

MLGMA

<http://www.mlgma.org>

MICHIGAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

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Michigan Municipal League

The Manager

The official newsletter of the Michigan Local Government Management Association

Affiliated with the Michigan Municipal League

December 2002

Strategies for Tough Times

By D. Wayne O'Neal, Eastpointe City Manager; Chair, 2003 Winter Institute Planning Committee

The Winter Institute Planning Committee has worked hard to make the 2003 Institute at the Ypsilanti Marriott at Eagle Crest interesting and informative.

As the theme denotes, we will look at strategies to help managers deal with the tough economic times we are all facing. We have a mix of sessions that we hope will be thought provoking as well as entertaining.

The new ICMA Executive Director, Robert O'Neill, will address the

membership at the Annual Business luncheon. We will also hear from Gerard Miller, Chief Executive Officer of the ICMA-RC.

In addition to our regular basketball and dinner networking opportunities, this year there will be a field trip to Cabela's on Wednesday night.— sponsored by Plante & Moran and the Robert W. Baird Co. The funds raised by the trip will go to the association.

Registration materials were mailed in late November. We look forward to seeing all of you in January!

Michigan Shoots for 2011 ICMA Conference

by Dan Gilmartin, MML Associate Director; MLGMA Secretary/Treasurer

At its November 13 meeting, the MLGMA Board of Directors unanimously voted to reserve \$65,000 of its current fund balance as the state's commitment toward bringing the 2011 ICMA Conference to Grand Rapids/Kent County.

The MLGMA is in a fortunate position to be able to reserve these funds, and the Board hopes this action serves as adequate notice of Michigan's desire and

commitment to bring the conference to our great state.

The MLGMA, the City of Grand Rapids, Kent County and the Grand Rapids/Kent County Convention and Visitors Bureau are partnering in the effort.

Kent County Administrator **Daryl Delabbio** and Grand Rapids City Manager **Kurt Kimball** approached the Board about the possibility of having the MLGMA support Grand Rapids/Kent County in their bid to host the Conference.

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President's Message

by Warren D. Renando, Jackson City Manager

This is my last opportunity as the President of the MLGMA to address the membership through this newsletter. I want to take this opportunity to thank you for the faith you have shown in me by voting me into this position.

I expected that the president would have to spend his time working on the winter and summer conferences, dealing with the budget, the ethics violations, and all the other day-to-day activity of this organization. I also knew that I would have to work with Pete Stalker and the members of the credentialing committee to implement that program. I am very proud to say that Michigan is one of the leaders in the nation in the number of its members who have gone through the credentialing process. What I didn't expect were the surprises that changed the whole priority list for the organization.

The surprises this year occurred when we were attending the summer workshop. The first was to discover that the governor had just vetoed a revenue-sharing plan which members of this organization and of the Michigan Municipal League had worked

very hard to put together.

This veto required most of our membership to go back and create scenarios about what they were going to do if we had to implement the drastic revenue cuts. We all worked hard to get an override of the governor's veto and succeeded.

At that same summer conference, we were informed that the mayor of Grand Rapids—the state's largest and one of its oldest cities with the council/manager form of government—had proposed a charter amendment which would have greatly enhanced the power of the mayor and diminished the role of the manager. To the credit of this Board and this organization, we immediately authorized the expenditure of up to \$20,000 to support community groups in Grand Rapids which were opposed to the mayor's plan.

We were up against a very popular mayor who was willing to expend a great deal of money to pass this charter amendment. A political consultant was hired to develop our political strategy and to work with members of the citizens' group.

The mayor of Ionia was recruited to debate Mayor Logie on the benefits of the manager form. A political campaign was developed that has done a masterful job. As a result, groups as diverse as labor unions, the chamber of commerce, former mayors, and former managers all came out in opposition to the charter change.

If we defeat this charter amendment or not, I'm proud of the MLGMA's stand. The

MLGMA stood up to this challenge and gave it their very best shot. We did not say, "Oh, it's only a slight modification," as happened in Cincinnati. We defended the form we believe in, and of that, I am very proud regardless of the result.*

Recently, I participated in a panel in Gaylord representing the MLGMA. Other participants included Steven Powers, Marquette County Administrator, and Richard Watkins, Delta Township Manager. About 50 citizens listened to a discussion on the benefits of a full-time county administrator.

I believe there is widespread interest in the role of professional management and that we need to continue the development of tools that will help people understand the role of professional management in local government. To this end, the national ICMA has given us \$2,500 toward further development of these publications. By the time of our winter conference, I hope to have completed a publication which we can give out to citizen groups interested in adopting or defending the form.

Finally, in my travels throughout the state of Michigan on your behalf, I was once again struck by the enormous benefit our membership gives to their communities. Selfless hard work is a norm in our profession. Many times this work goes unnoticed, unrecognized and unappreciated. I can think of no better profession and want to thank you for the year you have given me.

DEADLINE

MLGMA members are encouraged to submit articles for publication in *The Manager*. Please submit all copy for the March 2003 issue to the editor, Sue Lee, [leeford598@aol.com] by Monday, February 10, 2003.

*NOTE: The voters in Grand Rapids defeated the Charter Amendment on November 5.

Community Education Committee Makes Great Progress in 2002

by Mike Young, Rockford City Manager;
Chair, Community Education Committee

The Community Education Committee was formed in 1997 by the MCMA Board of Directors to promote the education of local government and the Council-Manager Plan. Since that time I have had the privilege to serve as Chair of this important Committee and to be part of several exciting accomplishments.

Since our formation, the year 2002 has been by far our most productive year. The following information will highlight several of our accomplishments during the past year and set the stage for great things to come.

One of the main goals of the Community Education Committee was to develop a K-12 curriculum on local government. This seemed like a daunting task at first, but is now becoming a reality.

Our Committee has formed a partnership with the Michigan Municipal League, Centennial Youth Committee and began our effort by assessing what was currently being taught on local government throughout our K-12 systems. It became immediately evident that very little was being taught on local government and what was being taught was riddled with errors.

The Committee's first step toward writing a curriculum was to develop an outline including all of the important topics/concepts, which should be part of a complete K-12 curriculum. The Committee then expanded its partnership to include the Michigan Civics Institute, which was recently formed by the State Representative Doug Hart.

The Michigan Civics Institute's goal was to initiate the development of a curriculum on state government, which was completed last summer. Kent County Assistant Administrator and MML Centennial Youth Committee Chair Al Vandenberg expanded our outline in comprehensive narrative form to serve as the foundation for the curriculum.

Now the challenge of funding becomes critical to our effort. The overall cost of transforming the white paper into an actual curriculum and piloting this curriculum was determined to be \$77,000. A fundraising effort was initiated, and I am proud to say that the MLGMA was the first organization to commit to the project in the amount of \$5,000. Other contributors include the Michigan Municipal League, Michigan Townships Association, Grand Valley Metropolitan Council, Southeast Council of Governments, ICMA, Michcon and a \$7,000 challenge grant from the Fry Foundation. Funds raised to date now total just over \$30,000, which allowed us to take the first step in this important process.

On July 9, 2002 Committee members had the opportunity to participate in a Writers' Day in Lansing where presentations were made to 15 curriculum writers throughout the course of the day. The curriculum writers are now taking the information gathered during this Writer's Day and actually writing the curriculum.

In the coming months, the curriculum will be refined and, provided we can raise the additional monies needed, I would expect that the pilot program will begin this Fall. My special thanks to everyone who has participated in this effort to date, and especially

the MLGMA Board for being the first to come to the table with funding.

It also should be noted that we would not be where we are today without the assistance of Mr. Al Vandenberg. Thanks Al!

Brommage Fellowship

Last year was the first year that the Community Education Committee assumed responsibility for the Brommage Fellowship. In past years, the fellowship served as an opportunity to develop a research paper on various topics of importance to our Association.

The Fellowship now represents a traditional internship where a student from the University of Michigan's Ford School of Public Policy is placed in a member community for a term to learn firsthand the workings of local government. This year's fellow is Ms. Elizabeth Jablonski, who has been placed at Delta Township.

The fellowship is funded by a \$3,000 contribution each from the MLGMA Board and the Ford School of Public Policy.

I was surprised to see that very few communities were interested in participating in this project; we would like to see that change in the future. If our association is to remain one of the strongest in the nation, it will be our responsibility to help develop the managers of the future through internship opportunities.

Any communities interested in securing an intern outside of the Brommage Fellowship Project, please contact me. There are a number of interns looking for opportunities.

ICMA Tool Kit

As part of the ICMA's strategic planning process, the association

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has developed a “tool kit” to increase public awareness on the Council-Manager form of government and professional manager’s in general. This Tool Kit is titled, “Building Communities: It Is No Small Chore” and is available free of charge to all ICMA members.

The first phase in this process is a public awareness campaign, with the second being a more focused campaign at the high school and university level on the benefits of becoming a professional local government manager.

I would encourage all ICMA members to receive your free copy of this tool kit. Interested members should contact Ms. Michelle Frisbee, Director of Public Awareness for ICMA, at 212-962-3658 or by email at mfrisbee@ICMA.org.

This effort is being directed through ICMA’s public awareness campaign which I serve as a member.

As you can see, the Committee has been extremely busy and has been able to accomplish many exciting projects. If you want additional information on the Community Education Committee, please do not hesitate to contact me at 616-866-1537 or myoung@rockford.mi.us.

Membership Support Services Committee: Progress Report

by Paul Brake, Meridian Township Manager; Chair, Membership Support Services Committee

The Membership Services Committee is making progress in its second term as the combined Assistants and Diversity Committees.

Over two years ago, the Michigan Local Government Management Association empowered this

committee to support the development and longevity of new and existing members and members representing the changing demographics of our communities and workforce. The effectiveness of this committee will be reviewed, once again, upon its expiration in December 2003.

Upon the inaugural meeting of this group, the committee has officially renewed its commitment to three main objectives:

1. Identify and welcome new members and to personally invite their participation in MLGMA conferences and activities.
2. Keep the membership apprized on contemporary diversity issues.
3. Publicized issues of diversity in MLGMA and MML publications.

The committee is still hashing out some innovative and creative ideas to assist first-time conference attendees (particularly at the Winter Institute).

This includes continuation of “Membership Ambassadors,” greeters at the conference registration desk and activities to make certain that new attendees are comfortable and matched with senior members. The committee is committed to increasing the diversity of the attendance at MLGMA functions and to provide an atmosphere of acceptance to current and new attendees. Look for more details in the future.

Just as we are concentrating on those already in the profession, the committee has launched an effort to encourage those potentially interested college students to consider the local government management profession. In particular, special emphasis will be given to encourage women and

minorities to enter the field. Committee members Teri Arbenowske, Shannon Stumbo, Amy McEwan, Shane Reeside and Stan Pasioka have been busy contacting college professors, across the state, in public administration programs.

As part of this effort, the committee is formulating a brochure and information packet about the Michigan Local Government Managers Association. These informational materials will be distributed to professors and the students at colleges and universities across Michigan.

This is coordinated with the assistance of ICMA staffers and is already hailed as a first of its kind. A special thanks goes to Teri Arbenowske and Stan Pasioka for undertaking this component of the project.

We are pleased to report that the group has successfully continued recruiting and authoring a series of article for the *Michigan Municipal Review*. Dana Foster’s article in the July issue encourages managers to bring their assistant manager to conferences and getting those members involved. Also, the article takes a candid look at the demographics of the managers in the profession and what needs to be done.

An article on the Multicultural/Multiracial Community Council in Farmington Hills was featured in the September issue. This article showcased an innovative effort to provide this community with opportunities to learn about and experience different cultures. We are very proud of these articles and look forward to continuing the dialog in upcoming series of other related diversity topics.

The committee is pleased with the work we have been able to accomplish thus far and look forward to the exciting opportunities that lay ahead. What is done so far is a "work in progress" and we are confident that the results produced will be worthy of reporting at the annual Winter Institute early next year.

Please feel free to pass along your comments and suggestions to any of our members or you can contact me via e-mail at brake@meridian.mi.us.

Nominating Committee Activity

by Daryl J. Delabbio, Kent County Administrator; Chair, Nominating Committee

The MLGMA Nominating Committee's charge is found in Article VI of the MLGMA Constitution, which states in part: "When considering the selection of a slate of proposed officers and directors, the Nominating Committee should place the candidate's desire to serve and dedication to the association above all other considerations. After establishing this as a primary concern, the nominating committee should ensure that diverse opinions and concerns of the organization are well represented. Several additional factors should be considered when making nominations. Included among these considerations should be representation of all geographic areas, type of local governmental unit, and the size of communities represented. In addition, considerations should be given to women, minorities and assistants."

The Nominating Committee has traditionally met immediately prior to the Winter Institute to

present a list of candidates to the membership for consideration at the annual business meeting. The MLGMA Constitution provides that if a vacancy occurs, the Board of Directors can appoint a member to serve the unexpired term of the member resigning from the Board. In 2001, there were several vacancies that had to be filled and, as a result, I asked the Nominating Committee to meet and make recommendations to the Board. Then-Nominating Committee Chair Doug Thomas convened a meeting of the committee at the Summer Workshop in Cadillac, and two recommendations were made to the Board to fill the Board vacancies.

The consensus of the Nominating Committee at that meeting (as well as the subsequent meeting held in conjunction with the Winter Institute this past January) was to have the Nominating Committee meet twice during the year: during the Summer Workshop and Winter Institute.

This past July, the Nominating Committee met on Mackinac Island as part of the Summer Workshop. Originally, the intent was to discuss narrowing down a list of candidates for the Board of Directors and President Elect for

further discussion next January in Ypsilanti. However, with the resignation of Michael Uskiewicz (former City Manager of Escanaba) from the Board, President Renando asked that I convene a meeting of the Nominating Committee to submit a name to the Board to fill the vacancy.

The Nominating Committee met and recommended that the Board of Directors appoint Jerry Peterson, City Manager of Marquette, to fill the unexpired term of Mr. Uskiewicz, which ends in 2004. At its meeting on July 24, the Board unanimously accepted the recommendation.

The Nominating Committee will be meeting immediately prior to the Winter Institute in Ypsilanti next January. Members of the Committee include Vice-Chair **Kathie Grinzinger** (Mt. Pleasant), **Dennis Bow** (Flushing), **Richard Lewis** (Traverse City), **Tom Markus** (Birmingham), **Doug Thomas** (Alma), **Bryan Mazade** (Muskegon), **Spencer Nebel** (Sault Ste. Marie), and **Bill Nelson** (Dowagiac). If you have an interest in serving on the Board, please feel free to contact any one of us.

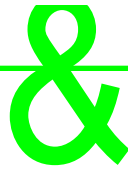
Michigan Shoots for 2011 ICMA Conference, *continued from page 1*

Daryl and Kurt have been working closely with the Grand Rapids/Kent County Convention & Visitors Bureau to develop a formal proposal to ICMA, which was submitted before the December 2, 2002, deadline. The executive directors of the MML (George Goodman), Michigan Townships Association (Larry Merrill), and the Michigan Association of

Counties (Tim McGuire) submitted letters of support to host the conference in Michigan.

Michigan joined Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and St. Louis and Kansas City, Missouri, in submitting proposals. The ICMA will narrow the field from four to two, with a final determination expected in September 2003.

Back page news



Calendar

Regional Managers Groups

BORDER BANDITS

Hillsdale/Branch/Calhoun Counties. *Contact:* Maurice Evans, CM, Marshall.

GENESEE COUNTY

Genesee County—meetings held first Thursday of the month. *Contact:* Michael Senyko, CM, Fenton.

LAKE AREA

Macomb County, parts of St. Clair County and the Grosse Pointe area—lunch meetings held 3rd Thursday, every other month. *Contact:* Brian Vick, AA, Grosse Pointe.

MIDDLE OF THE MITTEN

Lansing metro area—meetings held 1st Thursday of the month. *Contact:* Theodore J. Staton, CM, East Lansing.

MID-MICHIGAN CITY/COUNTY

Upper Central Lower Peninsula. *Contact:* Ken Hibl, CM, Clare.

NORTHERN MICHIGAN L.P.

Meetings held 4th Thursday of the month. *Contact:* George Korthauer, CM, Petoskey.

OAKLAND COUNTY

Meetings held 1st Wednesday of the month, excluding July and August. *Contact:* William Ross, CM, Auburn Hills.

SAGINAW COUNTY

Saginaw County—meetings held last Friday of the month. *Contact:* Ron Lee, Saginaw Township Manager.

SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN

Wayne/Washtenaw/Lenawee/Monroe Counties—meetings held 3rd Wednesday of the month. *Contact:* George Brown, CM, Adrian.

SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN

Berrien/Kalamazoo/St. Joseph/Cass/Van Buren Counties—meetings held 3rd Wednesday of the month. *Contact:* Frank Walsh, CM, St. Joseph.

THUMB NUTS

Thumb area—meetings held three times each year. *Contact:* Charlie Graham, CM, Frankenmuth.

U.P.

Meetings held twice each year. *Contact:* Spencer Nebel, CM, Sault Ste. Marie.

WEST MICHIGAN

Kent/Muskegon/Ottawa Counties; Ludington/Portland areas—lunch meetings held in Grand Rapids, 3rd Wednesday of each month, except July and August. *Contact:* Mark C. Meyers, ACA, Norton Shores.

Calendar

2003

January

28- MLGMA Winter Institute
31 Ypsilanti

March

26 MML Legislative Conference
Lansing

July

22- MLGMA Summer Workshop
25 Crystal Mountain

September

21- ICMA National Conference
24 Charlotte, NC

*Happy
Holidays!*

*Wishing you
a joyous
holiday season,
and a happy,
prosperous
New Year!*

MLGMA Scholarship Makes Training Possible

by Dale Kerbyson, Marlette City Manager

I recently took advantage of the MLGMA Scholarship program to attend the Disney Institute's class, the Disney Approach to Quality Service. I would not have been able to attend if not for the scholarship.

This class deals with community image. The Disney approach is simple: Exceed expectations and pay attention to detail.

Disney spends the time, effort and money to dissect every aspect of their customer interaction. They shared the process, which has universal applications, with attendees from many countries representing a variety of businesses.

The exercises required each of us to draw from our own business, culminating in a list of items to change in our customer interactions. I proposed a series of seven changes for the City when I returned—and this is before applying the Disney approach to any specific area of our municipal customer interaction!

I strongly recommend the Institute, and suggest that you review some of the reports other managers have filed with the MLGMA after attending. Your organization will benefit from the experience.

If you would like a copy of my report to the MLGMA, I would be happy to email it to you. Contact me at dalemarlette@yahoo.com