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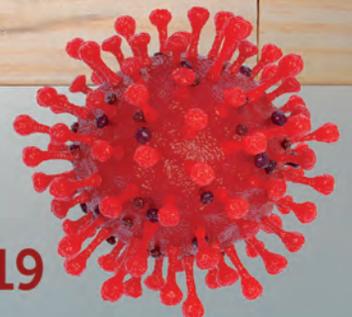


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## New Jersey Municipalities Magazine

Volume 99 | Issue 3

EDITOR

**Michael F. Cerra**

MANAGING EDITOR

**Amy Spiezio** [aspiezio@njlm.org](mailto:aspiezio@njlm.org)

DIRECTOR, COMMUNICATIONS, MARKETING, AND TECHNOLOGY

**Taran B. Samhammer** [tsamhammer@njlm.org](mailto:tsamhammer@njlm.org)

ADVERTISING COORDINATOR

**Tasneem Kapadia** [tkapadia@njlm.org](mailto:tkapadia@njlm.org)

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

**Lori Buckelew**

**Benjamin Dworkin, Ph.D.**

**Andrew LaFevre**

**Frank Marshall, Esq.**

**Paul A. Penna**

**Matthew U. Watkins**

CREATIVE DIRECTOR

**Dawn Becan**, White Eagle Printing Company

SUBSCRIPTION MANAGER

**Thomas Fratticcioli** [tfratticcioli@njlm.org](mailto:tfratticcioli@njlm.org)

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COVID-19



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## It's Time

New year. New Leadership. Same priorities. The difference is that it's time... time to tackle the big issues that have challenged so many local officials for so long. Property tax relief. Access to records. Affordable housing.

We all have struggled the last two years and we have paid the price in so many ways. As we (hopefully) transition from pandemic to endemic, as we continue to re-open and progress to whatever the "new normal" turns out to be, now is the time to tackle the big challenges and push for solutions. And while we are absolutely committed to necessary reforms to the State's laws and regulations regarding affordable housing and needed administrative relief to local governments related to access to public records, allow me to focus in this column on a critical part of long-overdue property tax relief.

For years elected officials and the League's Legislative Team have tirelessly campaigned to end the diversion of billions of dollars from municipalities to the State in the collection and distribution of Energy Tax Receipts. This tax for public utilities was intended to streamline operations, but with billions billions diverted to the State's general fund since 2008 rather than back into the communities for which it was intended, the impact has been elimination or reduction of services, increased fees, and increased property taxes.

With the Senate Community and Urban Affairs committee unanimous approval of S-330, which increases distribution to municipalities from the Energy Tax Receipts

Property Tax Relief Fund over five years to restore municipal aid reductions and requires the additional aid to be subtracted from the municipal property tax levy.

We're pushing harder than ever, continuing more than a decade's work. We ask you to continue reaching out to your legislative leaders to ensure ETRs are restored to their rightful place—New Jersey's municipalities. Stay tuned and please take action and ask your Legislators to support this important legislation.

United, municipalities can accomplish great things. In this issue, this is illustrated by the words of mayors from throughout the state from their 2022 outlook speeches. Whether new or experienced, local leaders are guiding communities through the COVID pandemic as it, mindbogglingly, closes out its second year of loss and challenges. In the meantime, municipalities around the state are also moving forward with new plans for their downtowns, for their housing, and for so many other topics that won't wait for the health emergency to end. Marking the second pandemic year, we also touch upon issues such as how towns like Hazlet have taken care of their vulnerable senior populations.

We also take a moment to recognize our Legal Team, who is so critical in helping advance your causes and representing your considerations in correspondence, plans, and the courts. They are an important part of ushering our goals over the finish line and we are glad to give them their well-deserved kudos. 🍀

*Michael Cerra*

United, municipalities can accomplish great things. In this issue, this is illustrated by the words of mayors from throughout the state from their 2022 outlook speeches.

As a reminder and an invitation, we hope you join us in celebrating next month's **Local Government Week**, April 3-9. Please take a moment to download a customizable logo from [www.njlm.org/localgovt](http://www.njlm.org/localgovt) and hash tag #NJLocalGovt when promoting your activities on social media so we can mark the week with you.

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# Next Steps

## Balancing pre-COVID strategies with new realities in municipal planning

Celeste Frye, AICP, Co-Founder and CEO,  
Public Works Partners, LLC

POST-COVID-19

Over the past two years, COVID has caused major disruption to every industry, from supply chains, to healthcare, to retail. The realm of municipal planning is no exception. As cities and towns across New Jersey have grappled with the pandemic, municipal leaders have struggled to effectively plan and execute new projects. For example: How can you gather community input when it's unsafe to come together? And, how do you revitalize a downtown if far fewer commuters and shoppers are visiting it?

At times, municipal planners might think the easiest way forward is tossing out all the old planning strategies and starting from scratch. But in fact, even in these turbulent times, many of the tried-and-true municipal planning strategies still hold up, they just need to be balanced with the new realities of COVID.

Below, find tips for adapting pre-COVID planning strategies to our new pandemic reality and, ultimately, three tips for making your 2022 planning effort a success.

### 1 Engage the community online and off.

Rigorous community engagement has always been the cornerstone of successful municipal planning. Guided by the insight and expertise of local residents, any project, whether a new park, a spate of new homes, or a sprawling new business district, is set on the road to success. This was true before COVID, and remains true now.

In fact, community engagement may be even more important than it was. Many communities have seen significant transformation as a result of the pandemic, and so it's essential to understand their needs and priorities.



Of course, the way planners gather insights and feedback is now different. In-person community meetings are often still not possible, and so planners have come up with new, creative ways to get the community involved, often turning to virtual forums. And while there may be some initial pain points migrating these sessions onto Zoom and other digital platforms, it's actually a boon in the long run. Virtual planning is more accessible and inclusive. A host of reasons may have prevented community members from attending in-person events, from working hours or childcare, to lack of transportation or physical disability.

Now, community members who may never have attended a public meeting can access the planning process from their homes and take a more active role in their communities.

### 2 Focus on equity and inclusion.

Just like community engagement, equity and inclusion have also long been a cornerstone of successful municipal planning. For a project to gain support and thrive, it needs to benefit everyone in the community, not just a select few. The best developments enhance a city or



town by lifting up those who need a helping hand the most.

This is especially true now, when so many across the state and the country are in need. Underserved groups have been disproportionately affected by the COVID pandemic. This inequality stems from and has ramifications for a broad range of municipal issues: from access to food and housing, to municipal services and safe outdoor space, to climate change and its consequences.

As you plan your next project, pay close attention to these inequities and seek to address them head on by prioritizing resource equity and centering the voices of members of these communities.

### 3 Be flexible.

Any veteran municipal planner will tell you that flexibility is key. The vision and goals you have at the very start of a project may change and evolve, and rigidity in the face of changing circumstances can cause your project to fail. Flexibility is especially important for municipal planning today, given that we're living at a time when so much is uncertain and unknown. Indeed, these last two years have transformed nearly every community.

Approaches and assumptions that may have made sense in 2019 might not serve a community in the present day. Planners



## Rethink transportation.

The pandemic has been a traumatic and destructive period for so many Americans. But the lessons learned in the realm of municipal planning provide an opportunity to re-envision New Jersey cities and towns for the better. Going forward, planning across the state has the chance to be more inclusive, more equitable, and more creative. Municipal planners everywhere can take these lessons and help build resilient, healthy communities that thrive amid the pandemic, and well after it recedes, as well.

should remain open-minded to ensure they are serving their communities effectively.

One example of flexibility: Think about outdoor spaces differently. While parks and green space more broadly have always been an important conversation around planning, they now have an outsized value. They're not just a perk, they're an essential part of maintaining community health. Similarly, planners can redesign other outdoors spaces like roads and sidewalks to allow restaurants and other businesses to operate safely. 🇯🇵

Celeste Frye, AICP is co-founder and CEO of Public Works Partners, LLC, a WBE/DBE/SBE certified planning and consulting firm specializing in multi-stakeholder initiatives and building strong connections across the government, nonprofit and private sectors. For more information, visit [www.publicworkspartners.com](http://www.publicworkspartners.com).

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## NJ Municipalities Represented at NLC DC Fly-In

NJLM's current and immediate past presidents, Mayor William Pikolycky of Woodbine and Mayor Janice Kovach of Clinton Town were joined by NJLM Deputy Executive Director Lori Buckelew at the National League of Cities (NLC) Fly-In last month.

The program focused on federal funding available to municipalities and how municipalities can use that funding. A consistent message was presented by federal law makers and officials: their focus has shifted from "shovel ready" to "shovel worthy" projects. Municipalities should keep this in mind when applying—they must make a case why their projects are shovel worthy.

Another area discussed was broadband programs, and the cities represented were advised to engage with the FCC maps on unserved and underserved locations, which is based on speed.

The meeting led to connections, including plans for future consultation with individuals from the White House's Intergovernmental Affairs team and US Department of Transportation.

In addition, they covered highlights from the Federal Government's Building a Better America publication, a 400+ page guidebook outlining the funding available to State and local governments. An abridged document focusing on funds that would be available to New Jersey municipalities will be available at [www.njlm.org/legislativeadvocacy](http://www.njlm.org/legislativeadvocacy).



Mayors Kovach and Pikolycky with NLC President, Union City, GA, Mayor Vince Williams. and NLC Executive Director and COO, Clarence Anthony.



Congressman Michael McCaul (R-Texas, District 10). Ranking Republican member Committee Foreign Affairs catches up with President Pikolycky.



President Pikolycky with Gabe Amo, White House Special Assistant to the President and Deputy Director, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs



NJLM President Mayor William Pikolycky with Charles Small, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Intergovernmental Affairs, US Department of Transportation



Bruno Pigott, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Water, US EPA and Mayor Pikolycky.



South Jordan, Utah Mayor Dawn Ramsey (l), with NJLM President Mayor William Pikolycky of Woodbine, and Immediate Past President Mayor Janice Kovach of Clinton Town.

# Building for Tomorrow: 107<sup>th</sup> NJLM Annual Conference Logo Rolled Out

The New Jersey State League of Municipalities has unveiled the logo and the theme for the 107th League Conference has been set. The event, planned for November 15-18 in Atlantic City, will take its inspiration from the theme of **Building for Tomorrow**.

“During this time of recovery and restoration, the NJLM Annual Conference provides forward-focused municipalities from around New Jersey an opportunity to work together,” said NJLM Executive Director Michael Cerra. “Building for Tomorrow is always a consideration for local governments, but with sweeping infrastructure developments impacting every step of municipal life, from communications to construction, we are providing a smart workspace for delegates and exhibitors to plan for the future.”

Whether honing skills in educational sessions, networking with peers at League events, or meeting with the innovators of goods and services in the Exhibit Hall, the Conference is an environment for local officials and professionals to focus on Building for Tomorrow.

Cerra adds, “We are continuing our commitment to meet the needs of local government officials. The in-person 2022 event will continue a long tradition of excellence. We look forward to seeing you all at the nation’s largest municipal conference this November.”

@ For more information, visit [www.njlm.org/conference](http://www.njlm.org/conference).

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**Municipal Salary Report** - Published 12/2021

# Under the Gold Dome: Municipalities Represented

**N**JLM member municipalities and affiliates were represented under the Gold Dome recently providing testimony to committees.

Jamesburg Business Administrator and CFO along with Director of IT for Bloomfield Jean-guy Lauture spoke at Assembly’s Science, Innovation, and Technology Committee about the specific challenges and needs of local cybersecurity.

NJLM Past President, Mayor Colleen Mahr of Fanwood addressed the Assembly Transportation and Independent Authorities committee meeting on how the State can improve equity and access for New Jersey’s workforce by reducing regional, economic, and other disparities in the transportation network.

Interested in having your voice heard in Trenton? Reach out to Deputy Executive Director/Director of Government Relations Lori Buckelew at [lbuckelew@njlm.org](mailto:lbuckelew@njlm.org).

## *Assembly Transportation and Independent Authorities*

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# Municipal Public Information Contest



## What?

The Municipal Public Information Contest promotes the use of successful and innovative techniques that increase government's ability to meet citizen needs and improve access to government services.

## Who?

Rutgers Center for Government Services, NJ Municipal Management Association, and New Jersey State League of Municipalities hold this annual competition to recognize the innovative projects of municipalities and inspire others. Panel judges include local professionals and NJLM staff.

Municipal governments in New Jersey are invited to apply.

## When?

Applications are due in September. Visit <https://cgs.rutgers.edu/mpic> for more information on the contest.

## Why?

Receive recognition for your municipality! Winners are also recognized during the Annual League Conference in Atlantic City in November.

## We are asking for your help - advice needed!

Entering its 60th year, Rutgers Center for Government Services, NJ Municipal Management Association, and New Jersey State League of Municipalities would like to update this contest, to make sure that its capturing the types of projects New Jersey's local officials and professionals find the most relevant and we'd like your input!

Help to craft a contest that is more timely and beneficial to local governments by completing a brief survey online. This input will be used when preparing the 2022 contest.



[www.njlm.org/MuniInfoContest](http://www.njlm.org/MuniInfoContest)  
submit survey/feedback by March 31

**Corrections & Clarifications**

**2021 Mayors' Hall of Fame**



(l to r) Mayor Owen Henry, Old Bridge, Silver; Mayor Keith Kazmark, Woodland Park, Silver; Mayor Dianne Didio, Oradell, Silver; Mayor Thomas Andes, Denville, Silver; Mayor Paul Mirabelli, Borough of Mountainside, Silver; Mayor Edward G. Campbell III, Gibbsboro Borough, Platinum; Mayor William Pikolycky, NJLM President, Woodbine Borough, Platinum.

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At the 106th Annual New Jersey League of Municipalities Conference in Atlantic City, then League President Janice Kovach, and officials from throughout New Jersey, honored the most recent inductees to the Mayors' Hall of Fame.

Platinum-level honoree, Mayor Edward G. Campbell III, Gibbsboro Borough, was not correctly identified in the photo run in the January edition. We apologize for the error. Above is the correct image and caption. **;**



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If you'd like to send something in, you can get the submission guidelines from [www.njlm.org/magazine](http://www.njlm.org/magazine) or reach out to Managing Editor Amy Spiezio at [aspiezio@njlm.org](mailto:aspiezio@njlm.org)

## March

**10** Budget, Ethics, and Procurement Updates  
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Conference Center at Mercer, West Windsor  
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**Health & Safety Notice:** To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, we recommend that attendees at our in-person events wear a face mask regardless of vaccination status.

## Running Start! Newly Elected Session Success

**H**undreds of elected officials attended the League's annual Orientation for Municipal Officials Who Are Newly Elected, Reelected, or Experienced-in North and South locations in January and February.

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(L to r) NJLM Executive Board Member, Deputy Mayor Guy Piserchia, welcomed attendees to the event. The attendees were engaged and ready to interact with speakers and their peers in the audience.



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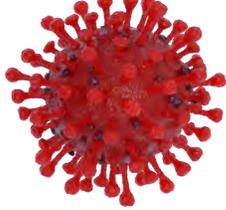
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# What's Next?

Mayors around the state discuss the future in their addresses

Compiled by Amy Spiezio, *Managing Editor*

**M**oving through their second year of COVID, New Jersey's mayors continue to lead their local governments and residents through challenges that have become normalized through trials and tests. As the pandemic transitions to endemic, communities are taking the good lessons with them and planning to rebuild and expand from where they were when the pause button of shutdowns and quarantines first started.



## Mayor James Baldassare Jr., Bernards Township



The blessings we continue to enjoy as one of the debt free and safest towns while being recognized as one of the “best places to live” are not perpetual “happy accidents.” They are the result of the many quality choices and decisions made over the years. Our good fortune can easily and quickly be lost if we do not remain prudent and vigilant.

The ongoing burden of potential overdevelopment still looms large as 2025 approaches with probable and unreasonable affordable housing mandates coming down on municipalities. As we all know, overdevelopment has the potential to seriously affect our quality of life and have serious adverse impacts on schools, traffic, emergency services and finances. This is not something that we can successfully address alone—where the solution lies in Trenton with the State Assembly, the Senate and the Governor's Office. We need to continually work with other towns to solidify and effectively articulate reasonable and responsible solutions and potential actions with regard to any future affordable housing requirements as 2025 approaches. I will continue to work with the Township Committee, other mayors

throughout the state, and our elected State officials to help find appropriate solutions.

We have many great volunteers but could use many more. Volunteering is a measure of selfless commitment to the community and its improvement, and I continue to urge all of our residents to find opportunities to become engaged and serve in some capacity toward the betterment of our town. Volunteering is a big part of what makes us who we are as a community. We are, after all, a community of families with a strong family focus.

## Mayor Frank Bivona, Franklin Lakes



I am proud of how well we have been able to adapt to the challenges of COVID as a community and as a governmental organization. Franklin Lakes has done amazingly well the past year supported by a workforce and volunteer base that has performed above and beyond during these challenging times. My sincerest thanks to all.

The Borough of Franklin Lakes is now embarking on a celebratory year honoring our 100th anniversary. The Centennial slogan “Pride in our Past, Faith in our Future” lays the foundation of an

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## What's Next?

entire branding effort by the Borough to bring a greater sense of community to Franklin Lakes. It honors the past which defines who were and are, but it also creates opportunities in the future to gather as a community and remind us of how fortunate we are and how bright the future is.

The past year was a difficult year but the Borough of Franklin Lakes has continued to thrive. We have never been more financially sound given our disciplined approach to financial management with rising surplus and plummeting debt. We have done this by keeping property taxes relatively low and significantly increasing our investment in infrastructure throughout town. We have improved our parks, roads and public facilities and made our major Borough thoroughfares more attractive. We are also a town that has attracted new investments from new and existing residents alike. Franklin Lakes has led Bergen County for three years running in the highest increase in assessed values. This is the best evidence that prospective homebuyers and businesses see us as a desirable destination and an attractive investment opportunity. With that growth comes challenges which we have responded to in every departmental area with appropriate support.

## Mayor Gayle Brill Mitler, Highland Park; NJLM 3rd Vice President



2021 was certainly a challenging year and while we don't know what lies ahead of us for 2022. I do know that Highland

Park has proven that we can stand up to and face any obstacles that get thrown our way.

One year ago, I was asking residents to stay home and do as much as they can remotely as we all worried about this new pandemic and how to handle it safely. Today, our in-town COVID testing facility provides tests for sometimes up to 600 people a day. The rate of infection can now be controlled by vaccinations and as of December 24, 2021, 83% of our population has had at least one dose of vaccine and 68% of our population is fully vaccinated.

One year ago, we questioned whether our active downtown lives in Highland

Park could go on. Well, there certainly were modifications. We created more outdoor gathering spaces for safe conversations at our Town Tables on South Third and North Fourth Avenues. Thanks to Main Street Highland Park, our residents were able to purchase fresh produce and gifts at our weekly farmers market and holiday markets outdoors.

The world has not gone back to normal yet, but truly, who is to say what normal really is? But Highland Park, this wonderful patchwork quilt of so many different people from different backgrounds and different faiths, and different histories, but all with the common goal of standing strong, moving forward and reaching out to one another, we survive. And I dare say we survive stronger and more creatively than ever before.

## Mayor Shelley Brindle, Westfield



From the abundant love and compassion I've witnessed in this community during the pandemic, we already know who we are. We just need to work harder to denounce those

who seek division, and actively and publicly stand up for each other. Let's heed the call from our Westfield clergy in a recently shared video of solidarity, "We need the light. Here. Now. Let's shine together." I firmly commit to leading that charge in the year ahead and making this one of my administration's most important priorities.

I look forward to the days when COVID is no longer mentioned in this annual address. In spite of its lingering challenges, I'm proud to affirm that the state of our Town is exceptionally strong, and we are well poised to capitalize on a post-pandemic future.

I will ask once again that you continue to hold us accountable for delivering on our commitments to you, and approach this year with gratitude for our families, community, service, and health.



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## Mayor Victor Carstarphen, Camden



We are committed to neighborhoods and improving the quality of life of our residents. The progress Camden has made over the past decade should be celebrated;

we also recognize that a lot of work remains. Our goal is to ensure our residents feel included and part of the city's renaissance.

The pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on Camden. The time is now for government to play a vital role in helping our residents address the needs in our community. We will continue to listen to residents as we govern.

## Mayor Robert Conley, Madison



It seems that my annual message, starting with New Year's 2012 (two months after Super Storm Sandy) often followed that theme, saying goodbye to a

rough year and having high hopes for the new year. I guess that is not a bad way to approach life, using the lessons of the past year to drive your hopes and dreams for the coming year.

Also last year I discussed the strength of our Downtown. This year we had CBS in town for small business Saturday, showing off our great shops. This became a great springboard to the holiday shopping season. As large malls fade in popularity, Main Streets are coming back with a vengeance. We are already known for our walkable and welcoming downtown, and as we reconstruct the Cook Plaza parking lot and start the

discussions on how to reimagine Waverly Place, we have an opportunity to make our downtown even more vibrant, a regional magnet for visitors and shoppers. Please be ready for the opportunities to be part of this process.

Yesterday we were enjoying 60 degree weather and right now Atlantic City

is cleaning up from a foot of snow, reminding us climate change must be addressed. Over the coming months, you will hear of Madison's commitment to once again lead the way with climate change just as our regional plastic bag ban became part of the momentum that led to the statewide ban.



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## Mayor Steven Fulop, Jersey City; NJLM Executive Board



### Member

I want to acknowledge how hard the last two years have been on all of us. There isn't a person in this room that hasn't experienced loss first hand. Beyond

the difficulties I faces firsthand navigating Jersey City's COVID response, I myself lost my grandmother, Elizabeth Fulop, to COVID during a time when we couldn't even have proper funeral due to COVID restrictions.

There's no doubt the last two years have been challenging for all of us, personally and professionally. However, as much as the last two years have reaffirmed to us how fragile life is, it also reiterates the importance that each of us value the time that is afforded to us to be here and to make a difference in our community.

Specifically, looking ahead in Jersey City the next four years will be viewed through the lens of what we learned from COVID and what we did to help our city and its residents regain their footing since the pandemic started. That's the challenge and that's the test we're facing.

## Mayor Joseph K. Hemphill, Rumson



As the global pandemic known as COVID 19 continues, the past year has been full of challenges for all the residents, volunteers and employees of the Borough of

Rumson. We continue to collectively face personal and business-related struggles.

We have been required to wear masks and maintain social distancing protocols. And perhaps the most devastating challenge has been the sickness, and at times, the untimely loss of so many friends, family members and neighbors.

This year, I again want to thank EVERY Volunteer and EVERY Employee, all of whom have worked so hard to make Rumson the special community it is. I especially want to thank the Rumson Police Department, the Rumson Fire Department, the Rumson First Aid Squad and the Rumson Department of Public Works for their hard work, untiring dedication, and, most importantly, for the risks they took every day to protect the quality of life we cherish in Rumson. I am sincerely hopeful that 2022 is a better year, starting with peace and good health for everyone.

**“ I'm going to challenge each and every one of you in 2022 to give people a chance. You never know the outcome of a chance. ”**

-Mayor Marty Small, Atlantic City, NJLM Executive Board Member

## Mayor Juergen Huelsebusch, Readington Township



As the Chair of our Open Space Advisory Board I have focused on protection of our environment and can report we have successfully preserved over 325 acres of land in the

past four years, with full reimbursement from both the county and State Green Acres program. I plan to work with our partners at the county and State and non-profits such as the Hunterdon Land

Trust and Raritan Headwaters to continue such efforts.

To protect the environment, my intent is to preserve our natural habitat, our forests, our meadows, our streams. The goal is to protect 500-750 additional acres in the next five years, assuming funding continues to be available. To protect our farmland, my goal is to continue to preserve farms when presented with the opportunity by local families or land-owners. To protect our streams and watersheds, my goal is to attain DEP category 1 status, a higher water quality standard for our streams and watersheds.

In the past four years, we have continued to expand our trail system, adding new trailheads and trails and providing our residents with more recreational opportunities. In 2022 there will be park upgrades and an effort to plant trees and manage meadows in a sustainable manner. We are in the first year of a partnership with RVCC to jointly design an ongoing stewardship program.

These goals will require cooperation with county, State and non-profit organizations. I am highlighting these goals first as we face not only medical pressures, but development pressures and unwanted State mandates. I am sure many of you have observed the sprawl and build-out in neighboring townships. We need to continue the smart development that has made Readington a more desirable place to raise a family.

## Mayor John E. McCormac, Woodbridge



During 2021, we had the opportunity to see our Woodbridge Health Department at its finest. While all other towns in Middlesex County joined with the County

Health Department, Woodbridge stayed separate, which gave us more control and freedom to do what is best for our

residents and the pandemic certainly justified that decision.

Once vaccinations became available, our Health Department rose to the occasion. To date we have administered more than 6,000 doses of Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines in first shots, second shots and boosters. Having our own Health Center enabled us to serve all residents five years of age and up in over 120 different clinics. Our Township nurses, combined with a contingent of school nurses, worked thousands of hours administering shots to what in many cases were reluctant and skeptical patients. The process was very well organized and people moved in and out and from station to station effortlessly. Every single clinic was followed by calls and emails to us from people who got their shots and wanted to thank us for making it so easy. Doctors, administrative staff, Police Officers and Emergency Management employees joined the nurses to make the experience seamless and friendly.

Perhaps their greatest challenge and

effort came in dealing with the five to 11 year-olds who came in for shots and were greeted by our entire staff dressed as Super Heroes, which of course they are in more ways than one. The children were given popcorn and cotton candy and friendly smiles and both kids and parents loved it but not the doctors who now

**“Last year, there was zero increase in property tax. We’re not going to be able to do that every year, but every year that we can, we will.”**

–Mayor Paul Medany, Deptford

face regular questions when kids come to their offices like “Hey, where’s your costume?” and “Where’s my popcorn?” Our thanks go out also to all other Township residents in the health care field

who have spent nearly the last two years putting themselves at risk to help others.

## Mayor Al Morgan, Borough of New Providence



Our battle with the pandemic continued all last year deeply affecting our lives, our way of life, our businesses, and our children.

Please stay strong, continue to be vigilant

and responsibly cautious, and we will get through this Pioneer Strong! Thank you to the Regional Board of Health and especially to our Borough Nurse Jen Aranda for their hard work ensuring our community safety. We also thank all our healthcare providers, essential workers, everyone affected and on the forefront

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## What's Next?

of this pandemic for their good service protecting us....

Also, this past year Hurricane Ida descended upon us with an unprecedented eight inches of water in about two hours, causing dangerous and damaging flooding. Thankfully our Police, Fire, EMS and our Emergency Management team were all on call and up to the task, heroically handling every crisis and situation, including many life rescues. As devastating as the storm was, the cleanup has been even more difficult on our community.

Many homes and businesses were deeply impacted including our DeCorso Community and Senior Center, and all of our pedestrian bridges. Our DPW did an incredible job in a short period of time getting us back up and running, but there is still so much more to repair and replace. Together we will get it done.

Great communities are built and maintained on hometown pride and spirit that foster volunteerism and generate tremendous community contributions. That is what we have built here together in New Providence, and with your support, we can continue to build an inclusive, vibrant, safe, welcoming, and affordable community. We are better together!

### Mayor Richard M. Onderko, Borough of Manville



Looking back for a moment, 2021 is certainly a year that presented us with significant challenges dealing with the lingering pandemic and a

major flood disaster from remnants of hurricane Ida. One thing about our community was very evident days following the flood, our fellow residents care deeply about one another. The outpouring of support for relief supplies from neighbors, our school district, surrounding towns, and local companies was truly heartwarming. This is what the American Spirit is all about, helping others in times of need. There is no

doubt the American Spirit is alive and well in Manville.

Hurricane Ida deposited 11 inches of rain in a very short period of time causing flash flooding in our Borough that no one expected, nor was it ever encountered before. This storm, the worst in our Borough's history, caused the lower floor of our Borough Hall to flood significantly....

2022 begins like most years, all eyes on the municipal budget.

The state aid we received has not increased 1 dollar in the last 4 years. That is no longer acceptable. I am not in favor of simply raising property taxes further to deal with flood expenses and to cover the loss of property tax revenues due to Blue Acre buyouts. Governor Murphy and our state representatives in Trenton already received that message from me, we need more financial aid. And we certainly deserve it given the severe flooding we must deal with.

We will continue to work to make Manville more storm resilient. I will also try to improve communication with all residents via our monthly newsletter, social media and putting news alerts on our website.

### Mayor Kareem Pritchett, Mount



### Laurel

It is a great honor and privilege to serve as Mayor, and I humbly embrace the immense responsibility ahead. Having served four years on the

township council, I'm ready for this opportunity to be a powerful voice for all residents, especially the many that never thought a day like this would be possible in Mount Laurel. During the next year, I will work to ensure our growing township pushes forward smart policies to help our local economy, ensure our residents feel safe and fight for critical infrastructure improvements we need to improve our roads, water quality and improve our quality of life.

## The Value of Virtues

Mayor Thaddeus Kobylarz of Chatham noted the value of good governing virtues, noting:

The Borough Council's annual Reorganization Meeting is always a good time to reflect on the public virtues that help foster and shape good government, and indeed, good governance. I understand these virtues to include such modes of excellence as:

- The wisdom to govern amid the conflicting interests and issues that, in any community defined by a diversity of priorities and viewpoints, can and will arise;
- A commitment to secure the welfare and needs of our diverse community and its residents;
- The desire to ensure that justice and rightness prevail in all of our decisions and actions;
- A determination to work together in harmony, even (or especially) where there is honest disagreement amongst us; and
- The goal of establishing that which is good, proper, and fitting for the community as a whole.

As I see it, such virtues represent a prescription for good, effective and judicious governance, a goal I trust the entire Governing Body will aspire to in the coming year.

And, most importantly, we will continue to build upon a responsive, open and transparent government that will work hard for all residents.

Last year, we focused on smart policies to help small businesses as they struggled through the impacts of the pandemic, we responded to challenges last summer that could have divided our community and rose to the moment together, improved transparency and fulfilled our commitment to keep Mount Laurel as the best place to work, live and play.

## Mayor Janet Tucci, West Long Branch; NJLM Executive Board Member



With the Delta virus somewhat behind us, who could even imagine that we

would again be fighting a new variant, the Omicron virus. In spite of massive vaccinations, boosters, COVID testing, quarantining, and the wearing of masks, our community, like others, continues to experience rising infections among residents of all ages.... I am proud to report that in spite of a limited work staff, on many occasions, we have been able to maintain all Borough services for our town during the past year.

Even though the Borough adopted an ordinance in 2018 to prohibit the sale of

**“ Some of the things that we’ve done which I’m most proud of is our flood buyout program. We are the most successful community, probably in the country right now, with flood buyouts. ”**

–Mayor Christopher Vergano, Wayne

marijuana and associated paraphernalia in town, Governor Murphy signed into law legislation which legalizes regulatory cannabis. We were then required to adopt a new ordinance within 180 days to ratify our prior ordinance, which we did in April. This ordinance prohibits the operation of any class of cannabis business within the Borough of West Long Branch. Like many surrounding towns, as well as the Monmouth County Board of Commissioners, we value the quality of life for our residents of all ages.

Fortunately, we were able to reinstate many of our West Long Branch traditions this past year. The Easter Hunt in the spring was modified to a drive-by event with great success and participation.

Our July 4th Fireworks were the best ever as was our Fishing Derby in June. We were able to have our summer concert series as well as an extremely well attended summer recreation program for the children in town and also held an outdoor movie night. The Fall Festival drew the largest crowd ever! The Lantern Walk and Tree Lighting events also were so very well attended and appreciated by residents of all ages. A new highly successful event “Yoga in the Park” was also provided for residents at Franklin Lake. Our town has been adorned with banners around the lake and flags along Locust Ave. throughout the year. Two recycling events were held this past year through the efforts of the Environmental Commission. The Shade Tree Commission planted a tree in Richard Cooper Park to celebrate Arbor Day.

As we exit 2021, let’s look forward with renewed hope for a better year of good health for everyone. A special prayer to our local health care professionals, police, fire and first responders. They continue to serve our residents without hesitation. 🙏

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Brian O'Malley, Public Affairs Officer, Holmdel Township

# Protecting Seniors

## Holmdel fought COVID with Senior Vaccine Accommodation Program

*The following is a write up of a program that was recognized as an Honorable Mention in the 2021 Innovation in Governance Contest from the NJ State League of Municipalities and the Department of Community Affairs.*

In 2021, Holmdel Township's administration department began receiving calls and emails from concerned senior residents. According to the State of New Jersey's policy at the time, these residents were eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine, however many of them reported issues with obtaining an appointment. Some of their concerns were difficulty using the online registration systems, inability to get through to make an appointment, hesitancy with driving across the state for a vaccine appointment, or lack of access to either a computer or the internet.

In early February 2021, Holmdel Township began informal discussions with the Visiting Nurse Association of Central Jersey (VNA) regarding the possibility of establishing a pilot program to assist local senior citizens and those with functional disabilities by providing an accommodation to receive a vaccine appointment. The VNA was already in the process of setting up a vaccination site at the Bell Works facility in Holmdel. They created a registration form especially for this pilot program. The Township's leadership team coordinated with our Office of Emergency Management, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), and Information Technology Department on a plan, out of which came the Senior Vaccine Accommodation Program.

The idea was that senior residents and those with disabilities would call the Senior Vaccine Accommodation hotline and would speak to a member of the Administration staff, who would take down the residents' address and contact information. CERT team volunteers would then receive a list of seniors and would visit them at home with a tablet computer and complete the online registration form on behalf of the resident. The IT department requisitioned the appropriate number of tablet computers and mobile wifi hotspots to ensure that this was all possible. To close the loop, each CERT member would notify the Administration Department once all of their residents for that week had been registered, and the Administration Department would coordinate with the VNA to ensure the resident was scheduled for a vaccine.

### Helping hand

Through this program, the Township was able to assist nearly 1,000 senior residents, about 20% of the senior citizen population in Holmdel. The feedback from our residents was overwhelmingly positive, as the accommodation program was able to get our seniors an appointment locally and quickly and helped them overcome the challenges of technology and (at the time) backlog.

Later in the spring, Holmdel was able to expand the Senior Vaccine Accommodation Program to add Bayshore Medical Center as an additional provider. Once eligibility expanded to include people as young as 18 years of age, the Township co-sponsored an event with Bayshore entitled "Operation VaxTEEN: Taco 'Bout a Party" which was an outdoor taco night party and vaccination event program aimed at providing the vaccine to graduating Holmdel High School seniors who needed to get the vaccine to be able to attend college in the fall. This program vaccinated over 100 high school seniors in one night.

Both of these program plans were shared with neighboring Bayshore mayors after Holmdel piloted them and some versions of the programs were carried out by several of our neighboring municipalities.

Through both of the programs, as well as weekly communications to residents using the CodeRed notification system and daily social media posts, Holmdel Township fulfilled its commitment to information transparency and outside-the-box thinking when it came to fighting back against the COVID-19 pandemic. 🦸

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# Developers Invited

## Highland Park passes innovative redevelopment plan, invites developers

**W**hen the Highland Park Mayor and Borough Council voted unanimously in the fall to adopt a comprehensive redevelopment plan, they were building on a lot of prior work, professional expertise, and public input.

Highland Park’s new redevelopment plan, which incorporates four designated tracts on Raritan Avenue and Rt. 27 within three blocks of each other, reflects objectives and ideas established by the Borough’s governing body in the 2003 Borough Master Plan, in Master Plan Reexamination Reports issued in 2010 and 2019, and in Borough Council actions related to land-use and redevelopment over the past 15 years.

### Getting there

The process to create the redevelopment plan, which took place over the preceding 16 months, was led by three professionals with considerable municipal planning and development experience:

- Jim Constantine, a licensed professional planner who is a principal of the national firm of LRK and who has worked as a planner on projects in more than 30 states, Canada, and Latin America;
- Josephine (Teri) Jover, Borough Administrator and Redevelopment Coordinator for the Borough of Highland Park, who has a Masters in City and Regional Planning from Rutgers University;
- Joseph P. Baumann, Jr., Esq., the Chairman of McManimon, Scotland & Baumann, LLC, who has 30 years of experience in all aspects of redevelopment and development law, with a strong emphasis on complicated projects involving numerous stakeholders, difficult sites, complex capital stacks, and extensive public sector involvement.

“While the Borough’s redevelopment plan took shape over the past two years, the groundwork for it began years, even decades, beforehand,” said Mayor Gayle Brill Mittler (NJLM’s 3rd Vice President). “Redevelopment is and has always been a high priority for the governing body and we’ve focused regularly on what we can do to make the Borough an appealing place for residents and visitors.”

Harry Glazer, Public Information Officer, Highland Park



### Robust public input

The Borough’s redevelopment plan benefited, in the words of Borough Planner Jim Constantine, from “robust public input” and was revised at different stages in response to feedback from residents. Public input was elicited at multiple Mayor and Council meetings in 2020 and 2021, meetings of the Borough’s planning board, forums with neighbors and local business owners, and an open master planning workshop in 2019.

The redevelopment plan also benefits from the character of the Borough. As the 2020 US Census revealed, Highland Park continues to grow, with an 8.49% increase in population over the 2010 Census. The Census also revealed that over 60% of the population are between the ages of 18 and 65 and the median family income is nearly 30% higher than the national average.

Highland Park enjoys a reputation as an ‘artsy’ town, with creative murals lining the sides of several downtown buildings, an active local arts commission, and frequent outdoor art exhibits and events. The Borough also is home to a vibrant weekly three-season Farmers’ Market, several street fairs, and a popular live music venue.

The Borough is a diverse community, located within a half mile walk to the New Brunswick train station. Two Middlesex County bus routes, and a NJ Transit bus line into NYC, run through the town daily. 🇯🇵

The Borough of Highland Park welcomes inquiries from developers about the redevelopment plan. To review the plan, go to: <https://www.hpboro.com/Home/Components/News/News/1277/> For further information and to discuss specific developer concepts, please contact Teri Jover at [tjover@hpboro.com](mailto:tjover@hpboro.com).

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# It Takes a Village

## How every municipality in New Jersey can benefit from joining their local Rotary Club

*Jodi Stephens, Office of Mayor and Administration, Robbinsville Township*

**M**ost of us are familiar with the African proverb, “It takes a village to raise a child” - derived from the idea that children grow up happier, healthier and tend to thrive when given the opportunity to interact with an entire community.

Today, more than ever, the meaning of this proverb holds relevance to sustaining a healthy and safe society. A sense of security and comradery is felt in a community whose members feel supported and cared for by its “village.” Local governments benefit greatly when they make volunteering a part of their culture. Residents tend to follow the lead by taking ownership in their town, working together to be morally and civically engaged, resulting in a flourishing community.

### Paying it forward

Since 2015, Robbinsville Township Mayor Dave Fried added a “Pay It Forward” element to his annual State of the Township Address, cultivating an environment amongst Township



Lending a hand was Detective Wayne Haugh and Sergeant Mike Farrell of Robbinsville Township Police Department, and food pantry staff. Rotary President Joseph Bellina led a team of club members on the delivery of 155 cases of non-perishable foods to the Robbinsville Township Senior Center. These goods will help stock their on-site food pantry.





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## Rotary & Municipalities

employees and constituents of giving back to those in need. Each year the mayor chooses an individual or organization in need of assistance, and through corporate sponsorships, donations and event ticket sales he has succeeded in raising the funds needed to greatly improve the lives of those recipients. Through his leadership, Mayor Fried promotes kindness and giving, resulting in numerous benefits to the community. Township employees and residents constantly strive to meet high standards of contribution and involvement making a meaningful impact and creating an infectious drive of “giving back” to the local community.

In an effort to increase impact and focus on a variety of community giving projects, Robbinsville joined the Robbinsville-Hamilton Rotary Club.

The local Rotary Club is a part of Rotary International, a global organization made up of volunteers striving to improve the lives of others through humanitarian projects such as feeding, clothing and providing good will to those in need. The common goal of all Rotary Clubs is signified by their motto: “Service Above Self.” Weekly Rotary meetings provide valuable insight to the immediate, ever-changing needs of the local and global community. Members of the club are action-minded individuals seeking to help better the lives of others. Through Robbinsville’s local Newsfeed – a digital “newspaper” highlighting the town’s accomplishments and events – along with social media, Township employees and residents are made aware of collection drives and other humanitarian projects.

### Then, special things tend to happen

“I’ve served as a business administrator in New Jersey for approximately 30 years, and I could not think of a finer volunteer service organization than the Rotary Club for responding to the needs of a municipality at any given time,” Robbinsville Hamilton Rotary President Joe Bellina said. “In addition to its philanthropic work, Rotary responds to natural disasters, public health crises and public safety initiatives. Our



(Top to bottom) Members of Rotary pose with Sgt. Scott Kiven and K-9 Quori at Robbinsville National Night Out; Send Hunger Packing Food collection; Robbinsville Business Administrator Joy Tozzi and Assistant Business Administrator Jewel Morgan help with a Rotary/Robbinsville beautification project.



Robbinsville Hamilton Rotary Club leadership and supporters at Flags for Heros with Hamilton Mayor, Jeff Martin (NJLM Executive Board Member, far right).

collective commitment has been a natural extension of our personal commitment to help others in need. It really is that simple.”

**Working hand in hand**

The Township of Robbinsville works hand-in-hand with the Rotary and encourages its employees to volunteer to

support programs that positively impact the quality of life within the community. With suggestion from the Department of Administration, Robbinsville Council adopted an Employee Volunteer Policy written into the employee manual. With approval from their respective department head, full-time employees can

volunteer up to four hours (depending on their work day) of paid time off per-month. People generally want to help, but the challenge is finding the hours while working a full-time job. When local government employees are engaged, they develop a heightened awareness of social issues existing in their neighborhood, creating a more empathetic environment.

Township buildings become drop-off locations for collection drives, again encouraging employees and residents to become actively involved in providing support whenx needed. Additionally, employees have stepped in to assemble meals for those facing food insecurity, delivered food to the homebound through Mobile Meals of Hamilton, and serve as a liaison, enabling the two organizations to work together on meeting community needs.

Robbinsville’s Municipal Building, Fire Station, Public Works and Senior Center have served as collection sites for items ranging from winter hats, gloves,

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## It Takes a Village

scarves and socks, to food, hygiene items and even used bicycles. Rotary collects and donates much-needed items to local organizations such as Salvation Army, Womanspace and Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County. The drop-off locations are publicized to the residents and yield unprecedented donations.

In March of 2020, the club was planning to participate in a district-wide event at The College of New Jersey, where over 700 volunteers would assemble and package non-perishable, high protein meals for those facing food insecurity in our community. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic the event was postponed. Jobs were lost as businesses were shutting down and the need for meals was growing daily.

The Robbinsville Hamilton Rotary realized the importance of moving forward with assembling meals. Under the leadership of then-Rotary Club President Bill Coleman, the organization was able to reorganize and scale down the event to adhere to COVID-19 guidelines. Township employees were offered the opportunity to participate in assembling the meals through the employee volunteer program. In just two weeks, the club was able to deliver 150,000 nutrient-dense, shelf stable meals, providing support for the Mercer Street Friends Food Bank, Salvation Army and local Food Pantries.

When Mobile Meals of Hamilton, a local organization delivering hot meals to the elderly, less-fortunate and homebound, faced an increased demand for its services and a decrease in volunteers due to the pandemic, the Executive Director turned to the Robbinsville Hamilton Rotary Club for assistance in delivering the meals. In some cases, these deliveries are the only daily interaction the recipients have with another person. The club sent an email to its members asking for assistance and again, Robbinsville Township employees volunteered to take routes and continue on until the organization was able to recover.

A career in public service means putting public interests first. It comes with an obligation to seek solutions to problems, work towards the common

goal of helping those in need and strengthening the community. While the Rotary club provides several opportunities to serve, additional benefits are reaped as well. Members and volunteers connect through a common thread of service, but in turn gain friendship, personal growth, leadership development,

knowledge of a variety of topics through weekly speakers. There is never a shortage of ways to pitch in and make a real difference. The rewards are endless.

It may take a village to raise a child, but it takes a village to raise a village.

With the help of local rotary clubs, we are all better together. 🚲

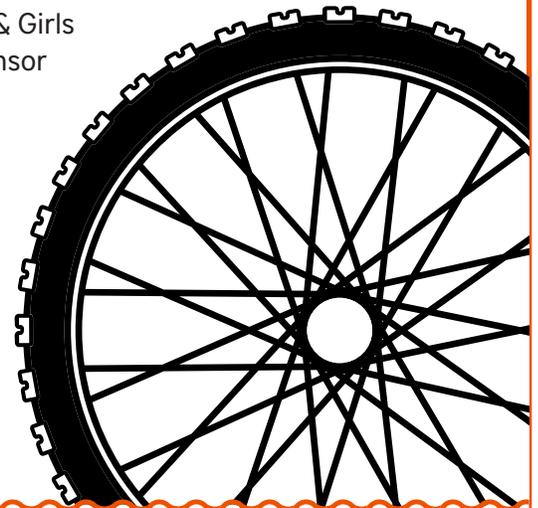


## Bike Drive Collaboration

Robbinsville Hamilton Rotary Club's used bike drive is a prime example of the collaborative efforts between the Rotary and the town.

Bicycles are dropped off at Robbinsville Public Works, donated to the Rotary Club, repaired and sold at modest prices by "The Bike Exchange of Ewing," which donates proceeds to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County to sponsor after-school programs.

Recently, over 50 bikes were collected for donation. Members of the Robbinsville Township Police Department were on site to demonstrate bike safety and attendees were treated to a meet and greet with RTPD K-9 Officers Quori and Corbin.





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# Modernizing Municipalities

## Preparing your building department for electronic permitting

Emily Burns, *Director of Marketing, Spatial Data Logic*

In New Jersey, legislators have taken monumental steps towards modernizing the building permit process for homeowners, contractors, and municipalities. A new law, signed into effect on April 30, 2021, requires the DCA to establish, develop, implement and administer an “electronic permit processing review system” within 1 year. This internet-based system will offer 24/7 access for the public to submit permit applications, plans and specifications online. Additionally, it will facilitate online inspection requests and information exchanges between parties.



By moving this process online, legislators hope to increase permit compliance by removing some of the barriers that may have prevented homeowners and contractors from going through the proper channels in the past. An electronic system will not only give contractors and homeowners the option to apply for permits and inspections online, it will also save time and money by eliminating paper, reducing the occurrence of incomplete forms and speeding up the process through real-time information exchanges.

### Electronic permitting

While building departments and other enforcement agencies will also need to offer electronic permitting, it is unclear when this law will go into effect on a local level. However, municipalities are not required to use the DCA’s system and may opt for another solution provided that it meets the requirements set forth by the DCA. Additionally, building departments are allowed to charge a permit surcharge fee for up to 3 years to offset the cost of implementing a new system.

The legislation leaves most of the formatting requirements and parameters up to the DCA’s discretion. For instance, the DCA will need to determine acceptable alternatives for handling raised seals, stamps and wet signatures on applications and tech cards. Additionally, they will need to provide more guidance on the permit surcharge fees, retention of electronic records and how to handle exceptions for large or complex plans.

Building departments will greatly benefit from moving these processes online and can begin preparing for and activating aspects of their online systems now. Depending on your department’s technological abilities, there may be a significant learning curve associated with bringing these processes online.

To ensure your staff is comfortable with the process,

- **Set up:** Begin by setting up and enabling your citizen platforms to accommodate online applications and inspection requests.
- **Training:** Additionally, seek out training opportunities and resources to familiarize yourself with online permitting and plan reviews prior to rolling this out to the public.
- **Assess:** Lastly, municipalities should begin assessing their current setups as they may need to invest in better connectivity, software or equipment to accommodate electronic reviews. 🚧

Emily Burns is the Director of Marketing at Spatial Data Logic. For more information, contact her at [info@spatialdatalogic.com](mailto:info@spatialdatalogic.com).

@ For more information about the legislation or SDL’s permitting solution, visit [www.spatialdatalogic.com](http://www.spatialdatalogic.com) or contact 800-805-9695.

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# Unique Partnership

## West Orange receives statewide recognition for Innovative program

Joseph Fagan, *Public Information Officer, West Orange;*  
Steve Ryan, *Senior Director of Development,*  
*Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris*



**T**he New Jersey Attorney General’s Office announced in an online video conference this past December that the West Orange Police Department (WOPD) was awarded the Excellence in Policing: Community Partnership Award. The award honors a partnership that strengthens relationships and collaborates with community stakeholders to advance public safety.

This prestigious recognition was presented to the WOPD for implementing a ground-breaking program where trained mental health clinicians are called upon to respond alongside officers on certain mental health crisis calls. The police department’s partnership with the Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris, Inc. (MHAEM) is an innovative approach to better serve the community in cases of non-criminal crises.

Through the development of a collaborative professional relationship between WOPD and MHAEM, police officers have the opportunity to increase their success rate for appropriate disposition and interaction with calls that may be related to mental health issues.

### Keeping residents safe

West Orange Police Chief James Abbott explained how the program conforms to the mission of community policing, “Our police department is constantly open to the implementation of new and different programs...especially those types that reflect our ongoing commitment to find improved methods in keeping all our residents safe. Our goal has always been to de-escalate situations with new initiatives focusing on unnecessary force. Our participation in this collaborative effort holds promise for bringing us closer toward our objective.”

Officer Brett Wanger of the Community Service Unit, who has responded to many calls stated, “After accessing the

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## Unique Partnership

situation on a call, advice is given on scene to determine if a person just needs some assistance rather than being arrested for their actions.”

Christine Czerniecki, LCSW, the Recovery Coordinator for MHAEM’s Community Support Services, explained, “Upon arrival at a scene, staff is given background information by officers which helps find the missing link for potential treatment, available options, or other resources to better address the situation.”

### Treatment over incarceration

The partnership between the WOPD and MHAEM helps prioritize appropriate response techniques and advocate for treatment over incarceration whenever appropriate. The WOPD is the sole nationally accredited law enforcement entity in all of Essex County. Accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), is the gold standard in law enforcement which requires all accredited agencies to promote and abide by the most contemporary best practices in the industry.

The Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris is an independent 501(c)(3) organization headquartered at 80 Main Street in West Orange. It is nationally recognized for its leadership in mental health issues with Robert Davison serving as its Chief Executive Officer.

According to Davison, “This partnership is something that just makes sense and, in my opinion, should be looked at as a model for municipalities throughout New Jersey and beyond.

“Law Enforcement professionals are exactly that... they are outstanding public servants but they are not social workers and should not be expected to fulfill that role, although all too often they are.”

“Working together, MHAEM provides the West Orange officers with resources, referrals and trained staff to de-escalate situations and help determine the best course of action for everyone involved. Through this partnership, law enforcement professionals receive support... mental health professionals get the

opportunity to provide much needed services and, most importantly, individuals dealing with mental or behavioral health issues can get the help they may need as opposed to becoming a part of the criminal justice system,” Davison said.

Chief Abbott cited the extensive degree of community collaboration that allowed this trail-blazing partnership to come to fruition.

“West Orange Township Attorney Richard Trenk was the first to



recommend working with MHAEM, based on his prior knowledge of the agency’s work in the community. Essex County Prosecutor Ted Stevens was critical in advancing the initiative for specifically granting the ability of MHAEM staff to review body cam footage. It was, within or at, his sole discretion to permit the practice which otherwise is prohibited by the New Jersey Attorney General.

The approval and support of Mayor Robert Parisi and the Township Council were also essential to the process.

“West Orange Police Department Captain Richard McDonald, and his staff, in particular are to be commended for believing that this initiative could succeed and be beneficial for all of us in the West Orange community,” Abbott said.

This program, thanks to all have worked diligently from conception to implementation, serves to make West Orange neighborhoods safer. It shows how innovative thinking and community partnerships engage all stakeholders as an investment in the future of policing which is already yielding positive returns. 

## Continuous Learning

In explaining the program, representatives of both the West Orange Police Department and Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris appeared in an online video to further explain details of the award winning and successful program.

Captain Richard McDonald pointed out, “In addition to in-person responses, trained clinicians review officer’s body cams twice a month and go over all the calls to address any areas that might need improvement.”

Miriam Cortez, M.S., LAC, MHAEM’s lead Co-Responder, spoke about the ongoing training, “We are able to watch and review videos and learn from them, collaborate, provide feedback and develop more informed training.”

Visit [www.facebook.com/watch/?v=646657436762607](https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=646657436762607) to see the full explanation of the program.

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# We Value Our Veterans

Award and ceremony event recognizes municipal efforts to support vets

Don Tretola, Government Affairs, DMAVA



The New Jersey's Governor "We Value Our Veterans" Award recognizes municipalities, businesses, and academic that have gone the extra mile in demonstrating the value they place on the sacrifices, patriotism, and bravery displayed by our men and women who have worn the military uniform.

Thanks to over 300 veterans who attended the Governors' We Value Our Veterans award ceremony which was held on November 11, 2021, at the Vietnam War Memorial in Holmdel. The weather was mild, with a backdrop of blue sky. In addition to our veterans who attended, there was a tremendous turnout of awardees, dignitaries, and many other invited guests from throughout New Jersey. It was an amazing sight to see.

## Award winners for 2021

Municipalities that received the award in 2021 included:

- Brick Township
- Jersey City
- Manalapan Township
- Wall Township
- Hazlet Township
- Keyport
- Scotch Plains
- Woodbridge

Other award winners were Bergen County, Burlington County, Camden County, Cape May County, Fairleigh Dickinson University, HMP, Hudson County, Masonic Village at Burlington, Monmouth County, Ranco Corporation, Rowan University, Rutgers Camden College, Saint Peters University, Stockton University, Union County.



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### FRIDAY, APRIL 29

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Jacquelyn Suarez,  
*Director NJ Division of Local Government Services*

#### CYBER ISSUES

Combating Cyber Attacks

#### BENEFITS ISSUES

Controlling Benefits Costs

### FRIDAY, MAY 6

#### ETHICS

Ethics in Local Elections

#### SAFETY

Safety in the COVID Era

#### RISK MANAGEMENT

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## We Value Our Veterans

### Reflections on participation

The municipalities participating noted they were pleased to put the spotlight on veterans. Keyport Borough Mayor Collette J. Kennedy said, “The Borough of Keyport is proud to be part of the DMAVA We Value Our Veterans program which encourages communities like ours to acknowledge and support the veterans every day, not just on Veterans Day. We are truly honored to have been able to participate in the program and to have been selected for the Community Award.”

Scott Barry, President RANCO, Construction noted, “Once a small family-operated electrical contracting firm, Barry Electric grew to a collaborative team of construction and design specialists. Ranco has recently been awarded the New Jersey Governor’s



Gov. Phil Murphy and Brigadier General Lisa J. Hou, D.O., Commissioner of the NJ Dept. of Military and Veterans Affairs, present a certificate to Keyport Borough Mayor Collette J. Kennedy.

great honor,” said Christine Giordano Hanlon, Esq., Monmouth County Clerk. “Our office takes great pride in serving

the residents of Monmouth County and the more than 33,000 veterans who call Monmouth County home. We are privileged to issue veteran identification cards, veteran peddler licenses, and Gold Star parents’ cards, and have also implemented the Honoring our Heroes program to provide our veterans with special discounts and services from businesses in the County.”

“Saint Peter’s University is honored to be recognized with the New Jersey Governor’s “We Value Our Veterans’ Academia Award,” said University President Eugene J. Cornacchia, Ph.D. “The University has always strived to be a military-friendly institution, but we have recently concentrated and expanded our efforts to support veterans and military personnel. Veterans have put their lives on the line for this country time and time again and they deserve all of our support and resources to assist them in obtaining their college degree.”



Gov. Phil Murphy and Brigadier General Lisa J. Hou, D.O. present a certificate to Christine Giordano Hanlon, Esq., Monmouth County Clerk.

“We Value our Veterans” Employer Award, a recognition of Ranco’s core values to honor and support our military, veterans, and all first responders such as police and firefighters. At Ranco, “We Build to Protect” is much more than a tagline.”

“The Monmouth County Clerk’s Office was proud to accept this award at the State Veterans Day ceremony and we thank the New Jersey Department of Military and Veteran Affairs for this

## Apply Now

During the year 2022, we would be honored to receive applications from every municipality, every county, every one of our academic institutions and as many businesses as possible. We are looking forward to publicly recognizing the hard work you do to support our veterans.

Please visit our website, [www.NJ.GOV/Military/Veterans](http://www.NJ.GOV/Military/Veterans) or contact me via email at [Don.Tretola@DMAVA.NJ.GOV](mailto:Don.Tretola@DMAVA.NJ.GOV).

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# Legal Team

## Serving Municipal Interests

In a year filled with unpredictability, the League's legal team could be counted on to continue their work advocating for New Jersey's municipalities. The legal department's amicus participation included amicus interventions before both the New Jersey Appellate Division and Supreme Court. While the issues were diverse, many of the matters touched upon OPRA in some way.

The League participates in these cases because they have statewide impact and municipal interests are well served by our involvement.

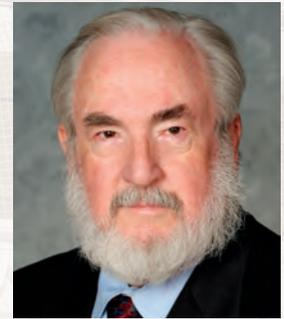
In addition to our amicus work, the League's legal department is a consistent resource for municipal attorneys as they continually adapt to a changing legal landscape. Acting as a clearinghouse for ideas and practices, we monitor and report on important state and federal court decisions that impact our members.

The legal department continues to review and update the various publications offered by the League, contribute to the League magazine and Town Crier blog, while maintaining League's ordinance and resolution library. This valuable tool for municipal attorneys, elected officials, and others allows users to see how other municipalities have solved problems, helping them to better address their own.

NJLM's legal department also works on legislative and regulatory advocacy—working closely with members of the League's legislative staff to provide analysis on legislative affairs. The Associate General Counsel frequently represents the League and municipal interests as a stakeholder on a variety of issues before the State's regulatory bodies.

We thank all of the legal experts who counsel the League and its members for their ongoing commitment to support New Jersey's Municipalities. 🇯🇵

### GENERAL COUNSEL



**WILLIAM JOHN KEARNS, JR.**  
Helmer, Conley & Kasselman  
Willingboro

### DEPUTY GENERAL COUNSEL



**TRISHKA WATERBURY CECIL**  
Mason, Griffin & Pierson  
Princeton

### ASSOCIATE GENERAL COUNSEL



**FRANK MARSHALL**  
League of Municipalities  
Trenton

### ASSISTANT COUNSEL



**EDWIN W. SCHMIERER**  
Mason, Griffin & Pierson  
Princeton

### ASSISTANT COUNSEL



**EDWARD BUZAK**  
Buzak Law Group  
Montville

### LABOR COUNSEL



**ANGELO GENOVA**  
Genova Burns  
Newark

### LABOR COUNSEL

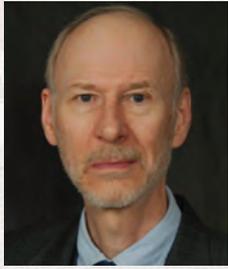


**JOSEPH HANNON**  
Genova Burns  
Newark

**ASSOCIATE LEGAL COUNSELS**



**MARTIN ALLEN**  
DiFrancesco, Bateman, Coley,  
Yospin, Kunzman Davis & Lehrer  
Warren



**MARK ANDERSON**  
Woolson, Sutphen,  
Anderson  
Somerville



**TARA ANN ST. ANGELO**  
Gebhardt & Kiefer  
Annandale



**JOHN BELARDO**  
McElroy, Deutsch,  
Mulvaney & Carpenter  
Morristown



**F. CLIFFORD GIBBONS**  
**MUNICIPAL LAND USE CHAIRMAN**  
Law Office of F. Clifford Gibbons  
Princeton



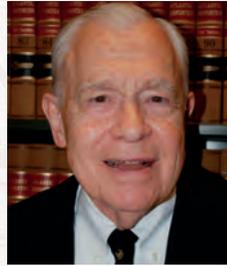
**JOHN C. GILLESPIE**  
Parker McCay  
Mount Laurel



**WILLIAM HARLA**  
DeCotis, FltzPatrick & Cole  
Teaneck



**JASON HOLT**  
Chiesa, Shahinian,  
& Giantomasi  
Trenton



**WILLIAM HOLZAPFEL**  
**CITY ATTORNEY**  
Director of Law Department  
Elizabeth



**MICHAEL B. LAVERY**  
Lavery, Selvaggi, Abromitis,  
and Cohen  
Hackettstown



**JOHN LLOYD**  
**TAX COUNSEL**  
Chiesa, Shahinian & Giantomasi  
West Orange



**EDWARD MCMANIMON**  
**BOND COUNSEL**  
McManimon Scotland  
& Baumann  
Roseland



**LESLIE A. PARIKH, ESQ.**  
Gebhardt & Kiefer  
Annandale



**SAMUEL "SKIP" REALE**  
Helmer, Conley & Kasselmann  
Willingboro



**MATTHEW S. ROGERS**  
Law Office of  
Matthew S. Rogers  
Ridgewood



**JOHN M. SCAGNELLI**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL COUNSEL**  
Scarinci Hollenbeck  
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Dorsey & Semrau, LLC  
Boonton



**JOEL SHAIN**  
**PUBLIC UTILITY COUNSEL**  
Shain, Schaffer & Rafanello  
Bernardsville



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Florio Perrucci Steinhardt  
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Murphy, McKeon  
Riverdale



**SAUL WOLFE**  
**TAX COUNSEL**  
Skoloff & Wolfe  
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# New Jersey Business Action Center

A resource for navigating government & operating businesses

Erica Lockhart, *Communications Specialist, on behalf of Melanie Willoughby, Executive Director, New Jersey Business Action Center*

**A**s New Jersey businesses continue to navigate, adjust, and embrace innovative and new approaches to operating and conducting business while recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, the New Jersey Business Action Center (NJBAC) has remained at the forefront of providing critical business services and guidance and COVID updates.

Widely known as NJBAC, we are a service-oriented, business-first resource center that can help businesses get answers to questions that range from starting, operating, sustaining, and expanding a business. Staffed by a full complement of Business Advocacy Experts who are also knowledgeable about government programs impacting businesses large and small, NJBAC is a division of the New Jersey Department of State and is comprised of three distinct business units: Business Advocacy, Small Business Advocacy, and Export Promotion.

## Business advocacy tool

Whether it is facilitating responses from government or regulatory agencies, directing businesses to appropriate officials, providing updates about new legislation and statutory changes affecting businesses; and more, NJBAC is a viable business advocacy tool for all New Jersey businesses.

NJBAC's Business Advocacy Experts provide businesses with invaluable assistance with site planning and technical support, guidance and direction in the areas of professional licensing, business certification, procurement opportunities, workforce development, identify funding sources; and more—inclusive of support to start-ups and existing businesses.

Small Business Advocacy NJBAC's Office of Small Business Advocacy business experts focus on serving the needs of New Jersey's small business community. The efforts of the Small Business Advocacy team specifically serve to help our Garden State small business owners, who essentially are at the core of our communities (the main streets and downtowns).

A dedicated team of Business Experts operate the popular Business Helpline at 1-800-JERSEY-7 and the online Live Chat feature on New Jersey's business-friendly website, <https://Business.NJ.gov>. The Helpline and Live Chat are facilitated by trained business experts each weekday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Don Newman, NJBAC's Small Business Advocacy Manager, oversees the continuous stream of inquiries coming in from small businesses, entrepreneurs, and start-ups. The Live Chat has answered more than 85,000 questions since the COVID lockdown in March 2020. No question is too big or too small, and all are answered within 24 hours.

## Delivering Answers

Some of the most popular inquiries involve sources of funding for both pandemic relief and new business ventures, operating guidelines for maintaining a safe workplace, licensing and certification concerns, and how to start a business.

Newman, who has many years of business experience in the private sector, is known for his encyclopedic knowledge of all things related to operating a business in New Jersey and he shares that knowledge daily with both his staff, the business community, and all those who reach out to NJBAC for business-related information and guidance.

"Our goal is to give business owners all the knowledge they need to move forward," Newman said. "That means connecting them with the right resources, directing them to the right state or federal agencies, guiding them through some of the more complicated processes, and doing whatever we can to help."

He added, "we want New Jersey businesses to grow and thrive, despite the challenges the recent pandemic has thrown their way."

## Other options

NJBAC's Office of Business Advocacy, Office of Export Promotion, Office of Planning Advocacy, and the New Jersey Motion Picture & Television Commission are also available to work with businesses depending on their needs.

**Business Advocacy:** NJBAC's Office of Business Advocacy experts stay up-to-date on the latest state regulations and programs essential to sustaining and growing a business in the Garden State; the team also works one-to-one with business operators as they look to find new locations, expand operations,

train their employees, and pursue innovative solutions to everyday business problems.

Stephen Milgrom, NJBAC's Business Advocacy Manager, oversees the day-to-day activity of the unit and works diligently alongside his team to build and maintain solid relationships with businesses and agencies to best serve Garden State businesses.

**Export Promotion:** NJBAC's Office of Export Promotion team works with companies to develop exporting plans to reach new markets around the globe. The team also administers the New Jersey State Trade Expansion Program (NJSTEP grants), which fund participation in virtual trade shows and other export-related programs.

William Spear, NJBAC's Export Promotion Manager, and his dedicated team, stays up-to-date on opportunities and programs that will help companies grow their business and market reach.

**Planning Advocacy:** NJBAC's Office of Planning Advocacy team coordinates statewide planning to protect the environment and guide future growth of communities through strategic planning for compact, mixed-use development and redevelopment.

Donna Rendeiro, NJBAC's Planning Advocacy Manager, and her team play a very important role in maximum utilization of land space and environmental preservation.

**NJ Motion Picture & Television Commission:** The New Jersey Motion Picture & Television Commission (NJMPTV) works with production companies and New Jersey municipalities to encourage the use of Garden State locations for the filming of commercials, movies, television shows, and other digital media. Popular and recent Garden State production projects include the movie *West Side Story* (a Broadway musical remake) and *The Equalizer* (a CBS television series starring Queen Latifah).

Steve Gorelick, Executive Director of NJMPTVC, and his team are committed to increasing New Jersey's visibility as a film and television destination and boosting economic opportunities for

local businesses through production partnerships. NJMPTVC also has a digital library that communities can contribute images to, inspiring film and television production in Garden State cities and towns.

**Connect your communities' businesses**

New Jersey Business Action Center encourages businesses to take advantage

of the free service and helpful guidance offered by its team of business experts.

As Executive Director Melanie Willoughby-NJBAC, a committed advocate for Garden State businesses, often says, "We are from state government and we are here to help." 🇺🇸

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# Plainsboro Today

Looking at the future through an optimistic lens

Peter A. Cantu, Mayor, Plainsboro; NJLM Past President



Village Center

**A**lthough the state and nation are facing enormous challenges going forward in this surreal, pandemic-induced environment, I am looking at Plainsboro Township's future through an optimistic lens. Having just celebrated Plainsboro's centennial on May 6, 2019, when the community looked back on our heritage, we now are focusing on our town today and its path forward for tomorrow.

The most recent bright spot on the horizon occurred a few months ago with the approval of a plan on Princeton University-owned lands to create a walkable, integrated mixed-use neighborhood development with a strong sense of place—defined by a “Main Street”-style commercial component, varied housing opportunities (950 units, including up to 200 units being age-restricted), modern office environments, and vibrant civic and open spaces.

## Watching Plainsboro grow

With an invaluable vantage point that comes from serving as mayor for more than four decades and from being married to one of the town's few remaining natives, I have watched Plainsboro Township evolve from a placid agrarian to a high-energy suburban community with numerous world-class, for-profit and not-for-profit corporations and research facilities.

The prestigious, high-profile entities include: Novo Nordisk's North American headquarters, Firmenich Inc., Munich Reinsurance headquarters, Siemens Corporate Research Center, Integra Life Sciences, Novartis, Croda International headquarters, Sandoz Inc., Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory (fusion energy), Penn Medicine Medical Center and health-care campus, Genmab U.S., headquarters, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. In addition, more than half of the town's total square miles has been set aside as open space, an invaluable investment in the quality of the life for those who work and live in the community as well as for generations of future residents and employees.

Times have certainly changed over the past 60 years from when my wife, Gale Cantu, would ride a horse down Plainsboro Road through a town with 1,600 cows, and only 1,200 residents. And as much as she is nostalgic about the quaint Plainsboro of

her youth, Gale is thrilled with how the community has evolved.

Today's perspective is a future of enormous promise. Plainsboro has been recognized by *New Jersey Monthly* magazine as one of the top 10 “Best Places to Live” in New Jersey and by *Fortune Small Business* magazine as one of the “100 Best Places to Live and Launch a Small Business.” These accolades were due not only to the town's superb location, but also to forward-thinking governing and planning over many years on the part of the town's leaders, professional municipal staff, and the numerous residents working as volunteers to support their community.

## Ingredients for vibrancy

Specifically, there are six areas that play a role in the vibrancy of Plainsboro's today and tomorrow

### 1. Location, Location, Location

Plainsboro, 12-square-miles in the southwest corner of Middlesex County, has what realtors often say is the number-one quality sought after by homebuyers and corporations: location, location, location. Straddling both sides of Route 1, it is in the center of the state and central to the state's success today and tomorrow. The excellence of its highways and mass transit infrastructure road provide accessibility to almost any employment, educational, or recreational location in New Jersey as well as within the New York-Philadelphia regional corridor.

### 2. Diversity

According to the 2020 US Census, Plainsboro's diverse population is 24,084; about 53% of the residents are foreign born. Diversity is evidenced by the population breakdown: 58% Asian, about 31% White, about 6% Black, and about 3% Hispanic or Latino.



## Plainsboro Today

offices, child care center, senior daycare center, independent senior residences, and pediatric specialized care medical facility operated by Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP).

### 3. The Fiscal Picture: a Thriving Landscape

The advantages of Plainsboro's location would dim quickly if the economy were simply a black hole that swallowed the community's vitality. Instead, Plainsboro's economic picture is the bright star in New Jersey.

With a AAA bond rating, Plainsboro has one of the lowest (effective) municipal purpose tax rates in Middlesex County, and the taxes have remained low because of an excellent ratable base of \$4.535 billion.

The economic strength of the community directly relates to decades of careful, strategic land use planning and implementation. The planning process has enabled Plainsboro to become Central Jersey's pre-eminent site for world-renowned corporations that have gone through a thorough deliberate analysis. They all have come to the same conclusion: Plainsboro is the place to be.

The heart of Plainsboro's corporate development is Princeton Forrestal Center—Princeton University's Corporate Office and Research Complex. Today, Princeton Forrestal Center represents over 90% of Plainsboro Township's commercial tax ratables. The Plainsboro lands within the Princeton Forrestal Center represent an economic powerhouse in the region with an approximate annual \$7.3-billion-dollar economic impact.

Founded in 1973, Princeton Forrestal Center is one of the nation's premier university-associated office and research parks. Today it is home to over 225 businesses, ranging from prestigious multinationals to start-ups and academic research facilities, focused on a range of disciplines including life sciences, biotechnology, health services, financial services, information technology, engineering, architectural services, legal services, pharmaceuticals, energy services, communications, logistics, and philanthropy.

Plainsboro also is now the host community to the first-class, renowned Penn Medicine Medical Center, which relocated to Plainsboro from Princeton

in 2012. The hospital is the main medical entity within the healthcare campus of more than one million square feet. The campus development, with an estimated \$1 billion economic impact, also includes an assisted living facility, skilled nursing facility, fitness center, medical

### 4. A-Plus Schools

People and corporations flock to Plainsboro for the quality of its K-12 schools, thus providing: developers' confidence in their ability to market new



## Affordable Housing Insight and Experience Our Clients Can Trust

McManimon, Scotland & Baumann, LLC has a long history of representing its clients in affordable housing development, both public and private clients alike. The firm has vast expertise in a variety of financing programs used to develop capital stacks, including, among other sources, HUD's Rental Demonstration Program (RAD), Section 18 disposition (Section 18), RAD/Section 18 blends, streamline voluntary conversions, low-income housing tax credits, New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency construction and permanent lending, FHLBNY AHP grants, and conventional lending.

In recognition of this experience, firm member Bakari G. Lee was recently appointed to the Affordable Housing Advisory Council of the Federal Home Loan Bank of New York (FHLBNY) and participates in the formulation of FHLBNY's affordable housing finance policy and regularly serves as a speaker at various affordable housing conferences.

For more information, contact **Bakari Lee** at [blee@msbnj.com](mailto:blee@msbnj.com).



housing units; corporations' confidence in their ability to attract quality employees; and homeowners' confidence in maintaining the value of their homes.

The West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District is consistently ranked among one of the finest in New Jersey. The district is routinely among the top five statewide for highest SAT scores with 96% of the students going

on to college.

**5. Housing: A Solid Foundation**

Great schools would be irrelevant if people were unable to find suitable housing to fit their lifestyle and budget. Plainsboro, once again, gets an A-plus grade, this time the subject being housing for people of all ages, financial means, and physical demands.

The municipality has attracted an

abundance of senior housing options on both sides of Route 1. It has fulfilled its State-mandated requirement for affordable housing, including a new development of 70 beautiful, contemporary, low- and moderate-income affordable apartment homes, made feasible by a partnership between the local government and a private not-for-profit.

In addition, some of the town's most popular housing exists in Plainsboro Town Center, within walking distance to the library, restaurants, medical offices, and retailers.

**6. R&R: Relaxation and Recreation and Restoration**

Plainsboro's commitment to excellence in education, jobs, health care and wellness, land use planning, economic stability, and housing is matched by its commitment to open space and other amenities that enhance the mental and physical health of every resident in the community.

More than 50% of Plainsboro's approximately 12-square-miles is preserved open space. Every building project that has been approved during the past several decades has an open space and walkways component.

Plainsboro's public parks provide for both active and passive recreational pursuits. The jewel is the 1,000-acre Plainsboro Preserve, which includes the 50-acre McCormack Lake, walking trails, wetlands, wooded areas, and natural habitats for plants, animals, and migratory birds. The 6,500-square-foot Rush Holt environmental education center, managed by Plainsboro Township's Recreation Department, offers many nature and environmental programs. The township hosts a public Middlesex County-owned golf course, and there are three fitness centers (two of them with state-of-the-art pools) that accommodate all levels of exercise needs.

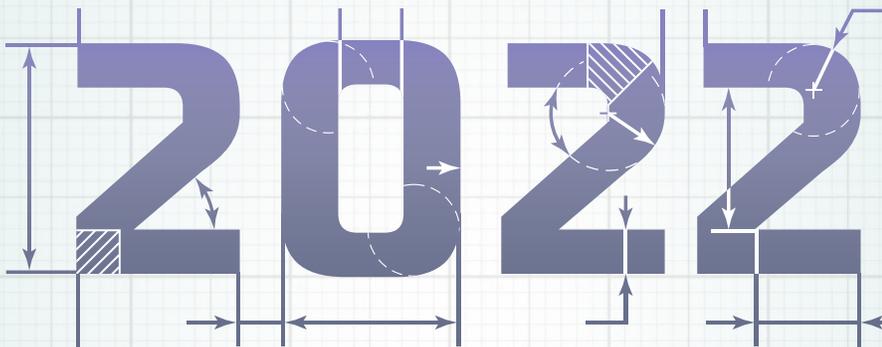
**Going Forward:**

It has been my privilege to serve Plainsboro as a volunteer and as an elected official for half a century. And as good as Plainsboro is today, I see the future to be even more spectacular—a fact that I hope will be celebrated at the town's bicentennial on May 6, 2119. 🇺🇸

# Municipal Officials

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- Secretary Granholm



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- Clarence Anthony,  
CEO, National League of Cities



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- Tucson Mayor  
Regina Romero



“We were the first to adopt SolarAPP+ and issue a permit through SolarAPP+ and just issued our 30th permit through SolarAPP+. With all the building we’ve done, there have been no issues.”



- Pleasant Hill Mayor  
Sue Noak

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## Technology and Automation Help Employees & Businesses Alike During COVID-19 Pandemic



With the recent pandemic completely disrupting the way we work, it accelerated the work-from-home movement for many industries greatly accelerating the adoption of technology and utilization of automation. In fact, McKinsey conducted a global survey of 800 executives and 85% of respondents said their businesses have somewhat or greatly increased the implementation of technologies that digitally enable employee interaction.

Technology enables us to work with maximum efficiency and is especially helpful during a time that doesn't allow us to have the ability to meet in person. Technology and automation can help with payroll, HR, and employee benefits processes to free up time for administration and empower employees by providing them with resources they need to do their job efficiently.

### Employee Self Service Portal

It is beneficial to utilize a contactless self-service portal for employees especially during the pandemic. Without the ability to meet in person, using an employee portal can allow for organizations to provide online tools that are accessible to help improve employee efficiency and satisfaction. Empowering staff to quickly get the resources they need allows them to focus on tasks at hand.

From comprehensive employee self-service capabilities that fully engage personnel to viewing and manage your own personal information such as enrolling in benefits, accessing pay stubs to making modifications of personal information. As technology continues to advance, it's being implemented in a myriad of ways to assist changing workforce trends.

### HR Processes

Today, the face of HR is often a central hub or portal that can be accessed by employees and administration. Almost all organizations have the capability to provide universal access to a suite of HR services through technology and cloud-based applications, dramatically transforming human resource management.

Technology is providing unprecedented efficiencies. Successful HR departments can empower remote workforces by utilizing a contactless HRIS platform that serves as a central hub for payroll, benefits and enrollment, as well as time and attendance. A centralized HRIS platform can improve workflow to reduce costs and improve employee retention, productivity, and engagement across municipal and county government entities.

Even some of the more complex HR tasks have been moved to digital platforms that allow manual tasks to be performed much more quickly and efficiently. Tedious and arduous tasks such as payroll, time and attendance, benefits administration, and other workforce management processes can be managed with automation enabled by HRIS platforms.

Utilizing an HRIS platform for employee benefits administration through automation helps minimize manual errors and streamlines the employee onboarding process.

process to get right.

Whether it is an HRIS platform or an integration with a cloud application, payroll workflows can be simplified by completely automating the process by

setup, review status and results, and access reports are also accessible.

Utilizing an HRIS platform that can be integrated with an employee single-sign on portal can take some of the stress off of administrators during what is already such a stressful time. It can also give employees visibility into some of these processes and allow them to have visibility to key resources, pay stubs, manage time-off requests and other documents they may need at any given time. 

## Technology and automation can help with payroll, HR, and employee benefits processes to free up time for administration and empower employees by providing them with resources they need to do their job efficiently

### Automating Payroll

Managing payroll can be a complicated process. Salaried employees, part-timers, and shift workers all have their own pay rates, deductions, and contributions. There are many parts of the payroll

delivering access to payroll data anytime, from anywhere, while eliminating manual processes that are accompanied with processing and distributing checks, vouchers, and W-2s. Payroll calendar and specific pay dates, check payroll

---

Frank Diassi, Chairman at Unicorn HRO and Managing General Partner for The Unicorn Group, has over 40 years of experience in business leadership. Diassi is a former Director of Mail-Well Corporation and Chief Executive Officer of Sterling Chemical. He had major corporate experience with Conoco Oil Company for 10 years where he held a senior business unit management position in the petrochemicals area. Diassi received a B.S. degree in chemistry from Rutgers University and a M.B.A. from the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business.

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## Library Tax Levies and Appropriations Caps



### Is our municipality permitted to increase the library tax levy?



Yes, there is a way to increase the municipal library tax levy. P.L. 2017, Chapter 260, which took effect in January 2018, amended the law to allow a municipality to seek voter approval to go beyond that minimum one-third of a mill taxation rate (33 cents per \$1,000 of assessable property) for free municipal libraries.

The amended law allows the governing body of a municipality to adopt a resolution, submitting to voters of the municipality, at a general election, a proposition to change the rate of the tax required to annually be raised, to an amount higher than the required one-third of a mill. To be successful, the proposition must receive approval by a majority of the voters in the municipality. If unsuccessful, the rate shall remain unchanged.

The rate can also be changed upon a petition to the governing body signed by qualified voters of the municipality equal in number to at least 15% of the votes cast at the last preceding general election. The petition must be filed with the municipal clerk at least 90 days before the general election.

Regardless of how the proposition makes its way to the voters—either by action of governing body or petition—a proposition to increase the levy cannot appear on the ballot more than once in any three-year election period. In other words, should an attempt to raise the rate fail before the voters, another attempt at raising the rate cannot be put forward for a period of three years. If approved, the increase expires after 10 tax years and reverts to one-third of a mill, unless a new proposition establishing a different tax rate is approved.

It should be noted that on any proposition appearing on a ballot seeking to increase the levy, along with the explanatory statement must substantially comply with specific language appearing within the law. This language can be found at N.J.S.A. 40:54-8.2.

The explanatory statement accompanying the proposition must include information regarding: the minimum amount

required to annually be raised by taxation for the support of the free public library pursuant to law, the current amount annually raised if above the minimum, the proposed change in the amount to be charged, the effect of the proposed change on property taxes, and the length of time that a higher rate will be in effect.



### Is there a cap on the amount our municipality can appropriate to the municipal library?



Yes, but there is a mechanism in which an appropriation can go beyond the cap. While N.J.S.A. 40:54-8 provides for a mandatory minimum annual library appropriation through a dedicated levy, a municipality may elect to appropriate additional funding. N.J.S.A. 40:54-8.1, however, caps additional appropriations at 15% of the previous year's total expenditures for the maintenance of the free public library.

As previously noted, there is a mechanism available for going beyond this 15% appropriation cap. Municipalities looking to go beyond this 15% cap may do so upon application and approval from the State Librarian.

N.J.A.C. 15:21-12.4 lays out the information required to be submitted to the State Librarian, including:

1. A prioritized itemized list that delineates the proposed use of the funds.
2. Justification that supports the provision of efficient and effective library services.

You should review this information and consult with your municipal library's board of trustees when drafting the application to the State Librarian to ensure that the additional appropriation will be used for authorized purposes. 

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# Gold Dome



Ben Dworkin, Ph.D., *Director, Rowan University Institute for Public Policy & Citizenship (RIPPAC)*

## Nurturing Hollywood, Jersey Style

**M**anaging the economy of a diverse state like New Jersey is complicated, especially because so many of the factors that drive commercial activity and job growth are completely beyond the state's control. Among them: federal policies, international markets, global competition, and of course, health challenges like COVID-19.

Part of Gov. Phil Murphy's approach has been to develop "new" industries that will take root in New Jersey and develop their own ecosystems of research, development, investment, and job opportunities.

The idea is to create something akin to Silicon Valley, an industry-focused hub where interrelated companies grow, launch new products, nurture talent, and thereby attract new talent and financing for the latest entrepreneurs. And importantly, because they are all connected, individual companies are less likely to move away in the future.

Over the last few years, four such industries have begun to emerge in New Jersey. Murphy didn't launch all of these, but with the support of his administration and the legislature, they are beginning to establish deep roots and grow where there was once very little, if anything at all.

**Offshore wind power:** The strong advocacy of former state Senate President Steven Sweeney and former Assemblyman John Burzichelli, among others, helped the state move ahead with establishing ocean-based wind farms that will eventually generate at least 7,500MW in renewable energy. The state is also supporting the creation of production, transportation, and transmission facilities and centers for workforce development that will make New Jersey the focal point for the industry nationally.

**Sports betting:** Online betting in this state began in 2013 and expanded to sports betting in 2018. Since then, no other state has seen more money wagered and more revenue generated through legalized sports betting than New Jersey. The industry has brought new life into the gaming and

entertainment venues of Atlantic City and the Meadowlands, capitalized on the universality of mobile devices, and is providing a home for creative thinking on future expansion.

**Adult recreational cannabis legalization:** The new state Senate President, Nicholas Scutari, was one of the chief architects of this initiative, still in its infancy. The current organizing and regulatory challenges faced by legislators and administration officials reflect, in part, the entrepreneurial spirit that pervades the industry; a dynamic that may well help launch numerous cannabis-focused startups and product development endeavors in New Jersey over time.

**Part of Gov. Phil Murphy's approach has been to develop "new" industries that will take root in New Jersey and develop their own ecosystems of research, development, investment, and job opportunities.**

**TV and film production:** This has not received as much attention as the others but can potentially be just as much of an economic engine. Through the creation of an aggressive tax credit program, New Jersey is beginning to re-establish its prominence in this area. (Thomas Edison's lab in Menlo Park invented motion pictures and the first film studio was in Fort Lee.)

Incentives for qualifying companies include a 35% tax credit for production and related costs incurred in Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Mercer and Salem counties and a 30% credit for all other counties. Eligible digital media companies can receive tax credits of 20-25%. Companies that hire a certain percentage of minority or female workers or contractors receive an additional 2% tax credit.

These tax credits aren't cheap. But they offset the generally high-costs of doing business in New Jersey, and thereby allow the state's other benefits to be appreciated. For example, its location between New York and Philadelphia allows access to both front-facing and behind-the-scenes talent. The state also has a wide variety of picturesque shooting locations within a compact area.

Murphy has also pitched Hollywood on New Jersey's generally socially liberal orientation that aligns with the views of many in the artistic community. When they invest in other, presumably lower-cost, states, production companies could face strong public pressure to pick up and leave when those states pass controversial new laws relating to bathroom access, voting and reproductive rights, and social justice, etc. They don't have to worry about that here, says Murphy.

Certainly, each of New Jersey's 564 municipalities have their own rules and regulations relating to film production. However, as Mayor Andre Sayegh from Paterson demonstrated during the shooting of Steven Spielberg's *West Side Story* last year, there can be significant advantages when local governments find ways to work with the industry, including direct benefits (burst of local spending by visitors) and indirect benefits (civic pride generated when "the movie people come to town").

The focus on re-establishing this industry in the state is already showing promise. The NJ Film and Television Commission expects total production spending to top \$500 million in 2021, a record high for the state and an increase of nearly 600% over 2016.

Three new large soundstage facilities also opened in 2021, one in Jersey City and two in Kearny. And Netflix, the billion-dollar global media giant, has put a bid in for the long-shuttered Fort Monmouth with plans to create it as a new production facility.

For Netflix, whose bid has not yet won the property, the shift in viewing habits during the pandemic have put it at the forefront of distribution channels

looking for new content. Original programming is one way that various streaming services hope to grow their market share in an increasingly competitive environment. A New Jersey-based studio is one way to ensure the development of such content, and may well inspire other industry players to follow suit.

## Its location between New York and Philadelphia allows access to both front-facing and behind-the-scenes talent.

Further, the emergence of TV and film production industry in New Jersey is likely to generate the need for tech-savvy creative people, who will then establish

their own small businesses to take advantage of the demand. The industry continues to expand into new technologies, including the Metaverse (virtual reality, avatar-based entertainment), artificial intelligence, and virtual production techniques. These are new ways to tell stories and engage paying customers. They require a highly-skilled workforce, especially in computer and graphic design and engineering—areas where New Jersey is strong already and can grow to be even stronger.

Five years ago, New Jersey had no offshore wind industry, no sports betting, no legal cannabis industry, and a much smaller film and television production sector. Today, all four of these are creating their own deep-rooted ecosystems across the state—ties that are likely to keep them here for decades.

As they grow, they will reshape the dynamics of state politics, just as other dominant industries have done in the past.

TV and film production, in particular, is now a half-billion-dollar business generator, with room for significant growth. That growth will depend significantly on how Trenton and municipal governments nurture it in the years to come. 

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## The Responsible Collective Negotiations Act and What it Means for Municipalities

On January 18, 2022, Governor Murphy signed into law the Responsible Collective Negotiations Act. (the Act). The Act amends and supplements the Employer-Employee Relations Act in several important respects. However, not all of the requirements of the Act are applicable to municipalities. These distinctions will be highlighted in this article.

### Provisions Applicable to Municipalities

The following provisions of the Act are applicable to municipalities.

#### Unions May Require Nonmembers to Pay for Arbitration Costs:

Unions have an obligation to fairly represent each employee in a negotiations unit, even if the employee is not a dues-paying union member. Historically, that obligation included paying the costs of representing a non-union member in an arbitration proceeding to enforce the employee's rights. Under the Act, unions can now require non-dues-paying employees to pay these costs. If non-dues-paying union members do not pay the cost of representation at an arbitration proceeding, then the union may agree not to provide representation.

#### New Rules for Revocation of Dues Authorization:

Previously, under the Workplace Democracy Enhancement Act, employees had a 10-day window after their employment anniversary date in which to revoke their dues authorizations. Under the Act, employees now have three options to revoke a dues-authorization:

1. If the employee authorized the deduction prior to the effective date of the WDEA, the employee may revoke it "in accordance with the law in effect at the time of the employee's initial authorization." In other words, for these employees we must look back to pre-WDEA law.
2. For employees who authorized the deduction after the WDEA became effective, they may file a notice with the employer at any time, and the revocation becomes effective

on the 30th day following the employee's anniversary date of employment.

3. As an alternative to (2), an employer and employee may agree that July 1 of each shall be the effective date for the revocation. The employee may still file the revocation notice at any time.

**Expedited Unfair Practices Charges:** A provision which will certainly affect municipalities is the expedited process in which unfair practice charges will now be handled. The Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC) will now have to render a decision on whether to issue a complaint within 60 days of a charge being filed. In addition, a decision on the complaint must be rendered within 120 days of the complaint being issued. This expedited process is in addition to the expedited process which already exist for municipalities for interest arbitration. Municipalities will need to be mindful of these dates.

#### Enforcement of Commission Orders in Superior Court,

**Law Division:** PERC, or any interested party, may apply to the Superior Court, Law Division to enforce an order of PERC in an unfair practice or scope of negotiations proceeding. While always applicable, this has been codified in the Act.

#### Other Applicable Provisions:

1. Employers must report information to unions about non-union employees.
2. Only unions and employers can invoke arbitration provisions in a CNA.
3. Permits the use of E-Signatures on authorization cards to certify a union as majority representative.

#### Provisions Not Applicable to Municipalities

There are other provisions which are not applicable to municipalities per the terms of the Act, but of which municipalities should still be aware.

**Establishment of a Permissive Category of Negotiations for State Employees:** The Act creates a new category of “permissive” subjects for most State employees (but, notably, not for employees of municipalities, counties, county colleges, and state colleges). This “permissive” category includes “all terms and conditions of employment that are not otherwise mandatorily negotiable and that intimately and directly affect employee work and welfare, unless otherwise preempted by State or federal statute, unless a negotiated agreement would prevent government from carrying out its statutory mission.”

Many subjects that were previously nonnegotiable may now be “permissively” negotiable, meaning State employers may choose to enter into collective negotiations agreements regarding permissive subjects. Importantly, public employers remain under no obligation to do so and may lawfully refuse to negotiate over permissive subjects. But if a State employer does enter into an agreement over a permissive subject, that agreement will now be enforceable. The Act explicitly says that agreements on permissive subjects are subject to binding Arbitration.

However, the Act does not completely abolish the “nonnegotiable” category. Employers cannot enter into agreements on subjects if doing so “would prevent government from carrying out its statutory mission.” At this stage, it is not entirely clear what will fall into the “permissively negotiable”

bucket versus what will remain “nonnegotiable.” It will be left to the PERC and state courts to delineate the boundary between nonnegotiable and permissively negotiable subjects.

**Prohibition on Imposing New Contract Terms by State Employers:** For State employees, the Act codifies the Supreme Court ruling in Atlantic County regarding the dynamic status quo. Thus, until the State and a union reach a new agreement on an expired contract, the terms the expired contract will remain in place.

**Confidentiality of Union Communications:** The Act makes communications between union members and union representatives regarding union and workplace matters confidential for certain purposes. These communications may no longer be subject to disclosure under the rules of administrative agencies, and nor can an arbitrator issue a subpoena requesting the communications. However, the communications may still be subject to disclosure pursuant to other statutes or New Jersey Court Rules.

**Conclusion**

In sum, the Act contains several provisions which represent significant changes in public employment law. Public employers must familiarize themselves with these changes to prepare for future collective negotiations and ensure compliance with the new Act. 📌

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# Labor Negotiations

Matthew U. Watkins, *Consultant, NJLM*

## Oops I Didn't Mean That! Unintended Consequences of Legislation

**H**ow many times have you worked to put together a program to solve problems that have unintended consequences? How many times have you seen well-intended legislation have consequences that were not expressed at the time nor realized when legislators passed the bill? More importantly the costs of a bill, well intended or not, can cost taxpayers an incredible amount of money that was never intended. These costs are borne by local taxpayers.

New Jersey local governments rely upon the New Jersey State League of Municipalities and other governmental associations such as the New Jersey Association of Counties, to keep us informed. However, all too often the weight of the League and our Associations cannot outdo the money that is spent by other organizations advocating for legislation that often adversely impacts our ability to administer local government. The power that we have is the power of numbers. There are 564 towns, 21 counties and a number of municipal and county utilities that pay for public employees and are responsible for managing those positions properly. Acting together, we can and should impact legislation through our Associations, the League, and our own one-on-one advocacy.

I take this time to point out several key pieces of legislation as they relate to labor management for local government. I am not critical of the intents of the legislation highlighted, but I am concerned about the unintended consequences of the bills. At times, we see legislation moving through the legislature and onto the Governor with little regard for the impact on the taxpayers in New Jersey. This is not new. Decades ago, many of us thought that with the institution of the “State Mandate, State Pay” legislation would provide some recourse to have the state pay for the consequential costs of legislative action. I believe, by any measure, this has failed.

### **Unintended Consequences of the Workplace Democracy Enhancement Act**

Many of us know and try to implement all the issues that were put in the legislation on the Act. What I believe to be an unintended consequence is the amount of work (and thereby costs) that the act places on administrators of the local government. There are two obligations. First when hiring an employee, local government must provide the union, regardless of representation or not, the employee's name, job title, worksite location, home address, work telephone number, home telephone number, cellular telephone number, date of hire, work email, and personal email.

Furthermore, this must be done within 10 days of the hiring. Additionally, every quarter the municipality must provide the unions with the information above for each of their unit employees. Many of the 564 towns do not have a personnel department, and therefore providing this information is an onerous and time-consuming effort and takes away from the work of administering the community.

### **Unintended Consequences of Equal Pay Act**

There is no question that the issues of pay equity throughout the United States, and in fact the world, needs to be addressed. The legacy of past generations needs to be corrected. Work is work, pay is pay, regardless of the gender of the individual performing the work.

However, the cost of ensuring that pay is equitable and the consequence of adjusting the pay for positions to ensure that they are equal, needs to be considered. Moreover, how to accomplish this can be challenging for even the most experienced mayors, elected officials and administrators.

According to Governor Murphy's announcement on the compliance of the Act, “The Act generally prohibits an employer from paying an employee who is a member of a protected class less than what it pays an employee who is not a member of that protected class for substantially similar work. These

employee protections are stronger than the federal Equal Pay Act, which covers only gender-based pay disparities and only requires equal pay for “equal” work, not “substantially similar” work.

New Jersey’s law provides protections based on race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, civil union status, domestic partnership status, affectional or sexual orientation, genetic information, pregnancy or breastfeeding, sex, gender identity or expression, disability or atypical hereditary cellular or blood trait, liability for service in the Armed Forces of the United States, nationality, and refusing to submit to a genetic test or make available the results of a genetic test.”

**A tricky task**

I don’t know about you but trying to sort out exactly how to accomplish this task is tricky. However, we all must try. Furthermore, the unintended consequence of the relations within your organization cannot be overlooked.

I point to the impact of the increasing one employee, or position, to a higher pay always generates controversy within the organization for those who do not get the increase. This domino effect is a perfect example of an unintended consequence of a well-intended legislation.

**Advocacy in action—the worst bill ever**

One of the most significant illustrations of a bill that would have had tremendous consequences, was the Responsible Collective Negotiations Act. The cost of the work to comply with the Act would have been in the millions of dollars (I estimated \$10 million). Moreover, due to the dynamic increase in arbitrability of the Act would have continued to cost local and County governments millions in taxpayer money each year.

Back in the summer, public advocacy groups such as the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, the New Jersey Conference of Mayors (NJCM), the New Jersey Municipal Management Association (NJMMA), the Government Finance Officers Association of New

Jersey (GFOA), the New Jersey Association of County Finance Officers (NJACFO), and the New Jersey Association of County Administrators (NJACA) and others demonstrated the ability to work together quickly to address the legislation.

Fortunately, after countless hours of work spearheaded by the League, we were able to at least remove local and county governments from the requirements of the Act. A significant part of our success was due to the impact of individuals calling their legislators to inform them of the problems of this bill.

**Good luck to administrators!**

If there is anything that you take away from this article, it is the need for vigilance and advocacy. Each one of us participating in our own way to amend legislation that may have consequences, intended or otherwise, is paramount. We are fortunate to have organizations

like the League, NJCA, NJMMA, GFOA and others to continually monitor legislation. But it is just as important for us to participate, especially when the alert goes out for assistance with legislation.

Every day, municipal administrators and elected officials work hard to hold down taxes. The consequences of legislation can work against that effort, placing new demands on our time and costs. Be vigilant and participate in the legislative process as best you can. We need all eyes watching for the unintended and costly consequences.

And, when you are totally lost or need assistance with these issues, the League Labor Advisory Service is here to help. Give us a call. 📞

@ To discuss about the NJLM Labor Advisory Service, email Matt@njcs.us



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# Legislative Update

Lori Buckelew, Deputy Executive Director and Director of Government Affairs;  
Paul A. Penna, Senior Legislative Analyst,  
Andrew LaFevre, Legislative Analyst;  
Frank Marshall Esq., Associate General Counsel



## S-85/A-457 Allowing alternate deputy registrars

**Status:** S-85 Introduced and Referred to Senate Community and Urban Affairs Committee; A-457 Introduced and Referred to the Assembly Community Development and Affairs Committee.

This bill would permit the local registrar of vital statistics of municipalities having a population in excess of 100,000 persons, 45 according to the most recent federal decennial census, to appoint up to five alternate deputy registrars.

The League supports this common-sense measure to provide additional staff to process vital statistics documents in the State's largest municipalities. – PAP



## S-377/A-2553 Municipal accounting of abandoned properties for State database

**Status:** S-377 introduced and Referred to Senate State and Local Government Committee; A-2553 introduced and referred to Assembly Housing Committee.

S-377 requires municipalities to maintain a registry of all abandoned properties and contact the owner of each abandoned property concerning the status of rehabilitation efforts prior to receiving municipal aid.

The bill defines municipal aid as Energy Tax Receipts, Consolidated Municipal Property Tax Relief, and Transitional Aid.

The registry must include the following information for each abandoned property: block and lot number; street address; owner(s) of the property; person/entity responsible for rehabilitating the property; and if any rehabilitation efforts have been completed on the property. This registry would have to be separate from any existing registry.

Annually a municipality would have to submit this registry to the Department of Community Affairs, who in turn must publish a statewide database of all abandoned properties. The statewide database must be searchable by municipality and the type of entity owning the property.

In addition, each quarter the municipality must deliver a notice to each abandoned property owner soliciting information regarding the status of any rehabilitation efforts. The property owner will be required to respond by documenting any rehabilitation efforts completed on the property within the past 12 months. If the property owner fails to respond to the notice

within 30 days of receipt the municipality may hold a special tax sale under the "Abandoned Properties Rehabilitation Act."

While the goal of this legislation is laudable, the League opposes this bill because of the mandatory nature and one size fits all approach to addressing a serious localized problem in addition to being needlessly punitive. – PAP



## S-291/A-688 Establishing Household Water Assistance Program

**Status:** S-291 has been introduced and referred to the Senate Community and Urban Affairs Committee. A-688 has been introduced and referred to the Assembly Housing Committee.

S-291/A-688 would require the DCA, in consultation with the BPU, to establish the "Household Water Assistance Program." The purpose of the program is to provide affordability assistance for water, sewer, and stormwater utility services, to eligible households throughout New Jersey. The legislation also creates the Household Water Assistance Advisory Group, which would be tasked with reviewing affordability of water services and designing programs to help with affordability issues. One member of the Advisory Group would be appointed by the Governor upon the recommendation of the League.

Throughout the COVID public health emergency households have struggled to pay water and sewer utility bill, leaving municipal utilities without anticipated revenues needed to continue normal operations. This bill would see that these households get assistance with paying their utility bills, providing the revenue needed by municipal utilities. – FM



## A-2024 Establishing campaigns for utilities payment assistance programs

**Status:** Introduced and referred to Assembly Commerce and Economic Development Committee

This legislation requires every electric, gas, sewer, and water public utility to establish a common-sense public awareness campaign that would inform residents of bill assistance programs that could help them pay for their utilities. The public awareness campaign must include, at a minimum, a list of bill payment assistance programs that may be eligible to its customers, information concerning the general application

process and who may qualify for assistance under each program, and contact information for the program. The printed educational materials and public service announcements must be, at a minimum, in English and Spanish and available at county offices, public libraries, senior citizen centers, community-based outreach organizations, and local electronic media. Often residents are not in New Jersey.

The League fully supports this legislation because it helps reduce cost for our residents, who may not be aware of programs that could help reduce their costs of living expense. –AL



**S-75/A-587**  
**Appropriating 9-1-1 System and Emergency Response Trust Fund money**

**Status:** S-75 Introduced and referred to Senate Law and Public Safety; A-587 introduced and referred to Assembly Law and Public Safety

This legislation permits funds from the 9-1-1 System and Emergency Response Trust Fund Account to be appropriated for the purposes of paying for any costs incurred by counties and municipalities for the provision and maintenance of 9-1-1 emergency services, including but not limited to, cost associated with emergency response training, operating expenses and capital expenses. The bill requires funds to be distributed on a prioritized basis first to county, regionalized, or large centralized

public safety answering points, followed by other local public safety answering points.

The League supports this legislation because it seeks to correct the allocation of funds to be used to for their intended purpose of maintaining New Jersey’s Emergency Response Services. – AL



**A-995/S-271**  
**Reimbursing law enforcement training costs**

**Status:** A-995 introduced and referred to Assembly Law and Public Safety Committee; S-271 introduced and referred to Senate Law and Public Safety Committee

This legislation would expand the reciprocity arrangement between county, municipal law enforcement agencies, institutions of higher education, State law enforcement agencies, and the New Jersey Transit Corporation for the reimbursement of the hiring and training costs incurred when one of those organizations hires a law enforcement officer who resigned from one of the other organizations within the first three years of employment or if the officer was appointed within 120 days of the date of resignation.

The League supports this legislation because it eases the financial responsibility of hiring and training of police officers for municipalities, while also helping to support a higher retention rate amongst New Jersey’s local police. – AL

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## Local Governing



### Befriending the Butterflies

**M**ayor Robert Moffatt recently recommitted the Borough of Cape May Point to supporting the National Wildlife Federation Mayors' Monarch Pledge.

"Through this pledge, we once again promise to, 'create habitat for the monarch butterfly and pollinators, and to educate residents on how they can make a difference at home and in their community,'" Mayor Moffatt noted.

The borough joins Franklin Township (Somerset), as New Jersey municipalities who are 2022 pledge participants at press time. The two municipalities along with Highbridge, Leonia, Gloucester, Allentown, Holmdel, Monroe Township (Gloucester) Bernardsville, Toms River, Scotch Plains, and Franklin Lakes were 2021 participants.

Mayors and other heads of local government are taking action to help save the monarch butterfly, an iconic species whose eastern populations have declined by 90% and western populations by 99% in recent years. Through the National Wildlife Federation's Mayors' Monarch Pledge, U.S. cities, municipalities, and other communities are committing to create habitat for the monarch butterfly and pollinators, and to educate residents about how they can make a difference at home and in their community.

The support of communities is critical, particularly those who, like Cape May Point Borough and other New Jersey communities, are on the monarch's migration pathway.

There is no fee to participate, but each year municipalities must commit to at least three Action Items, such as issuing a proclamation and revising maintenance and mowing programs to protect milkweed and native nectar plants, and report on them at the end of the year. In addition, at least one action must be taken from the "Program & Demonstration Gardens" section.

The Mayors Monarch Pledge is a campaign from The National Wildlife Federation that is open through March 31. For more information, visit [www.nwf.org/MayorsMonarchPledge](http://www.nwf.org/MayorsMonarchPledge)

Also, Monarch Conservation in America's Cities a solutions guide for municipal leaders can be downloaded from [https://www.njlm.org/DocumentCenter/View/9864/Monarch Conservation](https://www.njlm.org/DocumentCenter/View/9864/Monarch%20Conservation). 

## NJLM Supporters

The New Jersey State League of Municipalities would like to thank its supporters, who value their partnership with the 565 municipalities of New Jersey. For information about the League's sponsorship program, please contact Michael F. Cerra at 609-695-3481, Ext. 112, or [mcerra@njlm.org](mailto:mcerra@njlm.org).



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NJ LOCAL GOVERNMENT WEEK EVENT



**Business Roundtable  
Discussion with Council  
& Town Officials**

Answering Questions Facing Local Businesses  
and Our Community

**APRIL 20, 2021 | 8:30 - 10 A.M.  
STAGEHOUSE TAVERN**

Join Mayor Losardo, members of the Town Council, as well as directors  
from the Department of Public Works, Inspections, Public Safety,  
Downtown Redevelopment and the Manager's Office for a discussion  
on Township issues

RSVP to Tom Strowe at [tstrowe@scotchplainnj.com](mailto:tstrowe@scotchplainnj.com)



# CELEBRATE NJ LOCAL GOVERNMENT WEEK



## NJLM invites you to join municipalities around the Garden State April 3-9, to engage citizens while celebrating the work of local government.

**SHOWCASE** the hard work of local governments and value residents receive by highlighting programs and services

**COORDINATE** community service and volunteering events with local organizations to cross-promote NJ Local Government Week.

**SHOW-OFF** your citizens' view of the community with photography showcases and contests that can serve as a feeder program for your entries to the League's Show Off Your Municipality photo contest!

Publicity tips and strategies as well as links to a sample press release and resolution and a downloadable NJ Local Government Week logo are available at [www.njlm.org/njlocalgovt](http://www.njlm.org/njlocalgovt).

#njlocalgovt



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