



NJLM President Mayor
Paul Tomasko, Alpine

President's Note:

For the past few years, local governments have been struggling with the rising costs of healthcare for their employees. This year, the challenge is at an all-time high as the State Healthcare Benefits Program (SHBP) faces a death spiral and more double-digit increases passed to municipalities and their employees.

As possible solutions work their way through the legislature, the League is working on behalf of communities around the state. Our legislative team attends SHBP and Plan Design Committee (PDC) meetings, reporting on them regularly in our [Pension & Health Benefits news flashes](https://njlm.org/CivicAlerts.aspx?CID=17) [<https://njlm.org/CivicAlerts.aspx?CID=17>].

We've also formed a Healthcare Benefits Committee, chaired by Hamilton (Mercer) Mayor and NJLM 2nd Vice President Jeff Martin. This problem does not lend itself to quick solutions, but we will work together to ensure local governments are represented in the decision-making process that protects municipalities and those who tirelessly serve them.

In other news, through the end of the month, Early Bird pricing is available to secure your place at the must-attend local government event of the year. I'm looking forward to seeing you all there in the expanded Exhibit Hall, in the classrooms, and at League Events throughout the Conference in Atlantic City.

Please consider sending the League a proposed resolution for consideration at the Conference Resolution Committee meeting held during the Annual Conference. These resolutions help determine the legislative priorities that will guide the League and help your community.

Finally, I would like to thank former Clayton Mayor and League Executive Board Member Tom Bianco, who has left local government after he was nominated to fill a vacancy for former Gloucester County Commissioner Denice DiCarlo. We thank him for his service and wish him well in his new endeavors.

Action List: August

1. Familiarize yourself with the history and latest updates on the State Health Benefits Commission. Visit the League's [Pension & Health Benefits webpage](#) and subscribe to the [Pension & Health Benefits News Flash](#) for up-to-the minute developments.



2. [Enter your slogan](#) for the New Jersey Clean Communities Council's (NJCCC) "Be a Litter Rock Star" Slogan Contest. The winning entries that highlight communities' dedication to keeping streets, waterways and public spaces litter-free will be unveiled on October 8 during NJCCC's 20th-anniversary Awards and Expo in Somerset. Create a compelling phrase that embodies your municipality's commitment to clean streets and environmental stewardship. The deadline is August 21. The winning slogan will be announced at NJCCC's Awards Ceremony on October 8. [Visit the NJCCC online](#) for more information about the contest.
3. Send in Halls of Fame nomination forms. Marking its 40th anniversary, the Mayors' Hall of Fame is seeking [nominations of candidates for the 2025 Mayors' Hall of Fame](#). These nominees must be currently serving as mayor and have at least 10 years of mayoral service to be inducted at the Silver level, at least 20 years of mayoral service to be inducted at the Gold level, and at least 30 years to be inducted at the Platinum level. The [Elected Officials' Hall of Fame](#) is also accepting nominations for this year's inductees. Local municipal governing body members, active and retired, who have served for 20 or more years as a governing body member are eligible for inclusion.
4. [Complete a topic consideration as a Conference Resolution](#) if you have a topic to improve local government and address an issue impacting local governance. Or, if you already have a resolution drafted, please submit [your resolution for consideration](#). The resolution will be reviewed by League staff and presented at the Resolutions Committee meeting during the Annual League Conference. Visit the [Conference Resolutions webpage](#) for more details on the process and more information.



Morris County Launches 250th Website

The Morris County Tourism Bureau, Morris County 250th Anniversary Steering Committee, and Morris County Board of County Commissioners launched [Morris County's 250th Celebration website](https://morriscounty250.morristourism.org) [https://morriscounty250.morristourism.org]. The platform will serve as the central hub for all events, updates, educational resources, and community engagement opportunities tied to Morris County's commemoration of America's 250th birthday.

The 250th anniversary, or "Semiquincentennial," marks 250 years since the signing of the Declaration of Independence. More Revolutionary War battles and encampments occurred in New Jersey than any other colony -- with Morris County hosting many key figures from the era and preserving numerous historic sites that will be the focus of public events in 2025 and 2026.

Morris County's 250th website will keep residents, educators, and visitors informed with regularly updated details on upcoming events, volunteer and sponsorship opportunities, historical content, and ways to participate and donate.

Conference Updates



- [Register now for the 2025 Annual Conference](#). Early Bird pricing is \$60 for government or nonprofit and \$120 for non-government registrants, ending August 31.
- [Book your housing for the Annual Conference](#). Book a hotel room through the League's official room blocks to ensure the best Conference experience. The League's room blocks provide the best rates and shuttle bus service to the AC Convention Center. Book early for your preferred hotel—room blocks will sell out!
- Plan your visit to the Exhibit Hall. This year the Exhibit Hall will be 4 aisles larger in 2025 to create an even more informative and inspiring experience for attendees.

Plan now to maximize your networking opportunities by reviewing the [Exhibit Hall interactive map](#).

League Learning

The League will hold an OPRA Update for All Municipal Officials webinar on August 27. Frank Caruso, Executive Director of the Government Records Council will provide attendees with a brief and basic understanding of OPRA and how the changes implemented under P.L. 2024, c.16 are going.

In addition to the presentation, we will have an “Ask OPRA” segment. Please submit your OPRA-related questions before the seminar to dholland@njlm.org [<mailto:dholland@njlm.org>] using the subject line “Ask OPRA.”

Registration is \$45 for League members [<https://njlm.regfox.com/opra-webinar>].

Grants

FY26 State Budget Grant Roadmap

New Jersey’s FY2026 state budget includes multiple grant opportunities for municipalities. These grants span numerous state departments and programs, each with its own timeline and application requirements.

For a full rundown, please visit the [Town Crier blog](#) [<https://njslom.org/Blog.aspx?IID=281#item>], the League’s legislative blog.

Magazine Moment

Watch for Magazine Renewal Emails This Month

Our new subscription system is now rolling out to ensure we have a smooth transition. Those who have an email address on file will be emailed their subscription renewals. Ask your staff to check their inboxes for renewal notifications. The new online system will make it easier for subscribers to update and manage their subscriptions online throughout the year. If your subscription is part of a group subscription, renewals will be sent to the person responsible for managing your group.

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Are you and your team [subscribing to NJ Municipalities](#) [<https://www.njlm.org/712/Subscribe>]? Inspire your local government work by reading and building a library of the League’s magazine in print or online. [View a sample of the magazine](#). [<https://www.njlm.org/714/Magazine-Sample-Bookshelf>]

Share Your Stories: Fall Issue Articles Sought

We invite Mayors all over New Jersey and their teams to send in articles on success stories, challenges, and innovations. Currently, we are seeking stories, news briefs, op-eds, and columns for the fall issues. The due dates are August 25 for the October issue, September 15 for the November issue, and October 15 for the December issue. Have a potential story you’d like to discuss? [Email Amy Spiezio](mailto:aspiezio@njlm.org) [<mailto:aspiezio@njlm.org>] today.

Support the League's Magazine

If your municipality has recently used a vendor and you feel that their services would benefit other municipalities, [email Tasneem Kapadia \[mailto:tkapadia@njlm.org\]](mailto:tkapadia@njlm.org), Advertising Manager, with their details so she can send them information about the League's magazine. Advertising in *NJ Municipalities* magazine promotes their services and could benefit other towns.

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