau of Economic Research, the ladies and gentlemen responsible for knowing this stuff, lists the date the recession began as December 2007 and its end as June 2009

During that span the state lost about 143,000 jobs. Since then, we've added about 62,000 jobs or about 43 percent, exactly where Buono put it.

But here in New Jersey, things continued to decline long after June 2009 and we lost another 38,417 jobs through November of that year. Since that trough, the state has added 100,000 jobs of a total of 182,000 lost for a return of 55 percent.

So have we returned more than half of all jobs lost or a measly 40 percent? Figures lie and liars figure.

So let's look at one last measure of job performance. Of the 100,000 jobs created since November 2009, how many can Christie lay claim to?

The governor took office on January 19, 2010 making February his first full month in office. At the end of February, the workforce stood at 4,112,407 workers and the unemployment rate stood at 9.7 percent. The latest jobs report put the number of employed at 4,199,891 and the unemployment rate at 9 percent for a difference of 87,000 jobs and seven tenths of one percentage point all on Christie's watch.

Progress. Or a measly 40 percent.

Figures lie and liars figure. ▲

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Darryl Isherwood is the editor of PolitickerNJ, and its sister site State Street Wire. He has over a decade of experience as a reporter and has covered politics and government for news outlets in four states.



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Hasbrouck Heights

# Providing Affordable and Effective Recycling



By Rose Heck  
Mayor, Hasbrouck Heights

**A** Family Friendly Town," Hasbrouck Heights was named after Jacob D. Hasbrouck, general manager of the New Jersey and New York Railroad. With a population of 11,768, the borough's Sanitation Department continues to have its own backyard garbage pick-up with curbside recycling days mixed into its weekly schedule.

Its nine member team of three drivers and six loaders picks up approximately seven tons of garbage from both Zone 1 and Zone 2 in the residential area on its two dedicated days a week. (There are three main route trucks and three spare trucks available for use during Leaf Season and/or possible mechanical breakdowns.) They move through town beginning their day at 5:30 a.m. and work until their routes are completed. The business community provides its own pick-up service.



Department of Public Works Superintendent William Spindler stands in front of over 2,000 cubic yards of vegetative debris which was generated by a snow storm in October 2011. The debris was removed by Downes Tree Service and taken to the Borough of Hawthorne Compost and Wood Waste Facility, a NJDEP permitted facility for recycling.



Hasbrouck Heights newest garbage truck was purchased to replace a truck that was purchased in 1979.

As mayor of our very busy community, I am very proud of this department and the work it does under the able direction of Department of Public Works Superintendent William Spindler (a former State Wrestling Champion) and Assistant D.P.W. Superintendent Jim Schneider, both home grown men who graduated from local schools. The 29 member department does a myriad of work that provides many services under several different headings such as Buildings & Grounds, Shade Tree, Leaf Removal, Recycling, Road Repairs/Maintenance, Garbage and Trash Collection, Sewer Maintenance, Parks and Playgrounds.

**HASBROUCK HEIGHTS  
ENVIRONMENTAL/TRANSPORTATION  
COMMISSION AND THE DEPARTMENT  
OF PUBLIC WORKS TEAMED UP TO  
INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF MATERIAL  
THAT WAS BEING RECYCLED.**

In 2005, the Hasbrouck Heights Environmental/Transportation Commission, which I chaired, joined with Superintendent Spindler to begin our "Enhanced Recycling Program." We wanted to increase the amount of material that was being recycled.

Together, we reached out to everyone in town, including all of our schools both public and private, from Pre-K to High School. We arranged with the Bergen County Utilities Authority to send instructors into our schools to educate and promote the importance and the need for recycling. It took much effort and cooperation between the town and the schools, the purchasing of special containers for classrooms, cafeterias, etc. and the diligence of both the Superintendent of Schools and all of the teachers to bring about the success of our initiative.

An annual Paper Shredding Event evolved from the placement of one container to accept shredded paper in the Municipal Building. We soon needed to add a second container. Because the public was so receptive, we arranged for our recycling company to bring a shredding truck to the borough for public use, at no extra charge. Now look at the following charts to see a real recycling success story.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Pounds Recycled</u>	<u>Shredding Events</u>
2008	2140 lbs	0
2009	4580 lbs	0
2010	2720 lbs	0
2011	16,100 lbs	3
2012	11,520 lbs	3
2013	6740 lbs	1 to date
<b>Total Pounds Recycling to Date</b>		<b>43,800 lbs</b>

In 2009, the Hasbrouck Heights Recycling Program added the collection of electronics (eWaste) to our curbside collection program. Electronic equipment such as computers, monitors, keyboards, stereos, televisions, telephones, can be put out at the curb on newspaper collection days.

Electronics can also be taken to the Department of Public Works (DPW) Recycling Center at I Plant Road or to the borough's satellite recycling station on the first Saturday of every month.

**THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL AND  
OUR DPW SUPERINTENDENT PREFER TO  
COLLECT THE SOLID WASTE/RECYCLING  
USING DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
EMPLOYEES BECAUSE OUR RESIDENTS  
STILL ENJOY THE CHOICE OF  
BACKYARD PICKUP OR CURBSIDE PICKUP.**

Hasbrouck Heights has been able to purchase the following vehicles and equipment with revenue produced by recycling.

2008	Toyota Highlander Hybrid	\$ 30,000
2008	Ford 350 Mason Dump Truck	\$ 36,000
2008	Ford 250 Pickup Truck w/plow	\$ 28,000

2010	Ford 150 Pickup Truck	\$ 24,720
2011	Five Cubic Yard Salt Spreader	\$ 14,000
2011	Eight Foot Baker Snow Plow Blade	\$ 9,900
2012	2.5 Yard Grapple Bucket	\$ 13,500
2013	GMC 4WD Truck w/Utility Dump Body	\$ 41,219

The results are very visible as these new vehicles make their way through our local streets.

Our 2012 Tonnage Grant Report is ready for submission to the NJDEP. The list below reflects the totals of recycled material from the borough (residential only) in tons:

Grass	511	Brush	733	Leaves	197
Paper	380	Cardboard	152	Glass	301
Steel	43	Aluminum	22		
eWaste	17				

The Mayor and Council and our DPW Superintendent prefer to collect the solid waste/recycling using DPW employees because our residents still enjoy the choice of backyard pickup or curbside pickup. The DPW crew makes every effort to be respectful of residents' property and needs. Although private contracts are initially attractive, dumping fees generally rise and in most cases we would have to surrender our garbage trucks to the private haulers as part of the contract agreement. As for private garbage collection, in our opinion, it can be hard on residents, leaving them at the mercy of the hauler. Hasbrouck Heights owns its own fleet of trucks and that makes a big difference cost-wise. ▲

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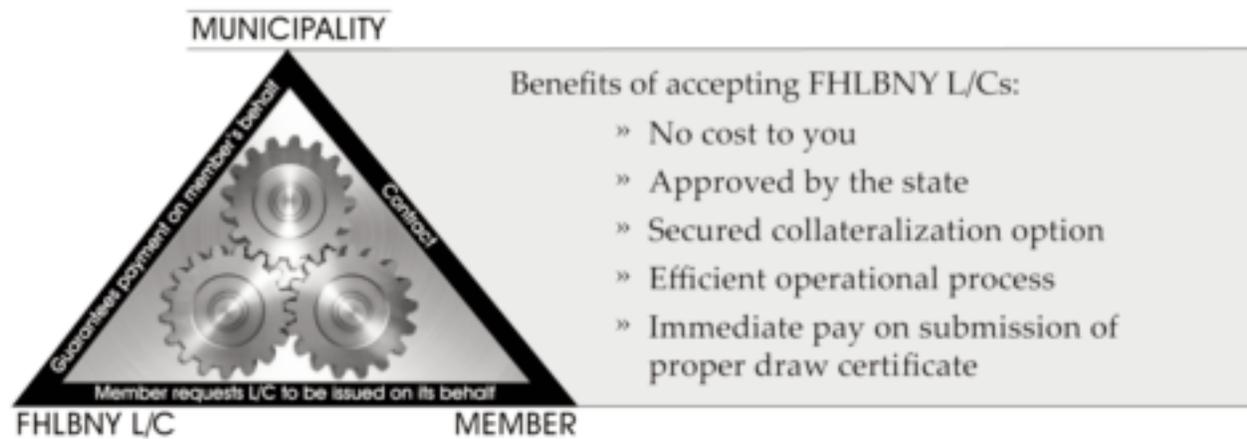
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Robbinsville's Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade

# A Fun Way to Build Community Spirit



By Dave Doran  
St. Patrick's Day Parade  
Coordinator, Robbinsville



The Division 1 Ancient Order of Hibernians Pipe Band performs along the parade route.

My best recollection is that we were standing on a hill overlooking the festivities at the Ancient Order of Hibernians in early October of 2008. Their annual music festival was in full swing and my pal Jimmy O'Donnell and I had just finished a conversation with a lad about how he was preparing for his next St. Patrick's Day Parade. After a slight pause Jim says to me, "Doran, why don't we have a parade in our town?" Now I'm not sure whether it was the cool autumn air or the sweet sound of Irish ballads that prompted my friend to arrive at such a statement, but it was surely a shocker. This was also a question for which I did not have an answer.

THIS IS A GOOD TIME TO  
LOOK BACK ON HOW  
THIS EARLY SPRING EVENT,  
THAT HAS HELPED KNIT  
THIS WONDERFUL  
COMMUNITY TOGETHER,  
CAME INTO BEING.

That was five years ago. This is a good time to look back on how this early spring event, that has helped knit this wonderful community together, came into being.



Robbinsville Mayor Dave Fried with Master SGT and Robbinsville resident, Kenneth Ashley, pose prior to the 2012 parade.

Robbinsville. The group's objective is to act as another nexus for Irish cultural events and activities in the local community, and to promote Irish heritage and cultural values.

WE SOON DISCOVERED  
THAT MANY RESIDENTS  
WERE EXCITED TO  
EITHER VOLUNTEER  
OR PARTICIPATE IN  
THE PARADE.

A few weeks after the music festival Jim reminded me of a conversation he subsequently had with a few local government officials, who were enthusiastic about the idea and offered their support. This encouragement combined with a handful of

local residents putting up seed money for paperwork and filings had us off and running. We formed the Robbinsville Irish Heritage Association (RIHA); a volunteer organization chartered to foster an understanding and appreciation of Irish cultural values in

RIHA developed an inclusive vision to engage Robbinsville residents and the local government. They sought to serve the community in a positive way. We soon discovered that many residents were excited to either volunteer or participate in the parade. This was also good news since we needed to form a parade committee to raise funds for parade expenses.

And we had fun coming up with ideas and raising money!

T-shirt and green hair extension sales, handbag BINGO at the high school, grocery bagging at the local food store, pancake fundraisers at a local restaurant, and even celebrity bartender nights at a local pub were



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The Mayors Wellness Campaign is a program of the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute in partnership with the New Jersey State League of Municipalities. There is no charge to join.

Major funding for the Mayors Wellness Campaign is provided by The Walmart Foundation  
For more information, call 609-303-0373 or contact Melissa Kostinas at [mkostinas@njhcqi.org](mailto:mkostinas@njhcqi.org)



This year's Grand Marshal, Chuck Petty leads the parade.

all part of the fundraising fun. The money raised at these events, along with several generous donations from local merchants, allowed us to put a parade on the street. We chose a parade route that went right

through the town center in order to make it convenient for families. Last year's parade included several Irish dance groups, five pipe bands, well over 230 girl scouts and even a dog on a skateboard.

As we look ahead to our next parade in Robbinsville, we are reminded of the keen sense of community developed by these events over the years. It has become a day that our businesses and residents, as well as their families and friends look forward to. As we were mustering for last year's event, I recall hearing one person mention how much pride they have in the community as a result of the parade. Following the 2011 parade, one of the Robbinsville Police Officers recounted the reaction of one woman to the event. He said she began to weep and said "This is how we used to celebrate in my old town."

The feedback from the residents has been very positive. Businesses are seeing one of their better revenue days on parade day. The support from our mayor and civil servants has been incredible and many have gone above and beyond the call of duty. Mayor Dave Fried has been an amazing supporter of the Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade in Robbinsville.

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**NEW JERSEY MUNICIPALITIES**



RIHA Parade Coordinator, Dave Doran; RIHA Secretary Anne Marie O'Brien and RIHA President Jim O'Donnell pose during the post parade party in 2012.

with economic development through tax stabilization," Mayor Fried said. "The community spirit has always been there, and that is why we knew hosting our own St. Patrick's Day parade would be a terrific idea. As we continue to build our economic infrastructure more businesses will benefit from this great tradition. It's a win-win for everyone, right in our own backyard, and we couldn't be more proud to be a part of it."

So, if you find yourself on a hill discussing civic events with a friend, be aware. They may have a plan that will bring your community together in a very positive way. If we can do it here in Robbinsville surely you can too! ▲

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## HIGHLIGHTS

### Tuesday, November 19

- Exhibit Hall Opens
- Workshops and Meetings
- Newcomers Conference Orientation Session
- Fifth Annual Sustainable Jersey Luncheon and Awards
- Consulting Period with Topic Experts
- Meeting of the League's Resolution Committee

### Wednesday, November 20

- Exhibit Hall Opens
- Sessions and Meetings
- Affiliates Luncheons
- League's Mayors Box Luncheon
- Annual Legislative Update Session

### Thursday, November 21

- Exhibit Hall Opens
- Sessions and Meetings
- Women in Municipal Government Breakfast
- League Luncheon for All Delegates
- NJLM Business Meeting

98<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL NEW JERSEY LEAGUE OF MUNICIPALITIES  
CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION

ATLANTIC CITY CONVENTION CENTER • NOVEMBER 19-21, 2013

# NJLM CONFERENCE PREVIEW

**Online & Paper Registration  
Opens August 1.**

**Register by October 1 for  
Reduced Rates**

## 98<sup>th</sup> Conference Headquarters

The 98th Annual League Conference will be held in the Atlantic City Convention Center, located at the foot of the Atlantic City Expressway.

Events occur in the Atlantic City Convention Center Tuesday, November 19 through Thursday, November 21 with a business meeting Thursday, November 21, 3:30 p.m. at the Sheraton Hotel.

Transportation from hotels to the Convention Center will be provided by chartered shuttle service. The shuttle service is paid for through a \$7.00 per day hotel room fee. Shuttle schedules will be publicized prior to the Conference and at each hotel during the Conference week.

## Room Reservation Procedure

Under the League's policy, only room reservation requests from municipal officials will be processed from June 1 through August 4. These room requests must be on the "Municipal Use Only" forms available from your municipal clerk or the League office. General room reservations for county and state officials and other interested parties will commence August 5. The form in this issue is for the convenience and use of non-municipal and non-exhibitor guests only.

Any room cancellations after Thursday, November 7, 2013 will require payment for all cancelled room nights. This is an important procedure designed to reduce the occurrence of double booked rooms and no-show reservations.



Room changes or cancellations should be made by directly contacting the Housing Department before 11/7. All accommodations require a one-night deposit to hold rooms.

Earlier this month, a municipal housing form was mailed to each municipal clerk. The Housing Department reserves blocks of rooms for assignment only to League delegates using the official form. Please use only the municipal form for municipal housing requests.

For a full list of League and Affiliate conference sessions and lists of exhibitors, consult [www.njslom.org](http://www.njslom.org) or the October issue of New Jersey Municipalities Magazine. Full details of each League and Affiliate program including CEUs and speakers will be in the November issue.

## Social Media and Conference Apps

While attending the conference, follow us on Twitter @NJ\_League or #njleague for immediate notices on changes to the schedule of League educational sessions, shuttle bus changes, announcements about sold out League events and important attractions. New this year, the exhibit floor plan and searchable list of exhibits may be viewed on smart phones. Find it at [www.njslom.org/exhibit.html](http://www.njslom.org/exhibit.html).

## Consulting Period Round Tables

**Tuesday, November 19, 2-4 p.m. – Hall A**

Over 70 Experts on Key Local Topics Answer Your Questions

## Annual Business Meeting

**Thursday, November 21, 3:30 p.m.**

**Sheraton Hotel, Pearl Ballroom – 2<sup>nd</sup> Level**

Includes Elections, Resolutions and Special Recognitions



**FOR NON-MUNICIPAL USE ONLY**

Forms will be processed beginning August 5, 2013

**HOTEL & MOTEL RESERVATION FORM**

**NEW JERSEY STATE LEAGUE OF MUNICIPALITIES**

THE ATLANTIC CITY CONVENTION CENTER – NOV. 19, 20, 21, 2013 – ATLANTIC CITY, NJ

**MAIL TO:** NJLM 98<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference  
201 Tilton Road, Suite 17B  
London Square Mall  
Northfield, NJ 08225

**OR**

**FAX TO:** (609) 383-8616  
**Online:** NJSLOM.org then click on  
“Annual Conference”  
PAYMENT REQUIRED TO HOTEL BY OCT. 11<sup>th</sup>

**LAST DAY TO USE THIS FORM IS FRIDAY, OCTOBER 11<sup>TH</sup>.**

**HEADQUARTERS – ATLANTIC CITY CONVENTION CENTER – 98<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL LEAGUE CONFERENCE**

**SPECIAL NOTE:** Please make firm decisions early and realistic reservations. CANCELLATIONS MADE AFTER THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7<sup>th</sup>, WILL BE REQUIRED TO PAY FOR ALL CANCELLED NIGHTS. GOVERNMENT AGENCIES SEND VOUCHERS IMMEDIATELY TO ASSIGNED HOTEL AFTER RECEIVING HOTEL ASSIGNMENT. CANCEL DEADLINE IS NOV. 6<sup>th</sup> FOR CAESARS, HARRAH'S AND BALLY'S.

**Hotel Choice(s):**

1<sup>st</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ | 4<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_\_  
2<sup>nd</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ | 5<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_\_  
3<sup>rd</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ | 6<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Rooms Requested: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Beds: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Persons Per Room: \_\_\_\_\_

**Special Request:**  Smoking  Non-Smoking  Handicapped  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**\*PAYMENT INFORMATION (please check):**

\_\_\_\_ CREDIT CARD TYPE: \_\_\_\_\_ # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. \_\_\_\_\_  
CANCELLATION AND DATE CHANGES MUST BE COMPLETED NO LATER THAN NOVEMBER 7<sup>th</sup>. CANCELLATIONS AFTER THAT DATE, WILL BE CHARGED. \_\_\_\_\_ Initial/Acknowledgement

\_\_\_\_ VOUCHER/PURCHASE ORDER – SEND P.O./VOUCHER IMMEDIATELY AFTER RECEIVING HOTEL ASSIGNMENT. PAYMENTS MUST BE MADE TO HOTEL NO LATER THAN OCTOBER 11<sup>th</sup>. CANCELLATIONS AND CHANGES TO # OF NIGHTS MUST BE COMPLETED BY 11/7<sup>th</sup>. CANCELLATIONS AFTER NOVEMBER 7<sup>th</sup> WILL NOT BE REFUNDED. CANCEL DEADLINE IS NOV. 6<sup>th</sup> FOR CAESARS, HARRAH'S AND BALLY'S. \_\_\_\_\_ Initial/Acknowledgement

**ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE DATES ARE ESSENTIAL!**

Arriving Atlantic City: \_\_\_\_\_ Departing Atlantic City: \_\_\_\_\_

If accommodations at the hotel/motel of my choice(s) are not available, I understand the Housing Dept. will make comparable reservations elsewhere and that I will receive acknowledgement directly from the Housing Department and/or assigned property. Acknowledgements will be sent after each reservation booking, modification and/or cancellation. **REVIEW FOR ACCURACY.**

Rooms will be occupied by: (Names **MUST** be supplied for each room reserved.) **PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY! DO NOT OVERBOOK!**

Name of Occupant	Smoking Y or N	# of Beds	Dates of Stay if Different Than Above
Room 1			
Room 2			
Room 3			
Room 4			

(PLEASE ATTACH LIST OF ADDITIONAL NAMES, IF NECESSARY – PLEASE, IN ARRIVAL DATE ORDER)

**CONFIRM TO: ALL CONFIRMATIONS WILL BE ADDRESSED TO THIS PERSON.**

Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Company/Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Street Address: (No P.O. Box) \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

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**NOTE: OPEN YOUR SPAM FILTERS TO ALLOW ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS FROM [SERVICE@ACROOMS.COM](mailto:SERVICE@ACROOMS.COM)**

**\* HOTEL LOCATION & RATES ON BACK \***

# HOTEL RATES & INFORMATION

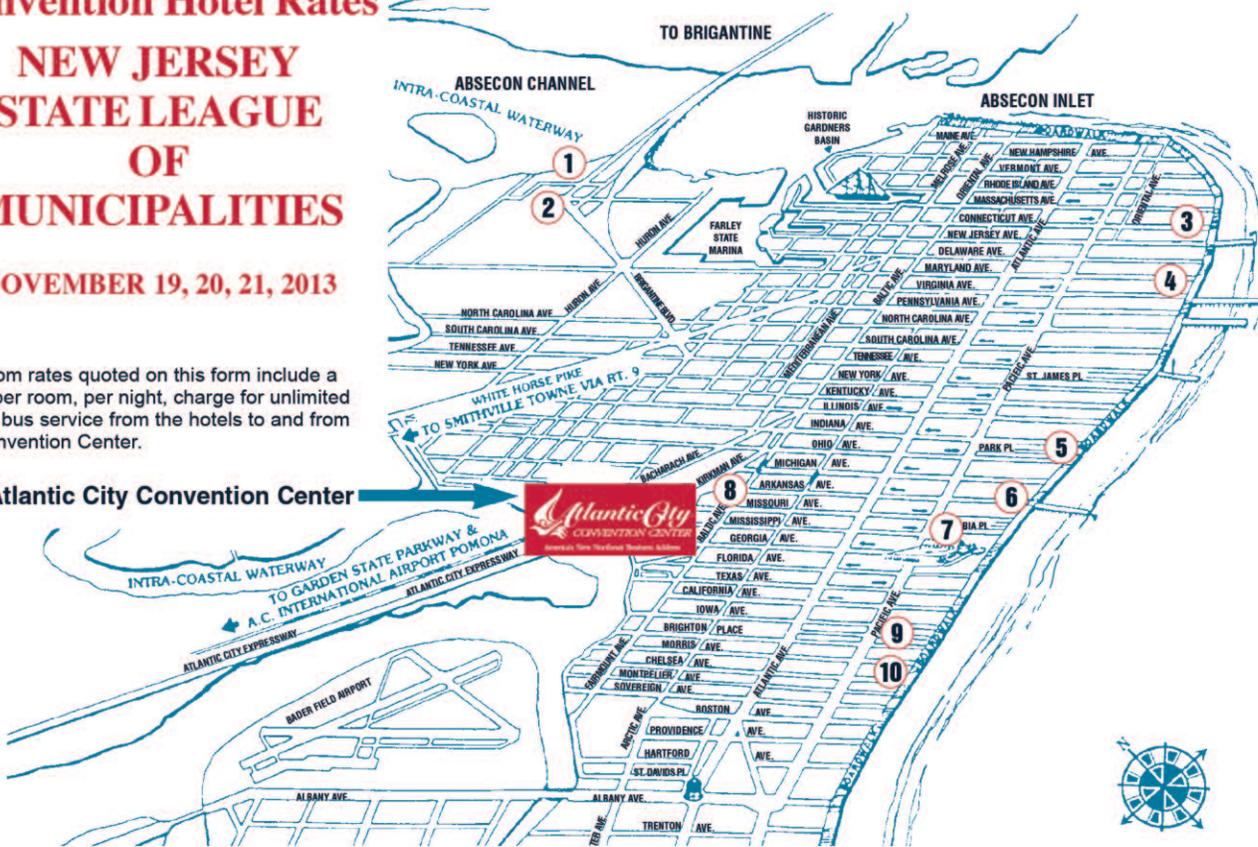
## Convention Hotel Rates

### NEW JERSEY STATE LEAGUE OF MUNICIPALITIES

NOVEMBER 19, 20, 21, 2013

The room rates quoted on this form include a \$7.00 per room, per night, charge for unlimited shuttle bus service from the hotels to and from the Convention Center.

#### The Atlantic City Convention Center



THE ATLANTIC CITY CONVENTION CENTER • ATLANTIC CITY, NJ

MAP #		SINGLE/DOUBLE
5	Bally's Atlantic City (ROH) (1, 2, 3, 4)	\$129
2	Borgata Hotel Casino & Spa (1, 2, 3, 4)	150
6	Caesars Atlantic City (ROH) (1, 2, 3)	149
1	Harrah's Marina (1, 2, 3, 4)	89
3	Revel (1, 2, 3, 4) 100% Non Smoking	154
8	Sheraton A.C. Convention Center Hotel (1, 2, 4, 5) 100% Non Smoking	142
		172 Club Level
4	Taj Mahal (1, 2, 3, 4)	92 Chairman Tower
10	The Chelsea (1, 2, 4, 7) 100% Non Smoking	79/89 Luxe King/Two Queens
9	Tropicana Casino Resort (1, 2, 3, 4)	85 Standard
		95 Havana Tower
7	Trump Plaza Hotel & Casino (1, 2, 3, 4)	80

One bedroom junior suites and larger hospitality type suites vary in price and hotel location. Rates range from \$153 for a junior type suite to \$475 for a hospitality type suite. Suites are on a "first come" basis per hotel. Please identify if you desire a junior suite or a hospitality suite type on your form. You will receive a call from the reservation office to discuss details prior to booking if we do not have information from prior years.

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- 5. Non-Casino Hotel

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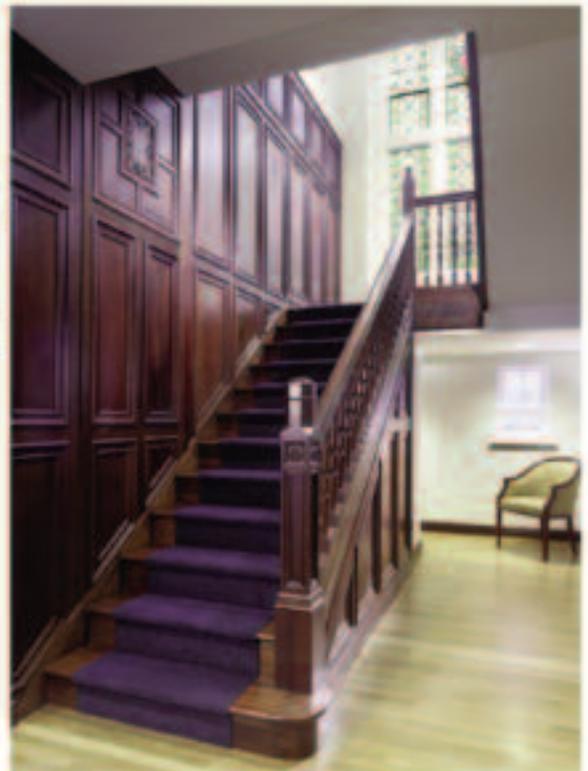


This three-story building accommodates solo professionals in need of as little as one office, to larger firms in mid-sized suites. All tenants may choose to take advantage of the building's common amenities including meeting rooms, kitchenette, and more.

The building's recent restoration incorporated state-of-the-art mechanical, electrical and communications systems. The building meets the standards of the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA).

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- Parking in two convenient locations
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of Municipalities



# Thank you to our League Supporters

The New Jersey State League of Municipalities would like to thank its supporters, who value their partnership with the 566 municipalities of New Jersey. We are working together for better communities and a better life. For information about the League's sponsorship program, please contact Donna Baltz at 609-695-3481, Ext. 127 or dbaltz@NJSLOM.com.



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# Legislative Update



By NJLM Senior Legislative Analysts  
Lori Buckelew, Michael F. Cerra, Jon R. Moran,  
and former NJLM Staff Attorney Matthew Weng, Esq.

## EXPANSION OF COURT ORDERED ATTORNEY FEE PAYMENT

The League supports S-2340, sponsored by Senator Rice, which would expand the ability of the court to order attorney fees, and also expands the types of filings that could be considered frivolous.

Municipalities deal with numerous lawsuits as a matter of course. Many of the suits simply have little or no merit, and are filed as part of a political vendetta or as an attempt to access what some assume are the "deep pockets" of the public body. These suits cost time and money and force towns to devote resources to defend them that could better be directed elsewhere.

This bill would alleviate some of those issues. Frivolous filings are expanded to include those filed merely to attack an individual or organization or as retaliation. It also expands the types of filings that may be considered frivolous to include claims, motions, pre-trial affidavits or other pleadings. Currently, the statute only covers complaints, counterclaims, cross-claims, and defenses.

This bill would help towns save money and resources by tamping down the number of frivolous lawsuits they are forced to defend.—MW

**VERIZON BUSINESS PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX MATTER LINGERS** In January, our New Jersey Supreme Court decided not to hear an appeal in a matter that will cost over 100 municipalities over \$8 million in 2013, and which will cost more and more municipalities, more and more millions, with each passing year.

At that time we stated that, unless the Legislature confronted this issue, remand of the case to the Tax Court would delay relief for New Jersey property taxpayers for years. In fact, the July 2013 Tax Court trial date has been adjourned without date. Discovery will extend until the early months of 2014. A trial date will be scheduled thereafter.

The case, *Verizon v. Hopewell*, in which the League supported Hopewell as *amicus curiae*, involved Verizon's claimed exemption from the Business Personal Property Tax (BPPT) in any municipality where the corporation unilaterally determines, in any given year, that it no longer

supplies dial tone and access to at least 51 percent of the local telephone exchanges. Verizon's claim had been rejected by the Mercer County Board of Taxation in 2009. The Tax Court reversed that ruling and awarded Verizon the exemption, pending further Tax Court litigation.

Now more than ever, municipalities need to unite behind A-3393 and S-2324. This legislation will provide better direction to the courts regarding the legislature's intent to protect residential property taxpayers, when laws regarding state taxation of telecommunications providers were reformed in 1997.

The League of Municipalities commends Assemblymen Caputo and Gusciora and Senators Smith, Greenstein and Turner for their sponsorship of these bills. We strongly support A-3393 and S-2324, which would clarify the law regarding payments of business personal property taxes by any local exchange telephone companies that, in 1997, served 51 percent of a municipality's residents.

A-3393 has been referred to the Assembly Telecommunications and Utilities Committee, chaired by Assemblyman Chivukula. S-2324 is in the Senate Community and Urban Affairs Committee, chaired by Senator Van Drew. We have contacted the respective Chairs and asked for expeditious action on this matter. Please add your voices to ours.

Also, please contact your state legislators and urge them to support this clarification of the law.—JRM

## REMOVING PROPERTY FROM ACCELERATED TAX SALE LIST

Assemblymen Dancer, Bucco and Assemblywoman Handlin have introduced A-3527, which authorizes the removal of property from the accelerated tax sale list in limited situations. Specifically, A-3527 would permit a governing body, by resolution, to require the Tax Collector or other officer in charge by law in the municipality with that duty, to remove from the accelerated tax sale list a parcel of real property for which the owner did not pay fourth quarter taxes, if after receiving notice of the tax sale, the property owner provides written notice to the tax collector that the listed property was materially depreciated by a natural or non-natural disaster declared as an emergency by the President or Governor.

While we appreciate the intent of A-3527, the bill is too narrow in scope and only applies to fourth quarter taxes in a declared emergency. The bill does not address the various nuances associated with an accelerated tax sale.

We oppose A-3527 which awaits consideration by the Assembly Housing and Local Government Committee.—**LB**

**LONG-TERM PLANNING FOLLOWING SANDY** The League Legislative Committee, including a special committee, recently considered state legislation introduced as a result of Hurricane Sandy. Two bills, in particular, take very different approaches as to how the state and municipalities approach long term planning at the Jersey Shore.

First, A-1892 creates a State Beach Task Force. The League Committee saw value in the creation of such a Task Force to study issues such as beach erosion, replenishment, funding, shore protection and the impact of the state's beaches on the state and local economies and to make recom-

mendations to the Legislature. However, the Committee requested consideration of some suggested amendments to address the concerns of municipalities.

The legislation creates a 17-member task force, which includes representatives from the business community, tourism industry as well representatives of respective state agencies as well as "...two representatives of coastal municipalities." The bill does not specify that the municipal representatives are to be elected officials nor is there any geographical balance considered in their appointment.

Further, only two municipal representatives of a 17-member body cannot address the wide range of issues of importance to municipalities along the coastline, particularly considering that municipalities in multiple counties could be impacted by the recommendations of the Task Force.

Therefore, the League respectfully requested increased municipal representation on the Task Force assuring

representation from municipalities in all impacted counties and clarification that such representatives are to be municipal elected officials. With such amendments, the League would support A-1892.

A-1892 is sponsored by Assemblyman Albano and awaits consideration by the full assembly. The Senate companion, S-2359, is sponsored by Senator Van Drew and referenced to the Senate Environment Committee.

Second, the League Committee opposed A-3920, which creates the "New Jersey Coastal Commission." A-3920 would create a new instrumentality of the state that would "...administer, enforce, implement, and oversee all activities related to land use permitting and approvals within the coastal commission area." The "coastal commission" area is defined in NJSA 13:19-4 and includes lands in Atlantic, Cape May, Middlesex, Monmouth and Ocean counties.

The League opposes this legislation because it effectively undermines and

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usurps the discretion of local officials as well as the established oversight by the Department of Environmental Protection. Specifically, Section 6a would provide to the Commission jurisdiction over:

- "...all planning activities and all approvals related to applications for development." [Section 6a(1)]
- "...all activities related to land use permitting and approvals." [Section 6a(2)]
- "...all beach erosion and shore protection projects undertaken or proposed to be undertaken." [Section 6a(3)]
- "...the oversight and disbursement and use of any federal monies received from the Federal Emergency Management Agency or any other source related to reconstruction from the effects of Hurricane Sandy." [Section 6a94]]

Further, Section 7i requires the Commission to adopt a coastal management plan for the areas under its jurisdiction and Section 11 requires compliance with that plan from all state, county, regional and municipal governments.

Section 11 also states, "The commission shall review and approve or disapprove a county's or municipality's master plan, development regulations, and capital improvement program within 30 days after receipt."

Section 11 further provides that if the commission rejects the master plan of a municipality or county, the municipality or county is deemed non-compliant with the coastal management plan. These sections provide a far-reaching intrusion into local planning and zoning discretion.

A-3920 would also undermine the authority of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and, at the same time, create another state agency to assume the responsibilities of existing governments. This shifting

of responsibilities does not serve, and likely undermines, the best interests of the region and the state. There is simply no need to create another bureaucracy when existing governmental agencies are already working cooperatively on the short-term and long-term recovery and restoration efforts.

A-3920 is sponsored by Assemblymen Barnes, Giblin, Gusciora and Ramos and is referenced to the Assembly Environment and Solid Waste Committee.—MFC

**PROPERTY VALUE FOR BEACH DUNE AND REPLENISHMENT** Senators Whelan, Greenstein, Beck and Holzapfel have introduced S-2599, which requires consideration of increased property value due to beach replenishment and dune construction in determining compensation provided for condemned beachfront property.

Specifically, S-2599 would amend the Eminent Domain Act of 1971 to provide that just compensation for a portion of beachfront property condemned for the purpose of acquiring an easement for beach replenishment and dune construction must include consideration of the increase in value to the entire property due to the added safety and property protection provided by the dune, as well as any diminution in value to the property attributable to the condemnation.

Dunes provide protection not only for the beachfront property owner but their neighbors as well. In Superstorm Sandy we witnessed first hand the protection provided by dunes. Thus, S-2599 is good public policy as it provides just compensation for the lost of property while recognizing the value that a dune system creates for beachfront neighborhoods.

We support S-2599 which awaits consideration by the full Senate. Assemblywoman Spencer, Assemblymen Amodeo, McGuckin and Wolfe have introduced the companion bill, A-3889, which awaits consideration before the Assembly Environment and Solid Waste Committee.—LB

**BILL DENIES PAID LEAVE OF ABSENCE** The League of Municipalities opposes A-296, which provides that members of the Legislature employed in local government or public education must

## Save the Date!

### A Review of the Open Public Records Act (OPRA)

Tuesday, June 18, 2013  
 Crowne Plaza Monroe, Monroe Township  
 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Receive an overview of the law, the procedures for submitting and handling an OPRA request, the common OPRA exemptions, and a discussion of significant court cases from Brandon Minde, Esq., Executive Director of the New Jersey Government Records Council.

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take an approved leave of absence without pay from public employment for legislative duties. The requirement would not apply to those employed in the private sector.

By imposing a financial burden on such service, public employees may be discouraged from seeking office. First, this could deny the voters the opportunity to elect highly qualified, civic minded and dedicated public servants to represent them in the Legislature. Second, it could weaken the Legislature by diluting the pool of qualified candidates. Third, it could diminish the legislature's appreciation of the impact of their decisions on the effective, efficient and economical administration of municipal and county government, and public education.

We believe that the Legislature benefits from the perspectives of those who serve their fellow citizens in local government and public education. Accordingly, we oppose A-296.

The bill awaits action in the Assembly State Government Committee.—JRM

**AMENDMENTS PROPOSED TO THE COASTAL AREA FACILITY REVIEW ACT**  
The League opposes A-3709, sponsored by Assemblyman Barnes, which amends the "Coastal Area Facility Review Act" (CAFRA) to delete the exemption from CAFRA permitting requirements provided in the law for the reconstruction of any development that is damaged or destroyed, in whole or in part, by fire, storm, natural hazard or act of God. The League believes that removing this exemption will add another layer of red tape onto projects that are time sensitive after a natural disaster.

Requiring developers to wait for a CAFRA permit will only slow down the rebuilding and recovery process. In the wake of a storm, especially storms like Hurricane Sandy, it is vital that rebuilding take place without too much interference from the state.

The League also opposes A-3921, also sponsored by Assemblyman Barnes. That bill changes the types of development that require a CAFRA permit

from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). This bill would dramatically increase the number of development projects that require a CAFRA permit. It also removes more exemptions from the permitting process. As stated in our opposition to A-3709, these actions would only delay development by adding additional state red tape to the process. The CAFRA permitting system works quite well as it is and these amendments do not seem necessary.—MW

**A-2897 ENSURES SERVICES FOR HOMELESS** The League of Municipalities supports A-2897, which provides that a homeless person should not be relocated to a different municipality, unless a case management plan has been prepared.

That plan must include an explanation of why the person cannot be provided supportive services in the current location.

In addition, the bill requires that arrangements be made in the receiving municipality for supportive services to

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be provided to the homeless person in accordance with the case management plan upon the person's relocation. The bill specifies that, alternatively, a private social services agency, county agency, or municipal welfare agency shall ensure that the homeless person is provided supportive services in the person's current location. "Supportive services" is defined in the bill as including, but not limited to, those services necessary to prevent a person from suffering from the elements or hunger, or being deprived of shelter.

Sadly, there have been instances of homeless individuals being taken to, or given a ticket on public transportation to, another municipality where services are available. These situations fail to ensure a connection between the individual and the service provider.

We commend the sponsors Assemblyman Amodeo and Chris Brown for this proposal, which will ensure humane treatment for the homeless and help them to preserve their human dignity.

We support A-2897, which awaits action in the Assembly Human Services Committee.—JRM

**PROHIBITS CERTAIN CONTRACTS FROM RECEIVING A PUBLIC WORKS CONTRACTOR REGISTRATION** Assemblymen Singleton, Benson and Albano have introduced A-2384, which pro-

hibits certain contracts from public works projects. Specifically, A-2384 would prevent the issuance of a Public Works Contractor Registration to a contract or subcontract if in the last three calendar years the contractor has been determined by the Commissioner of Labor to have either had a total of three or more material violations of state wage, benefit and tax laws occurring on two or more public contracts or a total of three or more willful violations of safety or health standards pursuant to OSHA, occurring on two or more public contracts. Without a Public Works Contractor Registration the contractor will be prohibited from bidding on certain public works projects.

It is common sense that a contractor who violates the New Jersey Prevailing Wage Act, New Jersey State Wage and Hour Law, Construction Industry Independent Contractor Act, Workers' Compensation Law, Temporary Disability Benefits Law, Family Temporary Disability Leave and New Jersey Gross Income Tax Act on more than two occasions should be prohibited from receiving a Public Works Contractor Registration certification.

We support the swift passage of A-2384 which awaits consideration by the full Assembly. Senator Norcross has introduced its companion bill,

S-2390, which awaits consideration by the Senate Labor Committee.—LB

**BILL WOULD PROHIBIT THE USE OF MUNICIPAL VEHICLES BY 'PART-TIME' LOCAL OFFICIALS** The League of Municipalities opposes companion measures S-2235 and A-3351, which would impose an inflexible, statewide prohibition on the use of municipal vehicles by 'part-time' local elected officials.

Decisions regarding the use of municipal vehicles should remain with local officials. In order to better serve, many take advantage of seminars and meetings at remote locations designed to enhance their governing skills and improve their knowledge of issues and opportunities. In the course of their official duties, the availability of a municipal vehicle may help to limit the inconveniences that their dedicated service can impose on their spouses and children.

Further, we are unaware of a statutory definition of what constitutes "part-time" service by a local elected official. Most serve long hours for nominal compensation, and are consistently available to answer questions and to address the concerns of their neighbors and fellow citizens. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to fairly and honestly classify such service as "part-time," regardless of the level of compensation they receive.

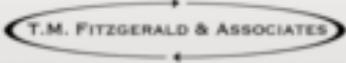
Accordingly, we oppose S-2235 and A-3351. The bills have been, respectively, referred to the Senate Community and Urban Affairs Committee and to the Assembly Housing and Local Government Committee.—JRM

**AWARDING OF PUBLIC CONTRACTS DURING A DECLARED EMERGENCY** Senators Buono and Greenstein have introduced S-2584, which revises the process for awarding certain public contracts in connection with an emergency. While the sponsors' intent must be commended the provisions of the bill will tie municipal hands when they need the most flexibility.

S-2584 establishes a complex process for municipalities to follow when entering into a contract for the delivery of goods or the performance of services in connection with the relief of an emergency declared by the Governor that exceed the bid threshold.

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While the bill acknowledges a need for expediency, the bill would establish a process that is unworkable. The bill would require a local unit to publicly announce and post a request for proposals in a conspicuous location on the municipality's website. In addition, the municipality would have to wait at least 48 hours to receive the proposals. Once the proposals are received they must be evaluated and meet 10 benchmarks before the municipality can begin to negotiate with the top three contractors. Finally, upon award the contract shall be posted on the contracting unit's website with the successful vendor's statement of its competence, qualifications and supporting documentation and data. This process assumes that in an emergency not only the municipality but the public and potential vendors will have internet access. In addition, the process would require municipalities to reallocate resources from respond-

ing to an emergency to fulfilling an administrative process.

In addition, S-2584 amends the requirements of Pay-to-Play to require business entities performing an emergency contract to disclose the list of political contributions as required by the Pay-to-Play Law as soon as possible but no later than 10 days after the award of contract if disclosure 10 days prior to entering the contract is not possible. The State Treasurer may provide a waiver. However, failure to make disclosure will render a contract void. This new requirement is impractical.

The Local Public Contracts Law has a well established and tested procedure for awarding contracts in an emergency. The law only permits an emergency contract to be awarded when the emergency is affecting the public health, safety or welfare that requires the immediate delivery of goods or the performance of services. It provides the flexibility municipalities

need to address the emergency immediately. S-2584 does not provide this flexibility. For example, after Sandy, to immediately address public hazards, a municipality was able to remove fallen trees off roadways to provide access or erect fencing around homes that had caught fire. If the provisions of S-2584 were law those same municipalities would have had to wait 48 hours and hope that their residents would understand that they were not dragging their feet but simply complying with a law.

In an emergency situation municipalities must quickly respond to address public health, safety and welfare issues. While addressing the emergency they are mindful that they must balance the urgent need to quickly and efficiently remediate the situation while ensuring that they will receive the maximum financial reimbursement from FEMA.

We oppose S-2584, which awaits consideration by the full Senate.—LB ▲

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Community Supported Agriculture

# Sharing New Jersey's Bounty



by Douglas H. Fisher  
New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture

**F**or many New Jersey residents who live in rural communities, fresh, locally grown produce is just outside the back door. In our state's urban areas, farmers truck their produce in to farmers markets and other retail produce outlets.

The number of community farmers markets—where New Jersey farmers can sell what they grow—has increased from 35 in 2001 to 155 in 2012. Our state's residents also are very receptive to new opportunities to support our

farmers and find the convenience they need in today's time-starved, multi-tasked world.

Another way that farmers are sharing fresh produce is a phenomenon called Community Supported Agriculture or CSAs. CSAs have gained enormous popularity and appeal, with many participating farms reporting waiting lists for "shares."

Farms pre-sell a share of their produce to a certain number of people, guaranteeing the farmer income. Shareholders are assured an amount of fresh produce and other foodstuffs, such as farm-fresh eggs, meats, seafood, cheeses and flowers, throughout the season. The participants help even out some of the risks farmers face every season, such as weather, wildlife damage, etc. Selections are offered in varying fashion that satisfies customer preference and the farmer's needs.



CSAs HELP KEEP  
NEW JERSEY'S FAMILY FARMS  
IN PRODUCTION, PROVIDING  
JOBS AND BOOSTING THE  
STATE'S ECONOMY.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's 2007 Census of Agriculture reported 81 New Jersey farms offered Community Supported Agriculture. The 2012 Census, which is being compiled now, is expected to show even higher numbers. Across New Jersey there are many examples of successful CSAs.

At Muth Family Farm's CSA in Williamstown, Gloucester County, several hundred members receive a weekly allotment of freshly-picked certified organic produce. Members visit the CSA "farm stand" and can select their own

produce combination in the amount to which they are entitled. Most members live within eight miles of the farm.

This summer, VonThun Farms' CSA in Monmouth Junction, Middlesex County, is offering a traditional CSA, where shareholders will be given a selection of a variety of vegetables each week for a 20-week season. They also will have a "Harvest Host" program where a person or local business can host the program through their own location to friends, family and neighbors. In addition, there will be a "Jersey Fresh at Work" program where local offices or businesses can become a drop off point for CSA shares for their employees.

DanaRay Farm's CSA in Branchville, Sussex County, offers a variety of fruits and vegetables, for the full 34-week season or from June to September for the height of the growing season. A winter session, offering items such as leeks, scallions, high tunnel cooking and salad greens, potatoes, root crops, onions and winter squash, frozen summer vegetables and berries



The Muth Family Farm's CSA in Williamstown, Gloucester County has hundreds of CSA members, who receive a weekly allotment of freshly-picked certified organic produce.

and canned items like jam, pickles and sauerkraut is also offered. All items are picked up at the farm.

Community Supported Agriculture is offered in a variety of ways, as evidenced by DanaRay Farm, VonThun Farms and Muth Family Farm. Some farms even allow shareholders to participate in farming by planting or picking the produce.

CSAs provide many great benefits to producers, who get paid at the beginning of a growing season so they have cash available at a critical time when seed and fertilizer are needed. They also can plan for precisely what their shareholders savor and crave as their selections.

For consumers, CSAs fulfill their yearning for local produce. They create an excitement in the family for what they will receive each week. Participants can interact with the farmer and learn more about agriculture and how their food is grown. They might try something new or receive recipes on how to prepare the produce. In addition, they are supporting something ecologically sound and reducing their carbon footprint, by consuming produce that was grown close to home.

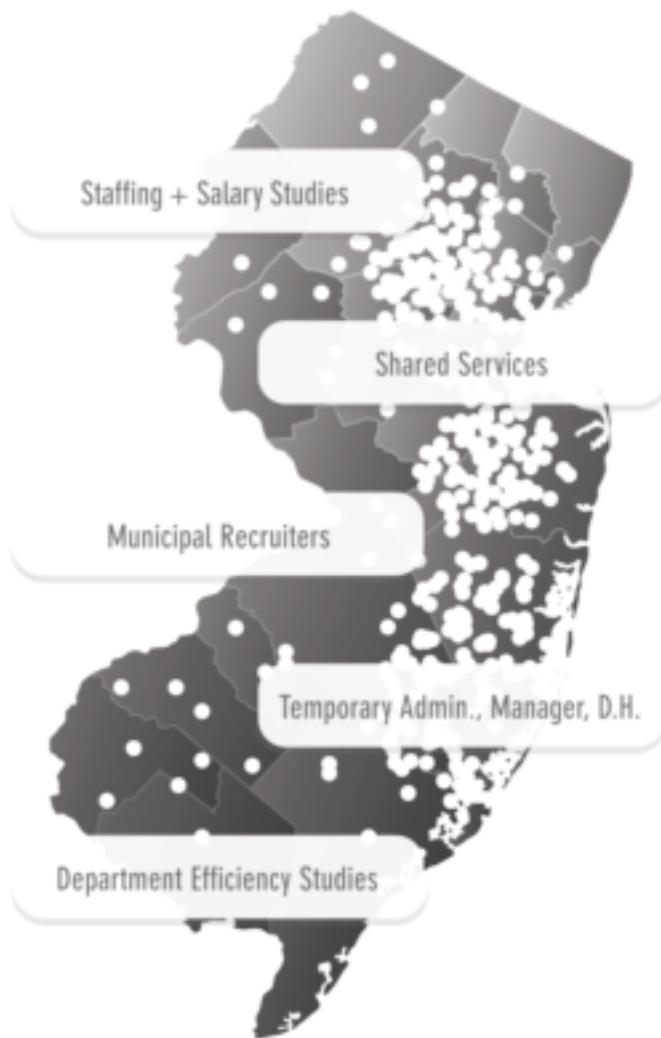
CSAs help keep New Jersey's family farms in production, providing jobs and boosting the state's economy. These farmers are responsible stewards of the land, using practices that sustain soil health, ensuring that the crops everyone loves, such as toma-



This summer, VonThun Farms' CSA in Monmouth Junction, Middlesex County, is offering a traditional CSA, where shareholders will be given a selection of a variety of vegetables each week for a 20-week season.

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toes, sweet corn, peaches, blueberries and so many more, can continue to be grown in the Garden State.

Finally, CSAs provide families all over the state with the freshest possible fruits and vegetables week after week, which are important parts of nutritious diets and contribute to much healthier lifestyles.

CSAs CONTRIBUTE  
TO A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE  
BY PROVIDING THE  
FRESHEST POSSIBLE  
FRUITS AND VEGETABLES  
TO FAMILIES EACH WEEK.

Last summer, in addition to traditional produce CSAs, Rutgers Cooperative Extension and New Jersey Sea Grant Consortium joined forces to incorporate local seafood into CSAs, through B&B Farms in Galloway Township, Atlantic County. People were able to buy seafood shares, which provided clams, scallops, oysters, lobster and many others seafood items on a biweekly basis. The "Sea Salt CSA" is available again this season.

The purpose of the seafood CSA is to give local residents an opportunity to support our state's fishermen and sample the responsibly harvested, local catch. Many people might not know that New Jersey fishermen landed \$177.9 million of seafood in 2010. Our state is the number one provider of surf clams in the U.S. and the number two provider of sea scallops. New Jersey's Cape May/Wildwood port is the second largest in the East Coast in terms of value.

By belonging to a CSA, our farmers and families in your community have a growing connection.

The Department of Agriculture has many CSAs listed on its Jersey Fresh website at [www.jerseyfresh.nj.gov/agriculture/jerseyfresh/find/communitysupportedag.html](http://www.jerseyfresh.nj.gov/agriculture/jerseyfresh/find/communitysupportedag.html). ▲

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# The Affordable Care Act, Personal Responsibility and Wellness



By David L. Knowlton  
President and CEO,  
New Jersey Health Care  
Quality Institute

**W**ith the largest portion of the Affordable Care Act, known colloquially as ObamaCare, set to go into effect by the end of this year, local communities are facing many questions. What does the law do? How will it affect our town? How will it affect our businesses? Our families? With so much uncertainty, mayors and local officials are looking for ways to help residents understand the law, deal with its effects and above all, help put their communities on the path to better health.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) was passed in 2010 and does four main things to our health care system:

- (1) It aims to make private health insurance more affordable by giving families subsidies to help them purchase coverage;
- (2) It expands Medicaid, the government sponsored insurance plan for the poor, the disabled and the elderly;
- (3) It reforms our insurance market to prevent discrimination based on health, age and gender; and,
- (4) It tries to control the rise of health care costs by providing incentives for better care, wellness and prevention, and innovation.

While most of the effects of the law are beyond the control of local communities, and many of our constituents may feel helpless, uninformed, and even a little frightened, there is a very important role for mayors and local government to play in the implementation process. First, local leaders can help their constituents understand what is going to happen in 2014. This will include helping citizens find resources on how to get covered, connecting them with “navigators”—or outreach specialists—who can field complaints and troubleshoot problems, and provide general information on what the law does or doesn’t do. Second, and most importantly, it is the duty of everyone—employers, municipalities, health care advocates, insurers, doctors—to build a growing perception amongst the population that if we are going to move toward a sustainable health care system, we must all take responsibility for our own health. That means an increased focus on wellness and prevention.

For example, under the Affordable Care Act many people with health insurance will be able to get diabetes screenings, cholesterol tests, and blood pressure readings at no cost. The elderly will have access to mammograms and colonoscopies with no copays. Smokers will get free access to smoking cessation programs, provided they have insurance. Everyone with coverage—men, women, and children—will have access to free yearly wellness exams.

In addition to the preventative services paid for by insurance, local communities can implement campaigns and programs to help their citizens move wellness beyond the doctor’s office, and into their daily lives. The fact is that there are many cost-drivers that are making health care unaffordable, and while the Affordable Care Act attempts to address some, others—like the fact that our population is getting older and sicker—require community involvement. People need to become more aware of health risks and unhealthy behaviors, and be willing to change their habits.

Programs like the Mayors Wellness Campaign and the Workplace Wellness Campaign, both initiatives of the New Jersey Health Care Quality Insti-



Over 100 people attended “Cook Well Tenafly.” The event featured five teams of student cooks, who prepared healthy recipes for their friends and neighbors.

tute, in partnership with the League of Municipalities, the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce, and the Business and Industry Association, have been offering communities the tools to develop and implement active-living initiatives. Through these programs, mayors, town administrators and business owners all over the state can leverage free resources to create wellness initiatives that can have a lasting impact among citizens and employees.

Take for example the Mayors Wellness Campaign's "Healthy Cook Off" series. We wanted to encourage healthy eating, so we created an event that highlights healthy eating in a fun event. Towns were able to engage community members and model a key piece of any health and wellness program: a healthy diet. The most successful "Healthy Cook Off" event was hosted by Tenafly. At "Cook Well Tenafly" over 100 people watched five teams of student cooks show off their healthy recipes to friends and neighbors. Tenafly even engaged local chefs, who created healthy menu items for their restaurants, showing attendees that they could make healthy choices even when eating out.

Events like "Cook Well" are a prime example of how through a wellness program implemented at the local level, we can create social pressure, build awareness, and also change behavior. When people see a certain behavior modeled and embraced by their neighbors, they are far more likely to adopt that behavior themselves. The people at "Cook Well Tenafly" saw that their community cared about healthy eating and left the event with the tools and motivation to make a change in their lives.

There are countless examples of programs like the "Cook Well" series that can make a real difference. Walking programs are a simple, low cost way that towns and businesses can encourage exercise. In a recent study by Duke University, found that walking for 30 minutes every day lowers your odds of developing heart disease, diabetes, and stroke. Walking for just 5-minutes can even cut down on cigarette cravings for those who are trying to quit smoking.

The bottom line is that our health care system is changing. We need to help people be informed consumers in that system—and being informed

means understanding what it means to live a healthy life. As the Affordable Care Act goes into full effect at the end of this year, there will likely be renewed noise on both sides as to whether the law is good, bad, or indifferent. There will likely be misinformation and people will continue to be confused to a certain degree. Amidst all that noise, the thing that doesn't change, the one certainty that every-

one should internalize and understand, is that we all have a responsibility to be proactive about our own health. ▲

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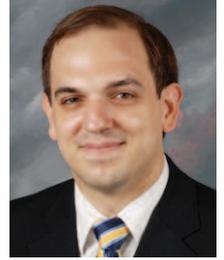
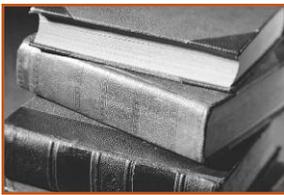
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By Matthew Weng, Esq.  
former NJLM Staff Attorney

## Residency Requirements

**Q** In your previous column you discussed residency requirements and how they affect displaced local elected officials. You mentioned a case from 1989, *Borden v. Lafferty*, as demonstrating some of the principles that a court would look to. Are there any more recent cases that take a look at this issue?

**A** Indeed there are. In *Fay v. Medford Township Council*, 423 N.J. Super. 81, (Ch., 2011), a Chancery Division case from 2011, the court examined residency requirements in detail and provided more guidance to local officials.

In *Fay*, Councilwoman Victoria Fay filed suit against the Medford Township Council after the Council determined that she no longer resided in Medford and declared her seat vacant pursuant to the Municipal Vacancy Law. Councilwoman Fay argued that because of a recent divorce “it was in her best interest and that of her son to vacate the marital home of 17 years which is located in Medford. Because of this marital dispute, she alleges that she had no place to go and had no income, so as a last resort she relocated temporarily to a condominium unit that her husband owned, and which was unoccupied.” *Id.* at 88-89. Fay further argued that Medford was her permanent home, that she fully intended to return, and that she turned down offers from Medford residents to stay with them because she did not want to burden them with her problems.

Fay argued that the process used by Medford to determine her seat vacant was arbitrary, capricious, and unreasonable.

The Judge looked to the Municipal Vacancy Law and determined that the procedure to declare a seat vacant under that statute required “a basic due process hearing on notice to her, so that she could confront the allegations and be properly represented by counsel if she chose. Further, the Council should, following such hearing make appropriate findings of fact and conclusions of law

supporting the reasons for its decision.” Essentially a formal record was required.

According to the Court, Fay had indicated in the past her intention to return to Medford by certain dates, which had passed without any action on her part. Further, she had demonstrated no evidence of when she would actually return to Medford or where her residence would be. After review of the record, the Court found that testimony of witnesses coupled with the plaintiff’s own testimony clearly demonstrated that she was no longer living in Medford and that the decision of the Council to declare her seat vacant was not arbitrary, capricious, or unreasonable.

**Q** Is it true that this is your last column for the *League of Municipalities Magazine*?

**A** That is true. I am moving on to my next challenge in private practice and this column will be placed in the more than capable hands of my successor, Edward Purcell, Esq. I want to thank everyone who reads the column, has suggested questions, and offered advice and corrections. Your input has improved this column immensely, and I hope you will continue to read and contribute in the future.

I also want to thank the community of local government attorneys that I have had the privilege of working with over the last four years. Your wealth of knowledge and experience has been an asset to the League of Municipalities’ legal efforts, and we would not be nearly as effective without your counsel and hard work. I hope to cross paths with you all in the future. Once again, thank you and good luck! ▲

*This column is for informational purposes only, and is not intended as legal advice.*



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*When I first became involved with local government 15 years ago I was given New Jersey Municipalities from a coworker. I have been reading it ever since. The articles often relate to issues we are facing in our town, and we've been able to use the experiences from other municipalities in solving problems of our own. ~Mayor Gary Passanante, Somerdale Borough*

*I always look forward to reading the magazine because it always seems to have information/references about issues that relate to our town be it in the legal, financial or legislative area. ~Mayor Cyril Weklsky, Town of Boonton*

# Meeting the Challenge of Vacant Office Space



By Joseph J. Maraziti, Jr., Esq.  
former Chairman of the State  
Planning Commission

**N**ew Jersey's suburban communities are facing a new challenge. With increasing frequency, New Jersey's classic suburban office park are emptying. Examples abound: Pearson Education is moving from Upper Saddle River to a Hudson River site in Hoboken. Panasonic is leaving its Secaucus location for an office tower under construction in downtown Newark; Merck is moving many of its workers from its palatial Whitehouse Station campus to Kenilworth; Honeywell will relocate its world headquarters in Morris Township to a newly built, but never occupied, office facility in Morris Plains. Indeed, the five-story office building in which I'm writing this article is approaching a 45 percent vacancy rate!

In short, half empty and empty office buildings dot many of New Jersey's suburban communities. And the problem isn't getting any better. But they are too important to the local and state economy to allow them to lie fallow for very long.

THE CHALLENGES ARE DAUNTING,  
BUT WITH CREATIVITY AND  
A FRESH LOOK AT OPTIONS,  
THERE CAN BE A BIG PAYOFF.



Half empty and empty office buildings dot many of New Jersey's suburban communities. And the problem isn't getting any better. But they are too important to the local and state economy to allow them to lie fallow for very long.



Vacant office buildings can gradually lead to an overall decline in property values - and thus tax revenue—for the entire town. Tax appeals and reduced assessments bode ill for the municipal coffers. The building that Pearson Education is leaving in Upper Saddle River is assessed at about \$43 million.

The causes of this recent phenomenon are both multiple and debatable. One factor is that many of these once state of the art office facilities have aged, lack energy efficiency and do not otherwise meet the needs of

today's businesses. Another is the preference of the new generation of workers for a more vibrant, lively and public-transportation friendly urban setting. In fact, that consideration was cited by Pearson executives when the

move to Hoboken was announced a few months ago. Access to public transportation is an added factor.

A comprehensive report documenting the changing preferences that are driving the exodus from suburban

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buildings was published a few months ago by Dean James Hughes and Professor Joseph J. Seneca, Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers, entitled: "Reinventing the New Jersey Economy: New Metropolitan and Regional Employment Dynamics." <http://policy.rutger.edu/reports/rrr/RRR33dec12.pdf>.

More and more New Jersey municipalities face this growing trend and need to figure out how to respond. Developers are beginning to seek zoning changes to convert these buildings and/or sites to residential use. Many town officials worry about the impact of an influx of new residents on schools and other public services. Should they resist such requests for rezoning and hope the market comes back?

While it is tempting to turn a blind eye toward these requests, there are dangers lurking in that response. If left vacant, these buildings can become "black holes" that drain the energy and vitality out of parts of the community that are typically in high-profile locations. This effect can taint other properties and gradually lead to



This is the site of new Pearson Education Tower in Hoboken. The preference of the new generation of workers for a more vibrant, lively and public-transportation friendly urban setting was cited by Pearson executives as one reason for the company's move.

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an overall decline in property values—and thus tax revenue—for the entire town. Tax appeals and reduced assessments bode ill for the municipal coffers. The building that Pearson Education is leaving in Upper Saddle River is assessed at about \$43 million.

IN ORDER FOR THE  
ECONOMY TO BE VIBRANT  
AND TO GROW, THE  
STATE WILL NEED TO  
HARNESS ALL ITS ASSETS  
TO DEVELOP IN THE  
RIGHT PLACE AND IN  
THE RIGHT WAY.

The locations occupied by these buildings are desirable and treasured ones for a couple of reasons. First, for the most part, they are in areas with extensive and functioning infrastructure. They are most often served by public water and sewer and are near highways and sizeable road networks. Some are not far from public transportation. But, more importantly, in a state with rapidly diminishing areas for growth, they occupy real estate that can absorb the development opportunities that have shrunk in recent years as a result of powerful preservation initiatives. While these initiatives are important and beneficial, they have removed great swaths of the landscape from significant development.

I served on the State Planning Commission when the current State Development and Redevelopment Plan was adopted in 2001. In the relatively short time since then, a series of steps have been taken to promote preservation in key areas of the state which have reduced the areas available for growth to take place.

These actions include: (1) the approval by voters in every county of the state of a Referendum proposed by Governor Whitman to spend \$1 billion over ten years to acquire one

million acres of open space and farmland; (2) the adoption of the Highlands Act which establishes a strict development regime for over 853,000 acres in northern New Jersey; (3) the acquisition of open space by counties and municipalities throughout the state with the use of Open Space Trust funds; (4) similar acquisitions by non-profit organizations; (5) the designation of multiple miles of Catego-

ry One streams, which restrict development within a 300 foot buffer on each stream bank and (5) the adoption of more stringent storm water regulations. Finally, (6) the contribution that Superstorm Sandy has made to the list of sites that can no longer be developed will become clearer as time goes by.

What do these historic changes in the use of the New Jersey landscape have

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to do with the decline of the suburban office campus? Everything. In order for the economy to be vibrant and to grow, the state will need to harness all its assets to develop in the right place and in the right way. These sites provide one of a number of resources to address this need.

## THE SEPARATION OF RESIDENTIAL FROM RETAIL AND BOTH FROM OFFICE USE IS A RELATIVELY RECENT PRACTICE.

The creative re-use of these buildings can provide multiple benefits. In some cases, as happened in Morris Plains, the building that Pfizer built at great expense for its own use, but never fitted out or occupied, will soon be transformed into the world headquarters for Honeywell. At Metropark,

CENTRA stripped a 110,000 square foot outdated office building and created an energy efficient award-winning design that has been credited with spurring improvements at other buildings in the neighborhood.

In other cases, there will be opportunities to transform these sites—and maybe the buildings too—from single purpose part-of-the-day uses to multiple uses, such as a combination of retail, office, residential and public purposes. Mixing activities of that type in one location is not a radical idea. In fact, until the rise of suburbia after World War II, such combinations were the norm and not the exception. The separation of residential from retail and both from office use is a relatively recent practice. While mixed use development and/or redevelopment won't work everywhere, where it does make sense, there are multiple benefits.

For starters, parking can serve some uses during the day and others at night. Round-the-clock activities in one location not only make for a

more efficient use of land and infrastructure, but it also makes for a more interesting and lively neighborhood vibe. Instead of the exodus at closing time, which leaves these building lurking in darkness through the night, the area can include parks, restaurants, cafes and entertainment venues. On the upper floors, condos and apartments can provide housing for New Jersey's growing population. Round-the-clock communities have been developed successfully, such as the Washington Town Center. Others are in the planning stages, such as the Ewing Township Parkway Avenue Redevelopment Plan, which focuses on the former General Motors site.

The challenges are daunting, but with creativity and a fresh look at options, there can be a big payoff, not only for the locality, but for New Jersey as well. ▲

Joseph J. Maraziti, Jr. serves as Special Redevelopment Counsel for municipalities throughout the state and was the Chair of the State Planning Commission 1998-2001.



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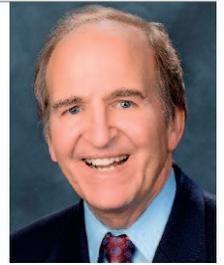
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# A Time to 'Navigate Recovery and Renewal'



By Bill Dressel  
NJLM Executive Director

**P**retty much every year I say that attending the League's Annual Conference in Atlantic City is more critical than ever. And each year, as local government faces more complex challenges, it is true.

However, Superstorm Sandy has had such a broad impact on our state, we will need everyone of you "on board" to navigate a successful recovery. The storm didn't just wreck buildings and roads—it's also impacting employment, tourism, tax revenue, homeless rates and more.

This year's programs will focus how you can make the best decisions on behalf of your citizens at this historic time. We'll also be sharing practical ways to make your taxpayers dollars go further. And, as always, the conference is an opportunity to meet other local leaders and initiate conversations that may lead to new ideas or money saving arrangements.

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If you're a new municipal official, it's a great opportunity to learn all you can about the subjects as different as affordable housing and green energy savings. As a veteran, you need to be on hand with other members of your governance team to stay up-to-date and contribute the insightful questions that make our sessions so valuable.

The 98th Annual Conference of the New Jersey State League of Municipalities will be held November 19, 20 and 21 at the Atlantic City Convention Center. The Conference attracts 20,000 visitors and is the largest of its kind in the nation. And our fee for the three days is the lowest in the nation.

So clear your calendar and review the Conference Preview information provided in this issue. Encourage your fellow municipal leader to attend the conference with you. Check out the list of sessions at [www.njslom.org](http://www.njslom.org). When it becomes available in the fall, study the detailed program and mark the sessions you don't want to miss. And if you can't make all of them, divide up the important sessions with others from your municipality.



While attending the conference, follow us on Twitter @NJ\_League or #njleague for immediate notices on changes to the schedule of League educational sessions, shuttle bus changes, announcements about sold out League events and important attractions. New this year, the exhibit floor plan and searchable list of exhibits may be viewed on smart phones. Find it at [www.njslom.org/98thconf/exhibiting.html](http://www.njslom.org/98thconf/exhibiting.html)

Time spent sharing and gathering information in the hallways and exhibit hall is also very beneficial. Your peers and state and local experts can show you new ways to cut costs and improve services for your constituents—and you'll avoid having to reinvent the wheel.

Finally, you'll want to head home ready to share your experience. If a particular session is of special value, purchase an audio recording to review with your fellow leaders. Also, consider writing a report or press release to share with other Council members and the media. The League provides forms at the conference that make it easy to make local newspapers aware of your involvement. We'll even send the press release out for you!

Here are the benchmarks I use to value my League Conference experience:

I met at least one new person every day.

I learned at least one useful thing I didn't know in a session every day.

I had at least one substantive discussion with a vendor about a new product that I might need.

I had fun, every day.

And for the past 39 years, the conference has exceeded my expectations. Hope to see you in November! ▲



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## What is in Base Salary for Health Benefit Contributions?



By Brian W. Kronick, Esq.  
NJLM Labor Counsel;  
Partner, Genova Burns Giantomasi & Webster LLC

Many are familiar with Abbott and Costello's tricky play on words, "Who's on First." A similar dilemma faces public employers, unions, administrative agencies, PERC, and the courts. While the former dealt with names of baseball players, the latter deals with what items of compensation can be included in the calculation of base salary for purposes of mandatory employee health benefit contributions.

Under recent reform legislation passed by the New Jersey Legislature under P.L. 2010, c. 2 and subsequently P.L. 2011, c. 78, public employees are required to contribute a certain percentage of their "base salary" toward health care benefits. Under Chapter 2, employees were required to contribute 1.5 percent of their base salary, and under Chapter 78, employees were required to contribute based on a sliding scale (based on base salary and cost of coverage) where those earning lower incomes would pay a lower percentage, subject to a minimum contribution of 1.5 percent of base salary. These pieces of legislation were enacted to ensure that employees who received health benefits were also contributing to the cost, and to ensure the public employees contributed a higher percentage toward the cost of their health benefits. Causing much controversy however, is the fact that the term "base salary" is not directly defined in the statute.

In addition to the lack of any statutory definition of the term "base salary" for purposes of employee contributions of health benefits, there were similarly no regulations officially promulgated to address its definition in connection with the new legislation. Of particular concern was the extent to which additional items of compensation, including items such as longevity, education incentives, and night and detective differentials were to be calculated in "base salary." Or, as some unions suggested, was "base salary" limited to mere contractual salary?

However, two regulatory agencies charged with oversight of the regulations, the Division of Pensions and Benefits and the Division of Local Government Services issued guidance on this matter, directing and instructing public employers on how to implement the legislation. The Division of Pensions and Benefits issued Frequently Asked Question (FAQs) wherein it answered the self-proposed question of what salary the 1.5 percent minimum contribution for employee health benefits should be based. The

answer provided was that it should be calculated on the employee's base contractual salary, which was clarified by the statement that in most instances, this refers to "the salary on which pension contributions are based." Shortly thereafter, the Division of Local Government Services issued Local Finance Notices clarifying that for purposes of the health benefit contribution provisions of Chapter 78, the term "base salary" referred to "the salary on which pension contribution or equivalent Defined Contribution Retirement Program (DCRP) salary is based (or would be if the employee was enrolled)." Such guidance documents are regularly relied on by public employers across the state.

The salary on which pension contributions are based is much clearer under the law and includes certain items of additional compensation. From a fairness perspective, it should be noted that employers are required to pay into an employee's pension fund in connection with a percentage of salary which includes certain items

of additional compensation. Therefore, under the guidance issued by the agencies, a definition which requires additional compensation to be included when employees contribute, appears to somewhat balance the burdens for pensions and health benefits, where the legislation on both issues were passed simultaneously. However, the authority of the FAQs and the LFNs have been challenged in a number of forums, contributing to the uncertainty in

PUBLIC EMPLOYERS,  
UNIONS, ADMINISTRATIVE  
AGENCIES, PERC, AND THE  
COURTS ARE GRAPPLING  
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how to apply the employee health benefits calculation pursuant to the reform legislation.

P.L. 2010, c.2, which requires employees to contribute 1.5 percent of their base salary toward health care benefits, was challenged in a case before Judge Feinberg. *New Jersey State Firefighters' Mutual Benevolent Association v. State of New Jersey*, Docket No. MER-L-1004-10, 2010 N.J. Super. Unpub. LEXIS 2312 (May 21, 2010). In generally upholding the provision of Chapter 2, Judge Feinberg referenced the FAQs and the LFNs, and suggested that employers and employees refer to these guidance documents in determining how to apply and interpret the legislation.

Similarly, with respect to Chapter 2, unions attempted to file grievances and arbitrate the amount of the contributions that were being deducted. Similar to the deference afforded by Judge Feinberg to the Division of Pensions and Benefits and the Division of Local Government Services, the New Jersey Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC) restrained arbitration with respect to interpreting the definition of base salary, citing provisions of the guidance documents. *Matter of County of Essex and Essex County Department of Corrections and Fraternal Order of Police Lodge*

106, P.E.R.C. No. 2012-9, 2011 NJ PERC LEXIS 119 (Aug. 11, 2011).

Yet, a Superior Court judge also construing the definition of "base salary" in Chapter 2, held that the term did not encompass any additional items of compensation, and thus was not equivalent to pensionable salary. In that case, the police unions in Paterson sought to enforce a more narrow definition of "base salary" in an attempt to confirm an interest arbitration award that called for 1.5 percent contributions in accordance with Chapter 2. The City of Paterson had been deducting the 1.5 percent based on pensionable salary, as directed by the FAQs and LFNs, and was thus including additional items of compensation. There, the Superior Court was inclined to adopt a stricter, dictionary definition of "base salary" in the absence of formal regulations or express statutory provision defining the term, in spite of the contrary less-formal guidance from two administrative agencies. Additionally, the court referenced the strict definition of "base salary" in a prior regulation, which was promulgated prior to the passage of the legislative reforms.

In that case, the City of Paterson appealed the Superior Court ruling, and the Appellate Division issued a stay of the order, pending appeal of

the matter. After submission of briefs on the issue, the parties just recently presented oral arguments before the Appellate Division on April 29, 2013. The City of Paterson was joined by the state and by the League of Municipalities in its appeal. The decision in that case could affect many public employers and employees depending on the Court's decision and depending on the percentage that was used to deduct employee contributions toward health benefits pursuant to Chapter 2. Moreover, the decision in that case would also have implications on the subsequent legislation in Chapter 78, which imposes a similar contribution on the part of public employees in that the amount of the contribution is in part calculated by reference to an employee's "base salary."

Similar to the challenge in the Paterson case involving Chapter 2 health benefits contributions, there was another case involving the City of Passaic in the context of Chapter 78 health benefits contributions. There, as in the Paterson case, the Superior Court held that "base salary" pursuant to Chapter 78 does not include additional items of compensation, and thus was not based on pensionable salary. It is interesting to note that there is an even stronger argument for relying on the guidance in the Chapter 78 context, because the guidance from the FAQs and the LFNs were issued specifically to address implementation of Chapter 78. Thus, although this case was not appealed, the decision by the Appellate Division in Paterson could have potential implications on the interpretation of "base salary" in the Chapter 78 context, although it will not be dispositive.

While the frustration and confusion over the definition of "base salary" might cause some to think, like in the Abbott and Costello skit, "I don't give a darn," its potential implications for employees and employers alike will leave all stakeholders waiting with baited breath on the Appellate Division's interpretation of "What's in Base." ▲

Brett M. Pugach, Esq., an Associate at Genova Burns Giantomasi Webster LLC contributed to this article.

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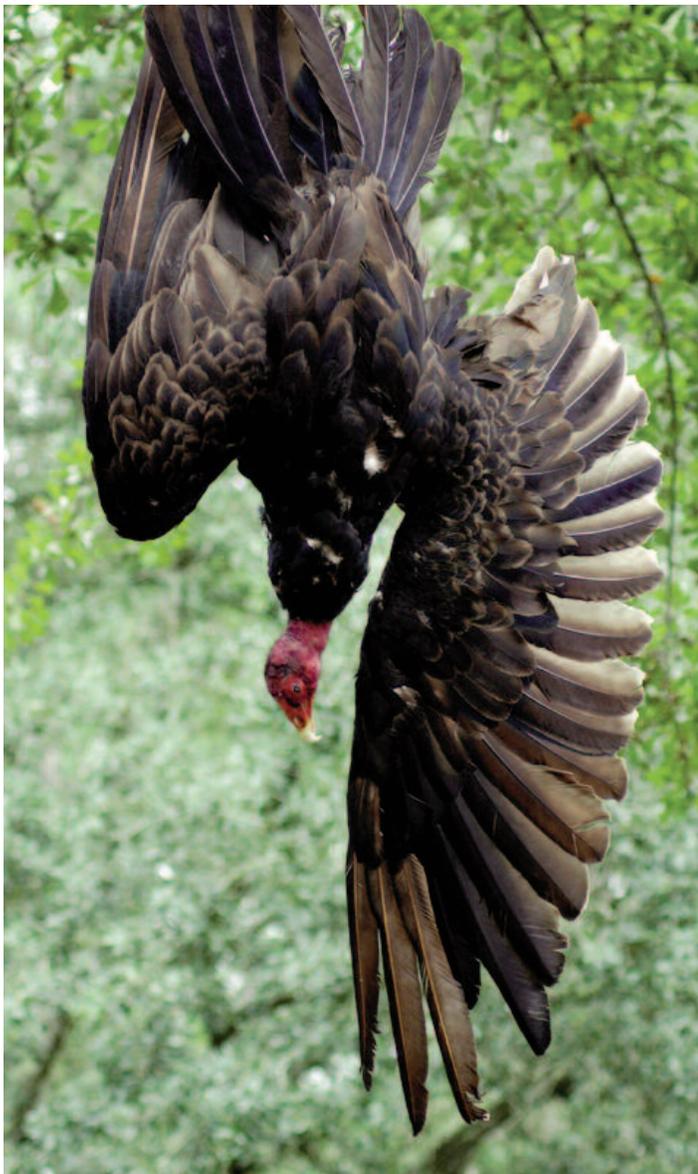
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# Managing Vulture Damage



By Wendy Anderson  
State Director, Wildlife Services  
in New Jersey  
U.S. Department of Agriculture

**N**ew Jersey's mix of urban, rural and suburban settings provides homes for a large number of wild animals, despite our ranking as the nation's most densely populated state. This close proximity at times leads to conflict.



Perhaps the most effective tool in dispersing vultures from a roost is the presence of a vulture effigy—a real carcass or artificial likeness—suspended in or near the roost tree or structure.

That is the case with vultures in many areas of our state. Extremely adaptable, vultures can thrive in highly populated areas. They are federally-protected migratory birds that play a key role in the food chain. However, their expanding populations can lead to crop and property damage as well as health and safety concerns.

At one time certain pesticides caused vulture populations to decline. Now that these compounds have been banned, their population is on the rebound.

## EXPANDING VULTURE POPULATIONS CAN LEAD TO CROP AND PROPERTY DAMAGE AS WELL AS HEALTH AND SAFETY CONCERNS.

**Characteristics** Two different species, black vultures and turkey vultures, are native to North America. The turkey vulture, an historic resident of New Jersey, and the black vulture, a recent immigrant, both live in New Jersey year-round. Turkey vultures are larger than black vultures and can be identified by their featherless, bright red head. In contrast, the black vulture is nearly all black and a bit smaller.

Vultures have adapted to specialize in scavenging carcasses. They have keen eyesight and a strong sense of smell in comparison with other birds. In addition, the vulture's sharp beak and highly acidic stomach liquids and urine help them in their role as scavengers. Unfortunately, these same attributes contribute to the damage they cause. Their urine kills bacteria, but is also corrosive. The vulture's sharp beak, developed for tearing, can be highly destructive to human-made surfaces. And vultures regurgitate an odorous and corrosive vomit as a natural defense.

**Vulture Damage Potential** As you can imagine, these traits do not endear vultures to nearby homeowners. Their habit of congregating in large communal roosts can make it necessary for local governments to take action to limit their impact on people living nearby.

Particularly near wooded areas, vultures may damage window caulking, roof shingles, vent seals, rubber roof liners, and pool covers. They may damage vehicles by scratching paint, removing rubber seals and wipers, and puncturing vinyl seat covers. Vulture feces and regurgitations can soil rooftops, office buildings, and playground equipment. Accumulations of feces from vultures roosting on electrical transmission structures can lead to power outages, at great expense to service providers. Vultures can also damage cell phone tower equipment.

Black vultures occasionally prey on live animals, usually newborn or other vulnerable livestock. These animals often die from the attack or must be euthanized due to the extent of their injuries.

Vultures can also raise health and safety issues, due to accumulations of droppings and their roosting and soaring behaviors. Contamination of water sources may occur when coliform bacteria from droppings enter water towers or springs used to supply drinking water. Residents frequently express health concerns because of accumulated droppings from roosts near their homes.

Finally, vultures also present a risk of aircraft strikes due to their size, soaring behavior and tendency to fly in groups.

**Legal Status** Both vulture species are protected by the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act, which is administered by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife further protects both species as non-game birds. The vultures and their nests and eggs may not be captured or destroyed without permits from both federal and state wildlife agencies.

**Managing the Conflict** Vulture management is complicated and site-specific. In most cases, consultation with wildlife professionals is vital to successfully resolving the damage. The best approach is to consider and apply a number of safe, effective, legal, and practical strategies—called an integrated approach. Strategies may include habitat modification, dispersal, and/or local population management.

Perhaps the most effective tool in dispersing vultures from a roost is the presence of a vulture effigy—a real carcass or artificial likeness—suspended

in or near the roost tree or structure. The effigy should be hung upside down with one or both wings outstretched. Research has demonstrated that proper installation of a vulture effigy commonly causes abandonment of the roost within three to five days. Federal and state permits are required before real carcasses can be used.

Other dispersal measures include pyrotechnics or handheld lasers, used alone or in conjunction with an effigy. Lasers do not physically harm the birds, but often the vultures relocate their roost to avoid this “new” experience. Sounding loud bird distress calls (with commercial devices) or flying helium-filled, Mylar balloons near the roost trees may also deter the birds for several months.

No permits are required to harass vultures, as long as they are not captured, harmed or killed. Local regulations may control possession and use of pyrotechnics in your area as well as noise levels, so check ordinances prior to using these methods.

Another effective approach is to eliminate food sources and trim back roost trees. Protected lambing/calving and clean farming practices which include prompt carcass disposal will reduce available food sources and protect livestock. Obvious attractants, such as open garbage or pet food left outside, should be removed or enclosed.

Physical barriers, such as overhead monofilament grid lines and netting, may be used to exclude vultures from an area. Installation of a wire pulled taut about 8 inches above and parallel to the ridge line of the roof will discourage or prevent perching.

However, sometimes vultures get used to these methods and no longer disperse. Removal of persistent birds from a local population increases effectiveness of dispersal programs, by ensuring that the flock remains responsive to harassment techniques. Vultures are intelligent and respond quickly when one or two members of the flock are removed through shooting. This approach reduces human/wildlife conflict without significantly impacting the local vulture population. Non-lethal methods, such as dispersal and habitat modification, should be used prior to and in conjunction with the use of shooting. Federal and state permits are required before vultures can be shot.

**Wildlife Damage Assistance** Wildlife Services, a federal service program, responds to requests from the public and agencies for assistance with wildlife damage. Wildlife Services is part of the US Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

During the past six months, Wildlife Services' biologists have placed vulture effigies in ten different locations in New Jersey, disbursing more than 309 black and turkey vultures from these areas. For more information on how to obtain the appropriate permits or for assistance with vulture problems, contact the Wildlife Services program in New Jersey at 1-(866)-4USDA-W.S. Private sector wildlife control companies may be able to provide similar services. ▲

**Carol Bannerman, Public Affairs Specialist with USDA-APHIS-Legislative and Public Affairs, assisted in editing and reviewing the article.**



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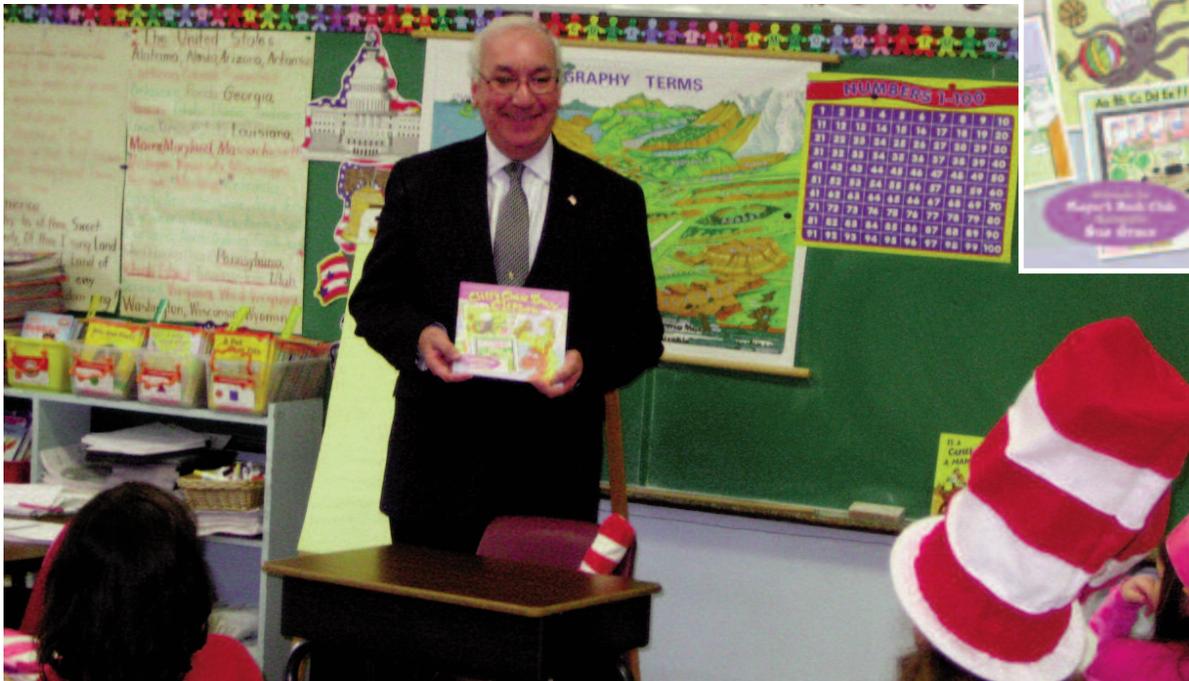
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# Clifton Mayors Book Club Announces Latest Book



Clifton Mayor James Anzaldi, a League Past President, visits School 13 to read to students as part of the Read Across America Celebration in honor of Dr. Seuss' Birthday this past April. The Clifton Mayors Book Club is also happy to announce the second book in their book series Cliff's Class Tours Clifton. The writers are now working on a third book.

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## League Hires New Staff Attorney

The League of Municipalities is pleased to welcome Edward Purcell as its new staff attorney. Mr. Purcell was, most recently, a regulatory attorney in the energy

industry. Prior to that, he worked as a legislative analyst on West State Street.

Mr. Purcell received his law degree from Rutgers School of Law at Camden and his Bachelor of Arts degree in History from Rowan University. He replaces Staff Attorney Matthew Weng, who is now an associate at Chance & McCann in Bridgeton, NJ. ▲

## Stuart Koenig Receives Pane Award for Ethics



NJLM Senior Assistant Council Stuart R. Koenig, Esq. received the 2012 Michael A. Pane award. The award, created in honor of the memory of Michael A. Pane, a leading expert on local government law, recognizes a local govern-

ment law professional who has made great achievements and exhibited the highest ethical standards. Mr. Koenig unexpectedly. He will long be remembered for the depth of his knowledge, his willingness to share it, and his articulate advocacy for better local government.

During his long career, he served as special counsel to more than 40 municipalities. Our members frequently turned to him for advice on questions involving municipal and land use law.

He had long served as Senior Assistant Counsel to the New Jersey League of Municipalities. In that capacity, he represented the League on land use issues, advised on legislative matters, drafted legislation, testified before legislative committees, and appeared in appellate litigation on our behalf.

He also served as the Chair of the Land Use, Environmental Protection, and Economic Development Subcommittee of the League's Legislative Committee. ▲

ment law professional who has made great achievements and exhibited the highest ethical standards. Mr. Koenig exemplified these qualities.

Sadly, on Saturday, September 15, 2012, Mr. Koenig, New Jersey's foremost expert on land use law, passed away



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In order to provide more opportunities for Attendees to earn their Continuing Education Units (CEU's) and increase the educational value of the Annual Conference, the League will now have badge scanning in every classroom at the Atlantic City Convention Center. Because of this, the procedures for the Conference Tracking System have changed.

#### **FOR SESSIONS WITH CEU'S**

- There will be no CEU Volunteers present at the doors. Instead attendees will self-scan in and out. Desktop Scanners will be present at the entrance of each room.
- Following the conference, the attendees will log on to the Tracking System website and download their CEU's the same way they have done in previous years.

#### **NEW THIS YEAR!**

##### **Voluntarily Verify Your Attendance at Conference Sessions**

- Attendees who aren't receiving CEU's but wish to track their attendance, have the option to self-scan in and out of every session using the badge scanners in each classroom.
- Following the Conference, attendees can access their attendance verification by logging-on to the League Tracking System from a link on the League website, and using their badge number, print out their attendance verification.

**All ATTENDEES scanning for credit MUST self scan in and out. This is a requirement of all accrediting bodies to receive CEU's.**

# Friend of the League Thomas Kenyon Will Be Missed



**T**homas G. Kenyon, 86, of Raritan Township, died Friday, April 26, 2013. He is a former mayor of Tewksbury and longtime legislative aide to U.S. congressman Scott Garrett when the congressman represented the 24th District in the New Jersey State Assembly.

In 2004, NJLM honored Mr. Kenyon with the Outstanding Service award, in recognition of

his long involvement in both municipal and state government and assistance to the League.

"Tom really did a lot of work for us," noted League Executive Director Bill Dressel. "He was very active on the League's Legislative Committee and worked on our behalf at committee meetings and in the halls of the State House."

Mr. Kenyon was an expert in municipal finance and land

use and served on many boards and commissions throughout his life. In 1995, he was appointed to the State of New Jersey Finance Board by former Governor Whitman. He was past president of the New Jersey Planning Officials, where he developed educational programs for municipal planning and zoning officials.

He also served in Tewksbury's local government. Starting in 1972 with his appointment to the Planning Board, he spend 30 years working in various capacities including 17 years on the Board of Adjustment, two terms on the Township Committee and Mayor in 2002. He was particularly interested in the preservation of natural resources, smart growth, and fiscal responsibility.

Mr. Kenyon served his country in the United States Navy during WWII. He graduated from Purdue University in 1950 with a Bachelor of Science in mechanical engineering. As a young adult, he played drums with various professional jazz and dance bands. His lifelong interests included horsemanship and golf. ▲

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New Mayor: . . . . . Carlos Aguasvivas

### Cape May Point Borough

New Clerk/Administrator: . . . . . Kimberley S. Hodsdon

New Clerk Email: . . . . . [khodsdon@capemaypoint.org](mailto:khodsdon@capemaypoint.org)

### Eagleswood Township

New Municipal Address:

. . . . . 146 Division Street, West Creek NJ 08092

(No Longer Using PO Box)

### Middle Township

New Administrator: . . . . . Constance Mahon

### Watchung Borough

New Mayor: . . . . . Stephen Pote

### West Long Branch

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By Taran B. Samhammer  
Bureau Services & Research Coordinator,  
Bureau of Municipal Information

**Middle Township** passed an ordinance to allow a professional utility consultant to solicit bids for electricity and natural gas suppliers after deciding to join an energy aggregation program. Doing so could save residents money on their energy bills. If a company is found offering lower rates than those offered by their current supplier, all residents will automatically be switched over to the new company unless they choose to opt-out. Residents may opt-out at any time, and there are no additional fees as a result of the program. Commercial properties who wish to participate must opt-in as per state law. The township anticipates that they will obtain the lowest rate by aggregating the community and forming a "buying group." This will make their energy load more attractive to third party suppliers and the group will receive a better rate than each individual customer would receive on their own. Electricity will still be delivered through the township's traditional energy distributor. Residents already using a third party energy supplier will not be affected, but may choose to participate.



In April, **Lawrence** (Mercer) became the first municipality in New Jersey to privatize their police dispatching service. The move will save money and free up police officers, who had been spending time filling in as dispatchers. The move is projected to save around \$1 million over five years, and one to three dispatchers will now be on duty at all times.



The U.S. Navy has announced that it will name a joint, high-speed vessel the USNS **Trenton** after our capital city. It is expected to be operational in late 2014. The Navy selected the name to honor the residents of Trenton and the State of New Jersey.



Currently 163 municipalities and nine counties have adopted smoke-free air ordinances in an attempt to protect their citizens—and infants, children and the elderly in particular—from the harmful effects of secondhand smoke. The New Jersey Department of Health is working with municipalities and providing assistance in drafting local ordinances. For a list of those that have already drafted ordinances, visit: [www.njgasp.org/Smokefree%20parks%20list.pdf](http://www.njgasp.org/Smokefree%20parks%20list.pdf).



**Newark's** Mayor Cory Booker was included in Government Technology Magazine's list of the "Top 25 Doers,

Dreamers & Drivers." Mayor Booker was highlighted for his use of social media to promote city information and to engage with residents. The Mayor co-created a video sharing site called #waywire, which provides a platform for citizens to share their views on politics and other issues. He has also utilized social media to confront social issues. For example, he took a food stamp challenge last year to show what it is like to subsist only on food stamps for one week.



**Wildwood** offers the option to pay for parking meters using a cell phone, rather than quarters. Meters feature a sticker instructing users on how to call and pay for the spot. Visitors may preregister to use meters from any computer, or can register from their cell phone on location. Those using the system may choose the option of storing personal information to make subsequent parking sessions easier. Time does not appear on meters; however the user and parking attendants may view the time remaining online. Those using the cell phone option can renew their meter time from anywhere. **Cape May** is currently exploring a similar option using a cloud-based system. An advantage of this approach is that the city would not need to purchase new meters. Instead, the old ones are simply assigned a number.



## Date Lines

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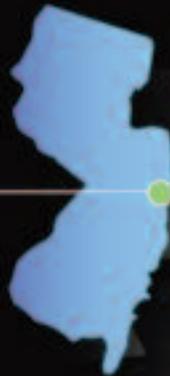
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