



MLGMA

<http://www.mlgma.org>

**Michigan
Local Government
Management Association**

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February 2011

President's Final Message

Alan G. Vanderberg, Administrator, Ottawa County

Dear Colleagues,

The past year has flown by and will be remembered as a challenging and fulfilling year in my life. The Board of Directors took on a number of new initiatives this year, completed some ongoing initiatives, dealt with some tough ethics situations and most recently, a challenge to the Council – Manager Plan in Watervliet which the Board will need to address in 2011.

I'll only cover a few 2010 highlights here as there is not enough space in this message to cover all of the good work that MLGMA is doing. The Board joined many other states in negotiating and signing a first-ever Affiliation Agreement with ICMA and also reviewed the ten-year old agreement with the MML. The Board created the MLGMA Leadership Legacy Program in the hopes that this will create a vital link between our words and actions in the future as we attempt to keep the Council – Manager Plan viable and vibrant into the future. The Board took an affirmative stance on the question of whether to hold a Constitutional Convention in Michigan yet this proposal took a sound drubbing at the polls.

Probably the most difficult part of the year was spent dealing with an abnormally large number of complicated ethics cases, several of them in conjunction with ICMA. While the actions of a few cast a shadow on our fine profession, wrestling with these situations reinforced how special and honorable the profession of local government management really is. The vast majority of professional managers live and breathe the ICMA Ethics Code day in and day out and make decisions that are sometimes more difficult because managers are not cutting corners or taking what sometimes seems to be the easy way out. The ICMA Ethics Code is ultimately what separates us from everyone else.

MLGMA represents major opportunities for continued professional growth and we were able to enhance some of those opportunities in 2010. The Board added the Saginaw Valley State University Certified Public Manager Program was added to the list of approved professional scholarship programs early last year and a number of managers are taking advantage of that opportunity. Our traditional professional development programs such as Harvard, Virginia, and Disney did not receive many applications this year so we changed course in the middle of the year to provide incentives to attract new ICMA Conference attendees. We had an excellent summer conference up at Crystal Mountain which was well attended. Next week the Winter Institute promises to be a significant professional development and networking experience as we take the conference to Detroit for the first time in our history. Once again the economy is taking a toll. Four of our long time managers from West Michigan have told me within the past week that they will not be able to attend, three because the conference was cut from their budget. This will be a challenge as we move into a future that still looks bleak economically for local government finance, at least for the foreseeable future. We do have another really good professional development coming up in April. The ICMA Midwest Regional Conference is happening in Novi on March 31 and April 1. This is a one-night away, reasonably priced professional development that packs a couple of major seminars into a couple of days.

The Advocacy Committee completed the Council-Manager Plan promotional video that has been in development since 2009. The video involved many elected and appointed municipal officials from across the state and will be a major tool in our toolbox as we seek to advocate for professional management and educate the public on what it is that we do.

(President's Message continued)

Another real positive of the past year was to become more aware of and interact some with the activities of the NextGen group. When I consider how bright, talented and passionate these individuals are for the local government management profession, I am optimistic that our profession will prosper in Michigan in the future.

Though the economic outlook remains grim, one silver lining is that we now have a new state executive, Governor Rick Snyder, who appears to think a lot like we do. I had the opportunity to meet Gov. Snyder at the MML Board Meeting and ask him a question. Establishing and following best practices and outcome based performance measurements are very important to Governor Snyder and might provide a great niche for the MLGMA to be of assistance in shaping the Michigan of tomorrow. The governor has called for local units of government to provide best practices for service delivery to him and the MML will be collecting those on behalf of cities and the Michigan Association of Counties on behalf of counties. Let's all take the time over the next month to document our best practices, outcome based performance measurement systems and examples of inter-governmental cooperation to the governor so we can enhance the role of MLGMA in being a vital part of the solution.

I thank Ted Staton for his assistance this year and also look forward to the great leadership that Steve Brock will provide next year. Also, thanks to you for the opportunity to serve as your president for the past year. I look forward to continuing to serve along side each of you as we work to better our communities, our profession and ourselves.

Best Regards,
Al Vanderberg

Please E-mail
Articles of Interest
for the
Manager to
Curtis Holt at
holtc@wyoming
mi.gov

The Council-Manager Form of Government—YouTube Video

By Al Vanderberg, Ottawa County

After almost two years in production, "The Council-Manager Form of Local Government" video is now available for viewing on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kbZlrXW2Bjg> and is coming soon to the MLGMA web site.

In 2009, the MLGMA Board charged the Advocacy Committee with the task of producing a video that could be taken to Michigan communities and provide "man on the street" testimonials of the Plan by city managers, elected officials, and educators. The Committee retained the services of Kirk Westphal, of Westphal Associates LLC in Ann Arbor to produce the video.

Much of the existing material describing the Plan focuses largely on the professional manager. The Committee wanted to balance that perspective with more involvement by the elected officials. This would help to negate any perception that advocacy of the Plan by professional managers is self-serving.

The Committee was very pleased with the overwhelming cooperation and assistance of those who were interviewed. Many of the elected officials were interviewed during the 2009 MML Annual Convention. Others were interviewed at the 2010 MLGMA Winter Institute in Grand Rapids. The Advocacy Committee would like to acknowledge the following video participants who gave their time and valuable expertise:

Elected Officials:

Robin Beltramini, Troy
Myron Frasier, Southfield
Karen Majewski, Hamtramck
Al McGeehan, Holland
Marilyn Stephan, Berkley
Dan Terbrack, Berkley

Managers:

Robert Bruner, Birmingham
Darnell Earley, Saginaw
Kurt Kimball, Grand Rapids (retired)
Ted Stanton, East Lansing
Victor Lauria, Novi

Educators:

Jered Carr, Wayne State University
Joe Ohren, Eastern Michigan University

(The Council– Manager Form of Government continued)

This project would not have been possible without the dedication of the members of the 2009 and 2010 Advocacy Committee members. I would like to acknowledge the following members of the Advocacy Committee:

2009 Committee

Jane Bais-DiSessa, Chair, City of Berkley
 Jack Duso, Vice-Chair, City of Midland
 Alex Allie, City of Huntington Woods
 Joe Fivas, City of Owosso
 Dave Harvey, City of Garden City
 Kathie Grinzinger, City of Mt. Pleasant
 Phillip Moore, Board Liaison, City of Alma
 Tim Wolff, Village of Lake Isabella

2010 Committee

Jack Duso, Chair, City of Midland
 Tim Wolff, Vice-Chair, Village of Lake Isabella
 Curtis Holt, Board Liaison, City of Wyoming
 Alex Allie, City of Huntington Woods
 Jane Bais-DiSessa, City of Berkley
 Kathie Grinzinger, City of Mt. Pleasant
 Meg Mullendore, City of Buchanan
 Mike Overton, Cheboygan County
 Phillip Moore, City of Alma
 Roger Fraser, City of Ann Arbor
 Troy Feltman, Bath Charter Township

Last, but not least, the Advocacy Committee would like to acknowledge Kirk Westphal for his enthusiasm, professionalism, and willingness to take on the task of managing this project, which at times was similar to herding cats. The production quality is excellent and exceeded the expectation of the Committee. We hope you agree and will find this video useful in reinforcing the Plan in your community.

2011 Winter Institute is Here

By Keith Van Beek, Ottawa County

We are looking forward to seeing our membership at the 2011 Winter Institute at the Westin Book Cadillac in Detroit. The planning committee has worked hard to provide an excellent and informative set of programs, all of which can be viewed at the affiliate website:

<http://www.mlgma.org/events/winter11/institute-2011.htm>.

Please note that the program not only includes a great pre-conference workshop on Tuesday, but also includes presentations by MML legislative staff, commentator Tim Skubick and ICMA Executive Director on Friday morning. Please make plans to attend the conference until completion on Friday at 11 AM.

Members can still register for the conference onsite. For our friends from southeast Michigan who plan to commute, parking is available at the hotel via valet for \$7 per day. This is the most inexpensive and convenient parking in the area. For overnight guests, valet parking is available at \$10/night. Other parking options include metered parking on surrounding streets or other garages, cost starting at \$2/half hour up to 2.5 hours or \$10/day.

