

The Beacon

Vol. XXXII, No. 1

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January 2006

Gov. to file budget plan this month

By John Robertson

Gov. Mitt Romney will file his fourth and final state budget recommendation later this month, with state finances far more stable than they were when he took office during fiscal 2003 and imposed harsh mid-year cuts in local aid.

With the economy and state finances slowly recovering from the recession, local leaders are seeking a material increase in municipal and school aid for fiscal 2007 to start fixing some of the damage done by aid cuts, mainly in fiscal 2003 and fiscal 2004, and to slow rapid growth in the property tax burden.

In fiscal 2006, Cherry Sheet Additional Assistance and Lottery distributions are still below fiscal 2002 levels. While total Chapter 70 school aid payments are slightly above levels of four years ago, about half of all school districts are heading into fiscal 2007 with aid levels 10 percent or more below fiscal 2002 amounts. Statewide, the state share of school spending under Chapter 70 dropped from 41 percent to 37 percent from fiscal 2002 to fiscal 2005, leaving local taxpayers to cover school aid cuts.

At a hearing on state tax revenues last month, the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation projected that

tax collections will grow by 5.4 percent next year, or almost \$1 billion, on top of 5 percent growth projected for fiscal 2006. Tax collections grew by 6.6 percent and 7.1 percent in fiscal 2004 and fiscal 2005. The Department of Revenue is forecasting slightly slower growth for next year, just shy of 5 percent.

The state ended fiscal 2005 with \$1.7 billion (about 7.1 percent of spending) in its Stabilization Fund or "rainy day" account.

Tempering this relatively good news about revenues and the health of state finances is the expectation that growth in health care spending and in a few other

large accounts will use up the projected new state dollars, leaving very little opportunity to address other pressing state and local government needs.

"While the tax outlook is modestly positive for 2007, weak employment growth will be a significant drag on both the state's economy and the commonwealth's revenues," said Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation President Michael Widmer at the Dec. 12 revenue hearing. "At the same time, largely unavoidable growth in health care and other costs will consume most, if not all, of the projected increase in tax revenues - be-

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Yarrows to speak, perform on Friday

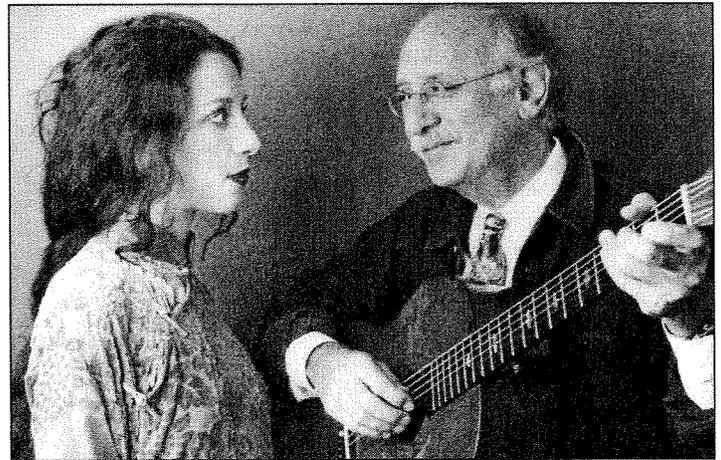
Peter Yarrow of the folk group Peter, Paul and Mary will be the Friday dinner

speaker, along with his daughter Bethany, during the MMA's Annual Meeting on Jan. 13.

Peter and Bethany Yarrow will draw on personal stories as well as songs as a means of conveying the message of mutual respect that is central to Peter Yarrow's project, "Operation Respect: Don't Laugh At Me."

The project, which is designed to help schools combat bullying and promote social and emotional learning, has been introduced to

2006 MMA Annual Meeting NEWS



Bethany and Peter Yarrow

more than 10,000 elementary and middle schools and is also used in summer camps and after-school programs. More than 18,000 educators have taken part in training workshops.

The appearance by the

Yarrows will help to deepen the commitment of municipal leaders to making their communities a place where everyone can succeed.

Peter Yarrow, 67, has been recording and perform-

YARROW, continued on 22

2005 MMA Board of Directors

The MMA Board of Directors holds regular meetings in Boston, followed by a meeting of the Local Government Advisory Commission with the administration. For information on the board's activities, contact the office of MMA Executive Director Geoff Beckwith at (617) 426-7272.

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Town Administrator, Brookline
- Mary Clare Higgins**, MMA Vice President
Mayor, Northampton
- Geoffrey Beckwith**, (non-voting)
MMA Executive Director
- John Barrett III**, MMA First Vice
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Springfield
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- Edwin Thorne**, Town Administrator,
Pembroke
- Stanley Usovicz**, Mayor, Salem

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

New year brings new opportunities

The pages on the calendar turn. Time always marches on. Changes come. Every day, we must decide whether we will embrace these changes and use them as opportunities. We do this in our personal and family lives, in private business, and in the public and community arena.

During the new year ahead, we know that Massachusetts will elect a new governor. This change is coming. As individuals, our job is to evaluate the candidates who seek this high office and make a ballot decision based on our own beliefs and wishes. Yet all local leaders, who number in the thousands, will be examining the race with a broader view and with an additional set of questions. This is because the next governor will take office at a crucial time for our communities and for our commonwealth.

We need the candidates to speak to a number of burning issues.

By
**Geoffrey
Beckwith**



- What is your vision of a true state-local partnership, and what role should the governor play in making this partnership work?
- Do you believe that cities and towns are facing a fiscal crisis?
- Do you believe that reliance on property taxes is too high?
- Do you believe that local services have been cut or compromised too much?
- Do you believe that we need to rebuild, renew or change the current state-local relationship in order to ensure our state's economic competitiveness, attract investment, keep young families in the state, address the cost of housing, and secure a high quality of life in our

communities, or do you believe that cities and towns are not central to addressing these issues?

- Will you commit to revenue sharing, dedicating fixed percentage of state revenues to local aid, ensuring adequacy, stability and equity in local finance?
- Will you allow cities and towns to diversify their revenue base with local-option sales and meals taxes, and will you work to close the telecommunications tax loophole?
- Will you guarantee that all Lottery revenues will go to cities and towns?
- Will you take on difficult political challenges, such as giving local officials the same powers that state officials have to control their health insurance costs, and initiating a wholesale review of the structure of our pension system?
- Will you work directly with local leaders to solve

DIRECTOR, continued on 17

The Beacon

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We encourage readers to send their comments, story ideas, news items, and notices of upcoming events. To send us messages electronically, through Massachusetts Local Net or through the Local Net's link to the Internet, the Local Net address is: Beacon Editor. The Internet address is: beacon_editor@mma.org

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MMA to move to new offices on Feb. 1

The Massachusetts Municipal Association will relocate its offices to One Winthrop Square effective Feb. 1. The organization's phone numbers and e-mail addresses will not change.

One Winthrop Square is an historic five-story building in the Financial District of Boston, about two blocks from the MMA's current office space at 60 Temple Place. It is convenient to several subway lines and the South Station commuter rail station. There is a quaint, landscaped public park in the front of the building.

The MMA and MIIA will be renting the entire second floor of nearly 20,000 square feet, becoming the largest tenant in the build-



The MMA's new home at One Winthrop Square

ing.

"We are very excited about moving into our new offices," said Executive Director Geoff Beckwith. "We have secured almost 25 percent more space for the

growing needs of the MMA and the MIIA insurance programs at a total cost that is less than what we are paying now."

The MMA negotiated a 10-year lease at favorable rates,

taking advantage of the competitive market for commercial rents in downtown Boston. The MMA has options to extend the lease for an additional five years and to lease additional space in the building, should the need arise.

The new office location will allow all of the MMA and MIIA's employees to be located on one floor to achieve greater efficiencies. The space contains a large conference room that can accommodate the MMA Board of Directors and can serve as a training facility.

The MMA will hold a formal "ribbon-cutting" ceremony and invite all MMA members to an open house in the spring.

- Paul Bockelman

MTF report proposes new local aid structure

By Pam Kocher

In order to help address the relentless squeeze on municipal finances, the state should dedicate 40 percent of annual revenues from income, corporate and sales taxes to local aid, according to the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation's 35th annual analysis of local revenues and spending.

The MTF study, released on Nov. 22, paints a picture of continuing stress on local finances in fiscal 2005, even with modest increases in state aid. Municipal stabilization reserves declined for the first time in a decade; excess taxing capacity under Proposition 2 1/2 fell for the fourth year in a row; and local operating surpluses decreased as well, contributing to a drop of almost \$150 million, or 25 percent, since 2002.

While sharp increases in health care costs have

added to the pressure on municipal budgets, state aid policy has been the primary contributor to local fiscal stress, according to the MTF study. Despite additional aid dollars in 2005, assistance to cities and towns remained \$750 million, or 14 percent, below 2002 levels after adjusting for inflation, with aid amounts well below 2002 in almost every community in the state. Even aid increases in 2006 will be mostly wiped out by inflation, the MTF notes.

"Although municipal leaders have raised property taxes, hiked fees, tapped reserves, and cut services in order to maintain fiscal balance over the last four years, local finances are still deteriorating in many, if not most, communities," said MTF President Michael Widmer.

To address the chronic squeeze on local finances - and to bring constancy to

the state's efforts to support municipal budgets - the MTF recommends that the state dedicate an amount equal to 40 percent of annual revenues from its three major tax sources to formula aid for cities and towns.

The 40 percent commitment recommended by the MTF would restore overall funding for Chapter 70, additional assistance, and Lottery to 2002 levels (after adjusting for inflation) and provide a modest increase of about 5 percent. Had this policy been in place in 2005, it would have resulted in additional aid to cities and towns of more than \$1 billion, the MTF reports.

The MTF recommends that the new revenue-sharing policy be phased in over several years and be coupled with a re-examination of state aid distribution formulas.

The MTF recommends

that the 40 percent commitment be implemented by dedicating portions of specific taxes, in order to establish for cities and towns a reliable stream of revenues that would be determined outside the state budget process. The new funding approach would also need to include additional provisions to buffer annual aid levels from future declines in the state economy.

The MTF also recommends that the state develop a new system for benchmarking municipal costs in order to ensure that the 351 cities and towns are using taxpayers' dollars effectively.

The initial findings of a major economic study by Northeastern University on the connection between revenue sharing and the future of the Massachusetts economy, released in October, conclude that the Massa-

MTF, continued on 16

Speakers are highlight of Annual Meeting

By John Ouellette

Dan Pink, Jeanne Shaheen, John Henning, Peter Yarrow, Thomas Menino, comedian John Turco, and the 2006 Massachusetts gubernatorial candidates are among the well-known names who will be participating in this year's MMA Annual Meeting & Trade Show, to be held on Jan. 13 and 14 in Boston.

Renowned speakers are just one feature of the MMA Annual Meeting & Trade Show, the largest annual gathering of municipal officials in the state. The event also features 27 timely workshops, a trade show, business meetings, receptions and other activities.

This year's MMA Annual Business Meeting, to be held on Jan. 14, will feature

the unveiling of an extensive study of the relationship between local aid and the state's economic health. The report, a joint effort of the MMA and Northeastern University's Center for Urban and Regional Policy, focuses on the need for reinvestment in revenue sharing in order for the Massachusetts economy to compete and thrive.

This year's keynote speaker, Pink, is a former speechwriter for Vice President Al Gore and the author of two books about the changing nature of the workplace.

Former New Hampshire Gov. Shaheen is the speaker for the Women Elected Mu-

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This year's MMA Trade Show will once again feature more than 200 exhibitors.

nicipal Officials annual Leadership Luncheon.

Annual Meeting attendees will have a chance to meet the next governor during a session with the declared candidates to be moderated by veteran broadcast journalist Henning.

Yarrow, of Peter, Paul and Mary fame, will be featured during the Friday evening dinner program. (See related story, page 1.) Turco will provide entertainment during the Saturday evening banquet.

Boston Mayor Menino will open the two-day meeting with the greetings of the city.

In addition to 27 timely workshops, a Power Hour Session will be held on Saturday, Jan. 14, to preview issues the Department of Environmental Protection expects to be working with cities and towns on in the coming year.

This year's Annual Meeting theme is "Investing Locally, Competing Globally: Communities Build Our Economic Future."

The Trade Show will once again feature more than 200 exhibitors highlighting products and services essential to community operations. The Trade Show will be

open on Friday, Jan. 13, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., and on Saturday, Jan. 14, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Educational opportunities will extend to the Trade Show floor, where exhibitors will be hosting workshops. More information about these workshops will be available on www.mma.org.

Reservations are being accepted for the WEMO Luncheon on Friday, Jan. 13, and the Friday and Saturday evening dinners.

All Annual Meeting events will be held at the Hynes Convention Center, except for the opening session and the banquet dinners, which will be held at the Sheraton Boston hotel.

Annual Meeting registration fees remain the same for the fourth straight year, in order to encourage all MMA members to attend and participate in this important event. Registration forms may be found in this issue of *The Beacon*.

For more information on the Annual Meeting, contact Marisa Lutz at (617) 426-7272, ext. 106. For Trade Show information, contact Karen LaPointe at (617) 426-7272, ext. 154. *

MMA initiatives to be highlighted at Trade Show

The MMA will be showcasing three major new initiatives at its Trade Show Booth this year.

Annual Meeting attendees are invited to stop by the MMA booth to see the MMA's redesigned and updated online services: www.mma.org and a new integrated members-only service.

The MMA and MIIA are also moving later this month. Members can stop by the MMA booth to learn more and see photos of the new MMA/MIIA office.

The MMA is also bringing a new focus to the state-local government partnership. The MMA booth will have a presentation on a Northeastern University economic study commissioned by the MMA. The report highlights the importance of local governments to the state's economic health.

At the booth Annual Meeting attendees can also "talk shop" with MMA staff about issues of concern in their communities and get information about Annual Meeting activities.

The MMA booth is located just inside the entrance to the Trade Show, in Hynes Convention Center Hall D. *

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MMA members to discuss revenue sharing

At the 2006 Annual Business Meeting, to be held Jan. 14 during the MMA's Annual Meeting in Boston, members will consider a proposed resolution calling for a new partnership between cities and towns and state government.

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Members cast votes during the MMA's 2005 Annual Business Meeting.

This year's meeting will also feature the presentation and release of a groundbreaking study by the Center for Urban and Regional Policy at Northeastern University, "Revenue Sharing and the Future of The Massachusetts Economy." The initial findings of this study were discussed at an MMA-sponsored economic forum in Boston in October.

The report will identify the clear connection between revenue sharing and the overall economic health of Massachusetts.

"We anticipate that this

report will compel state officeholders and opinion leaders to recognize the urgent need to re-invest in every city and town to ensure that Massachusetts can compete, thrive and prosper," said MMA Executive Director Geoff Beckwith.

The proposed Resolution on a New Partnership Between Cities and Towns and State Government is being jointly presented by the MMA's Fiscal Policy Committee and Revenue Sharing Task Force.

The MMA Board of Directors voted unanimously to recommend the proposed resolution.

Each year, resolutions presented at the Annual Business Meeting are drafted by the respective policy committees at the request of the Board of Directors to support the MMA's lobbying agenda in vital matters. The proposals are intended to clearly communicate the MMA's basic principles and policy directives to the appropriate

state and federal officials.

The text of the proposed resolution is published in this issue of *The Beacon* and is posted on www.mma.org.

Voting at the business meeting

Voting at the Annual Business Meeting is open to all municipal members of the MMA through voting delegates as defined by the MMA's bylaws.

Individuals eligible to vote at the meeting are:

- In the case of a city, its chief executive or a councillor designated in writing by the chief executive
- In the case of a town, the chair of the board of selectmen or town council, or another selectman or councillor designated in writing by the chair, or the manager designated in writing by such chair

Only one voting card will be issued per member community. *

Proposed MMA Resolution on a New Partnership Between Cities and Towns and State Government

Whereas, state and local governments in Massachusetts provide quality services valued and supported by residents and businesses as essential to individual and collective economic prosperity;

Whereas, the Commonwealth's economic future depends on the fiscal strength and service capacity of all 351 cities and towns;

Whereas, the Legislature and the Executive have predominate authority under the Constitution to regulate taxation and set law governing municipal administration and a companion obligation to ensure that cities and towns have sufficient revenues and appropriate management tools to fulfill locally determined obligations and state mandates and to respond to urgent challenges such as the creation of affordable housing;

Whereas, the present state-municipal relationship has been seriously compromised following several years of economic and fiscal distress for state and local government and is re-

flected locally by historically high reliance on the regressive property tax and constrained municipal and school services;

Whereas, heavy reliance on the property tax to fund municipal and school services, without meaningful revenue alternatives, hurts local economies and jeopardizes economic expansion statewide; and

Whereas, a new and enduring compact between local and state government is necessary to ensure that municipal government can effectively and efficiently provide vital services and provide a fertile environment for economic growth, competitiveness and prosperity, which is so dependent upon local quality of life;

Therefore it is hereby resolved by the members of the Massachusetts Municipal Association that:

In the Matter of Revenue Sharing, A reasonable and fixed share of state tax collections should be distributed annually to local government to help support municipal and school

services and to avoid over-reliance on the property tax;

State tax revenue sharing must include a revitalized municipal assistance program to help pay for public safety and other vital municipal services for all cities and towns with base amounts held harmless and distribution of new funds through a fair and equitable formula that includes acceptable measures of ability to pay and expense factors that reflect the full range of real local costs and obligations;

The Governor and the Legislature should immediately end diversion of Lottery revenues dedicated by law and practice for cities and towns and ensure that all municipal Lottery revenues are distributed without earmarking to help pay for local services and to ease property tax burden; and

Revenue sharing must also include a renewed Chapter 70 school aid program that ensures adequate state funds for local schools targeted to ward a state share of fifty percent of

required school spending and a fair and equitable determination of local contribution and new school aid amounts giving proper weight to vital factors such as median household income.

In the Matter of Local Taxing Authority,

Cities and towns must be granted authority to consider and adopt local option taxes, as is common in other states, to help pay for local services as an alternative to the property tax; and

The Governor and the Legislature should take timely action to update municipal tax law and protect the local tax base from loopholes created by new technologies and business practices, particularly in the area of telecommunications.

In the Matter of Budget Busters and the Delivery of Local Services,

With strict state laws limiting municipal ability to manage local budget busters, the Legislature and the Gov-

RESOLUTION, continued on 22

Henning to moderate candidates' forum

Veteran broadcast journalist John Henning will moderate the gubernatorial candidate's forum at this month's MMA Annual Meeting.

The declared candidates for governor have been invited to participate in the session, which will take place at 4 p.m. on Satur-

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day, Jan. 14, at the Hynes Convention Center.

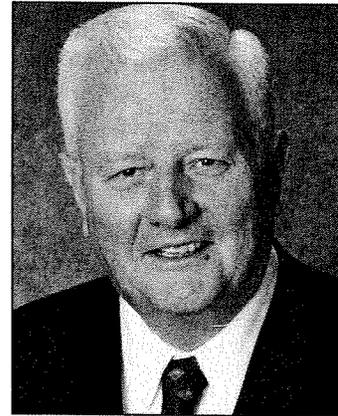
There will be ample time for questions from audience members.

Henning, now a senior advisor to the Boston-based public relations firm Denterlein Worldwide, in 1995 received the Governor's Award from the Boston/New England Chapter of the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences for career achieve-

ment. Henning has covered every gubernatorial election in Massachusetts since 1962 and every presidential race since the 1960s.

A former senior correspondent for WBZ Channel 4, Henning serves on the board of directors of the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists and is a past president of the Boston Press Club.

— Mitch Evich



John Henning

MMA to unveil new online services this month

At this year's Annual Meeting the MMA will be unveiling its new Web site, which has been redesigned and reorganized to make it easier for users to find information and interact with the MMA.

The new version of the site, still found at www.mma.org, will be officially launched on Jan. 13.

The site will include a new members-only area with features formerly found on the MMA's Local Net service, such as members-only discussion forums.

MMA.org provides a

wealth of news and information resources for the cities and towns of Massachusetts, in areas such as local aid, education, community development, labor relations and public works.

Features include:

- An events calendar, with agendas, directions and online meeting registration
- MMA advocacy information
- A directory of Web resources for local governments
- Municipal job opportunities
- Information about local government in Massachu-

setts

- City and town Web site, contact and demographic information

Members Area

A new password-protected members area on mma.org features Member Exchange, an online forum where local officials may pose questions, offer advice, and share information.

Members also may find, and contribute to, members-only resources such as sample policies and job descriptions.

Soon, members will be able to find information tai-

lored specifically for mayors, town managers, selectmen, councillors, finance committee members and personnel administrators.

Members will be able to register electronically for access to the new members-only section of mma.org by completing a registration form on the new site.

Annual Meeting attendees may stop by the MMA booth at the Annual Trade Show for a demonstration of the new Web site and its new members-only service.

— John Ouellette and Pam Kocher

Primer on owner's project manager due in spring

The MMA and Associated General Contractors of Massachusetts are participating in a working group of industry professionals to develop a primer on the new owner's project manager provisions of the public construction reform law enacted last year.

The new law requires cities and towns to hire an owner's project manager for every construction project valued at \$1.5 million

or greater in order to ensure professional and independent oversight of the project. The law does allow "in house" staff to serve as the project manager so long as they meet certain criteria.

The primer, to be released in the spring, will provide guidance to municipalities on the evaluation, selection and oversight of project managers. The primer will include case

studies, sample contracts, sample RFPs and RFQs, and sample ranking criteria for project manager evaluations.

The primer will include a section on the scope of project manager services during both the preconstruction and construction phases of a project, including designer selection, delivery system selection, cost estimating, scheduling, permitting, contract adminis-

tration, and project scope.

The task force is working with the Massachusetts School Building Authority as the authority drafts guidelines that will govern the duties of project managers, with an emphasis on the project manager serving in an expanded role as ombudsman between the municipality and the School Building Authority.

— Matthew G. Feher

Fiscal issues top municipal agenda for '06

By David Baier

As the Legislature returns this month for the final six months of formal sessions, four issues dominate the municipal agenda: local aid, the property tax burden, health insurance, and the school building assistance program.

Local aid, especially non-education aid, is the top priority for cities and towns. Adjusted for inflation, local aid is \$700 million below the level of 2001, according

to the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation. Three recent studies – by the Taxpayers Foundation, the Municipal Finance Task Force chaired by Sovereign Bank CEO John Hamill, and Northeastern University's Center for Urban and Regional Policy – detail the severity of the cuts and the desperate need to act quickly to address revenue sharing in Massachusetts.

The MMA will be working with state leaders to imple-

ment the recommendations contained in all three reports: to strengthen the state-local partnership and to restore adequate and predictable local aid to provide essential local services.

The property tax burden has exploded over the past four years. State aid cuts, declining commercial values relative to residential values, and the exploitation of telecommunications tax loopholes have all contributed to a surge in prop-

erty taxes on residents in recent years. Local reliance on the property tax to fund local services is at its highest level since Proposition 2 1/2 passed in 1980.

Municipal health insurance is the top budget buster for cities and towns throughout Massachusetts. A study conducted by MMA and the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation shows that health insurance has grown from 7.4 percent of

2006, continued on 15

Report: fiscal structure hinders local service delivery

By John Ouellette

Cities and towns are finding it increasingly difficult to deliver basic public services due to "serious structural problems" in Massachusetts, according to a recent report from the Rappaport Institute at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government.

"Virtually all of Massachusetts' cities and towns face long-term financial problems," according to the report, which was released on Nov. 2. "Many costs, particularly health insurance costs, are rising faster than revenues from local taxes and fees. Localities have virtually no ability to tap new sources of revenue or to significantly increase revenue from existing taxes and fees.

"State aid for localities dropped dramatically in recent years, and since the mid-1990s a growing proportion of local aid has been reserved for education and comes with restrictions that do not allow local governments to redirect this revenue to non-education uses."

The report, "Local Services, Local Aid, and Common Challenges," distills a number of recent studies,

including ones involving the MMA, that reach strikingly similar conclusions: that the fiscal future of local governments is dire unless significant changes are made.

In July, the MMA and the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation released a study concluding that soaring health care costs are unsustainable for municipalities.

A September report by the Municipal Finance Task Force, chaired by Sovereign Bank CEO John Hamill, concluded that the system of municipal finance and local aid in Massachusetts "is broken and needs attention."

At a statewide economic forum in October, the MMA and Northeastern University's Center for Urban and Regional Policy declared that a new fiscal partnership between state and local government is essential for the success of the Massachusetts economy. The preliminary findings of a report to be released at the MMA's Annual Meeting in January conclude that communities are overly reliant on the property tax and that current local aid levels are insufficient to adequately fund the local government ser-

vices that are needed to retain or attract people and jobs to Massachusetts.

Also in October, the Boston Municipal Research Bureau issued a report warning that city revenues are unlikely to rise fast enough to cover the cost of recent contracts with the unions representing many city workers, which means the city will likely have to make painful cuts in key services.

The report from the Rappaport Institute, written by

Phineas Baxandall, also cites a number of national studies that conclude, among other things, that Massachusetts cities and towns "have fewer workers and spend less on personnel than localities in other states and also face particularly difficult constraints in dealing with their fiscal challenges," such as restrictions on their ability to raise revenues and strict responsibility for schools.

The report is available on www.mma.org. *



Advice given on crisis management

Communications strategist Paul Andrew speaks during the fall conference of the Massachusetts Municipal Management Association about how to manage one's message in the midst of a crisis. The conference was held at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst on Nov. 17 and 18.

Cost-of-living, inflation data available

By Pam Kocher

Local officials seeking inflation data for planning purposes can access several relevant economic indicators.

PERAC COLA

The Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission gives local retirement boards the option to grant a cost-of-living adjustment based on the Social Security Administration's COLA determination.

The Social Security Administration uses the national Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers, known as the CPI-W, from the U.S. Department of Labor, to determine annual cost-of-living adjustments in order to prevent inflation from eroding Social Security and Supplemental Security Income benefits.

Social Security has set the COLA at 4.1 percent for benefits paid in calendar 2006. For 2005, the SSA's COLA was 2.7 percent.

The latest Boston-area CPI-W, covering the year ending in November 2005, was 3.2 percent. The Boston-

area CPI-W encompasses most of New England.

CPI

The Division of Local Services recommends that Massachusetts local officials looking at changes in budgets, revenues or other factors consider using inflation data to present data in "constant dollars" over multiple years. The DLS suggests two particular indices: the Boston-area Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), and the State and Local Government Implicit Price Deflator.

The Boston-area CPI-U was 3.3 percent for the year ended in November 2005, according to the latest data from the U.S. Department of Labor. The Boston-area CPI-U for calendar 2004 and 2003 were 2.5 percent and 3 percent, respectively. Historically, the CPI has averaged 3 percent over the long-term.

The State and Local Government Implicit Price Deflator also serves as an indicator of inflation, but it measures inflation as it relates to a "market basket" of

goods and services typically purchased by state and local governments. The Massachusetts Department of Education uses this price deflator index to calculate the inflation rate for cost factors in the foundation budget formula.

The State and Local Government Implicit Price Deflator was 4.6 percent for the year ended in June 2005, according to the latest U.S. Department of Commerce data reported by the Division of Local Services. The State and Local Government Implicit Price Deflator rose 3.7 percent from September 2003 to September 2004.

Property tax exemption COLA

The state revenue commissioner determined the cost-of-living adjustment to be used in fiscal 2006 by communities that adopt certain local options regarding property tax exemptions for senior citizens. The Department of Revenue measures the cost-of-living adjustment by the increase in the Consumer Price Index during the previous calendar year.

The cost-of-living adjustment for fiscal 2006 exemption purposes is 2.8 percent. This adjustment was 3.8 percent in fiscal 2005, 3.6 percent in fiscal 2004 and 4.3 percent in fiscal 2003. The figure for fiscal 2005 is expected to be released in March 2004.

Sources

The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics releases current information on the CPI each month. CPI data is available on the Internet (<http://stats.bls.gov/cpi>) or by calling the CPI Quickline at (202) 691-6994.

The Division of Local Services Municipal Data Bank provides CPI and State and Local Government Implicit Price Deflator data for 198 to 2004. Visit www.dls.state.ma.us/mdm for a downloadable spreadsheet, or call the DLS at (617) 626-2300. *

Health care survey data available

Data from the Municipal Health Care Cost Survey conducted by the MMA and the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation in May and June 2005 are now available.

This survey of 32 communities was designed to assess municipal health care costs from fiscal 2001 through fiscal 2005. Participating communities reflect the broad range of the state's municipalities in terms of population, geographic diversity and wealth. They account for ap-

proximately one-fourth of the state's population and almost 30 percent of local revenues and spending statewide.

The survey includes information on annual health care expenditures, plans, premiums, and contribution rates.

The Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation released a special report last July on the effects of soaring municipal health care costs, based in part on the results of the MMA/MTF survey.

The MTF report documents the dramatic impact that

soaring health insurance costs are having on budgets in cities and towns across the state. The report also urged state officials to provide local officials with the management tools needed to address the problem.

Requests for the survey data should be e-mailed to Pam_Kocher@mma.org.

The MMA would like to express its appreciation to the local officials and staff in the 32 participating communities for completing the extensive survey.

- Pam Kocher

Managers have booth at Annual Meeting

The Massachusetts Municipal Management Association will have a booth (1830) this year at the MMA Trade Show.

MMMA members will be at the booth to offer guidance on charter questions and form-of-government issues. Attendees will be able to pick up helpful materials and review sample charters and special acts.

An Annual Meeting workshop being offered by the MMMA, "Municipal Management: What Local Officials Need to Know," will focus on the same topics. *

Congress nixes plan for drastic CDBG cuts

By Marc Hymovitz

Congress in late November overwhelmingly approved a budget bill for fiscal 2006 that rejects an effort by the Bush administration to drastically reduce funding for the Community Development Block Grant program.

President Bush had proposed consolidating the CDBG program with 17 other local-assistance grant programs into two administered by the Commerce Department's Economic Development Administration.

The \$3.7 billion funding level proposed by the president for the consolidated programs represented an overall decrease of about one-third from fiscal 2005 and was far less than the \$4.7 billion spent on CDBGs alone.

Under the measure approved by both houses of Congress just before the Thanksgiving break, funding for the CDBG program will be reduced by a comparatively modest \$500 million, to \$4.2 million. The program will remain within the De-

partment of Housing and Urban Development.

The National League of Cities, joined by the MMA and other municipal organizations, strongly opposed the deep cuts and reorganization proposed by the Bush administration.

For federal fiscal 2005, more than \$123 million in total CDBG funding was available to Massachusetts cities and towns. Entitlement communities – those that meet certain specifications and receive funds directly from HUD – received \$84.5 million in CDBG funding. For all other communities who participate in the DHCD-administered competitive program, \$38.6 million was available.

The budget bill, which covers HUD as well as the Transportation and Treasury departments, also affirms

that municipalities may use federal funding for land taken through eminent domain for public use. The bill, however, imposes a one-year moratorium on funds for any eminent domain project “that primarily benefits private entities.”

The language was added as a result of the Supreme Court decision last June in *Kelo v. New London*, which allowed the city of New London, Conn., to use eminent domain to take private land for use by a private entity, so long as it was used for economic development purposes for the greater good. The decision has caused an uproar nationwide, including in Massachusetts, where House Minority Leader Brad Jones has filed a bill that would narrow the options for municipalities to use eminent domain. *

Gov. signs Ch. 40R zoning incentive plan

By Matthew G. Feher

On Nov. 22, Gov. Mitt Romney signed into law a measure that will help to offset education-related costs incurred with development under Chapter 40R, the local-option “smart growth” zoning incentive plan.

The plan creates Chapter 40S, which will reimburse cities and towns for a broad range of costs associated with school enrollment growth as a result of 40R development, including increases in local public or charter school attendance (K-12) and the need for services such as special education programs.

“We applaud the Legislature and Gov. Romney for this major step forward to provide positive incentives to cities and towns to adopt smart growth overlay zoning districts,” said MMA Executive Director Geoff Beckwith. “Communities want to grow their housing stock while ensuring that they will be able to deliver a full range

of basic services to their new residents, including quality schooling. Chapter 40S addresses this key concern.”

The MMA advocated for this change to help offset the fiscal impact associated with an increase in housing development. The lack of this incentive, as well as several other issues regarding the structure of Chapter 40R, explain why no community has adopted the program.

Chapter 40R encourages the adoption of zoning overlay districts that allow higher density residential and mixed-use development in so-called “smart growth” locations by providing fiscal incentives to cities and towns. Besides these new education incentives, 40R provides cities and towns with an up-front zoning incentive payment, a density bonus payment per unit of housing constructed, and priority consideration for various discretionary grant programs. *



Fire Safety Act discussed

Rockport Town Administrator Michael Racicot (left) makes a point during a Dec. 12 training session for municipal hearing officers in accordance with the state's Fire Safety Act. The 2004 law, a consequence of the nightclub fire at The Station in Rhode Island, requires participating communities to designate an officer responsible for hearing appeals of fire and building code violations. The training session in Randolph was sponsored by the MMA, the Attorney General's office, and the City Solicitors and Town Council Association, and featured Assistant Attorney General Bob Ritchie and attorney Jim Lampke.

Committee sets hearing on Ch. 40B reform

By Matthew G. Feher

The Legislature's Joint Committee on Housing has scheduled a hearing for Jan. 24 on the nearly 70 pending bills that would alter Chapter 40B, the state's affordable housing law.

The MMA filed the same Chapter 40B reform bill that was developed by the Governor's Chapter 40B Task Force and released last session by the Housing Committee.

The bill (S. 790) would make several reforms, in-

cluding the "double-counting" of affordable homeownership units toward a municipality's 10 percent affordable housing goal and provisions that would grant cities and towns the ability to deny comprehensive permits if they meet certain criteria.

Sen. Richard Moore of Uxbridge recently filed a bill that would close some of the loopholes under Chapter 40B that developers have been using to "exploit" cities and towns

across the state.

Moore's bill would:

- Increase the required amount of affordable units in a 40B development from 25 percent to 33 percent, thereby aiding communities in achieving the 10 percent affordable housing goal
- Limit the type of variances a developer can seek under 40B to density and lot area requirements
- Improve oversight of the profits of 40B develop-

ments, which are limited to 20 percent under the law

- Require a direct financial subsidy from a government or semi-government agency for 40B projects

The number of bills filed is an indication of the need to reform Chapter 40B due to flaws and its ineffectiveness at meeting affordable housing needs.

The Jan. 24 hearing will take place at 10 a.m. in Gardner Auditorium at the State House. *

MMCA to discuss council-executive relations

All aldermen and councillors are invited to the Annual Business Meeting of the Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association on Saturday morning, Jan. 14.

The business meeting, held 8:30-10 a.m. during the MMA's Annual Meeting & Trade Show in Boston, will feature a special training session for councillors and aldermen on council-executive communications. Panelists are Franklin Town Administrator Jeffrey Nutting,



West Springfield Councillor Paul Boudo, former Methuen Mayor Sharon Pollard, and Marilyn Contreas, policy analyst for the Department of Housing and Community Development. The session will cover ways in which councillors and aldermen can work individually and collectively with their community's executive to enhance their impact as local leaders.

The MMCA Business Meeting includes a year-in-review presentation and the election of the MMCA officers for 2006.

Councillors and aldermen will vote on the following slate of officers presented by

the 2005 MMCA Nominating Committee:

President: Claire Freda, Leominster

Vice President: Denise Provost, Somerville

Secretary/Treasurer: Cindy Romaniak, West Springfield

Contact: MMA Member Services Coordinator Ellen Stomacher



New mayors meet

Nancy Stevens (right), who was elected mayor of Marlborough on Nov. 1, raises an issue during an MMA seminar for new mayors on Nov. 30. At left is Salem's newly elected mayor, Kim Driscoll.

Whitlock scholarship applications due Jan. 25

The Massachusetts Municipal Management Association is accepting applications for the annual Gerry Whitlock Memorial Scholarship.

The scholarship awards \$1,000 to a Massachusetts graduate student who plans to pursue a career in municipal management. The scholarship is named in memory of Gerry Whitlock, a long-serving Massachusetts town administrator.

The application deadline is Jan. 25, and the scholarship will be awarded in the spring.

An application form can be downloaded at www.mma.org.

Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker

Send personnel changes to the MMA

Resignations, elections, retirements, and hirings bring about frequent changes in a community's personnel. Keep the MMA up-to-date with your community's personnel changes

by sending an e-mail to database@mma.org. Please include the person's name, title, and start date. If you have any questions, contact MMA Database Coordinator Michael Pingpank. *

Energy customers have several options

A recent survey of participants in the MMA's MunEnergy program found that a large majority consider budget certainty and competitive pricing to be the most important benefits of the energy program.

Seventy-two percent of respondents reported that they saved between 5 percent and 20 percent on the cost of electricity last year through the MunEnergy program.

Purchasing electricity through MunEnergy offers benefits in addition to budget certainty and competitive pricing, however. As an energy expert, Constellation NewEnergy, the endorsed

energy supplier for the MunEnergy program, can help members determine the most advantageous products for their municipality based on the city or town's goals and risk tolerance.

Municipalities don't want to be exposed to electricity price volatility, so many have chosen agreements that allow them to pay a fixed price for electricity over the term of their agreement. But there are other options available to municipalities as well.

A city or town that can accept some risk in exchange for the ability to take advantage of marketplace opportunities may be interested in a balanced

portfolio, where higher-risk products are blended with lower-risk products to achieve the lowest possible costs with the most acceptable level of risk. This strategy offers the risks and benefits of actively participating in the energy markets, with options to limit exposure.

Competitive suppliers also offer added-value products and programs for interested municipalities. Renewable products are an option for cities and towns that want to have a less of an impact on the environment through their energy choices. Municipalities may choose to purchase power from renewable sources such as hydroelectric, biomass, wind, solar, and landfill-gas.

Load response programs, in which organizations are compensated for curtailing electricity when the demand

for electricity is high, are an option for customers that are able to reduce usage during a grid emergency or extremely high prices.

Customers also have the option to choose the optimum trade-off between cost of energy and the opportunity cost associated with lowered consumption.

Constellation NewEnergy is available to discuss energy requirements and to answer questions about buying power in the competitive marketplace. Local officials are invited to stop by the MunEnergy booth (No. 1006) at the MMA Trade Show on Jan. 13 and 14 at the Hynes Convention Center in Boston.

For more information, contact MunEnergy Program Manager Erik Everton at (617) 772-7530 or erik.everton@constellation.com. *

Trade Show has new vendors, features

Local officials may visit some of their regular vendors as well as check out new ones at the MMA

Trade Show on Jan. 13 and 14.

Several new companies will be at the 2006 event to showcase the latest products and services tailored for municipalities. Also featured will be companies whose products and services communities have relied on for years. This is a great opportunity to meet vendors face-to-face and ask questions.

Trade Show features include:

- Exhibitor seminars offered during Trade Show hours
- A driving simulation system for public safety personnel, public works personnel, and others who

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drive for municipalities to test their driving skills

- A Firearms Training System simulator (back by popular demand)
- An Incident Support Unit provided by the Department of Fire Services
- A Holistic Wellness Fair on Saturday, Jan. 14, 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Trade Show hours are Friday, Jan. 13, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., and Saturday, Jan. 14, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

A welcoming reception will be held at the Sheraton Boston Hotel on Friday, 5:30-7 p.m., immediately following the last Annual Meeting workshop of the day.

"Trade Show Only" invitations are available to municipal employees and college students by contacting Trade Show Manager Karen LaPointe at (800) 882-1498, ext. 154, or karen_la-pointe@mma.org. *

MSA Annual Meeting to discuss selectmen's role

The Massachusetts Selectmen's Association Nominating Committee will present its slate of officers for the 2006 Executive Committee during the association's 79th Annual Meeting on Saturday, Jan. 14, 8:30-10 a.m., in Boston.

All selectmen are invited to the annual MSA meeting, held during the MMA Annual Meeting & Trade Show at the Hynes Convention Center.

Selectmen in attendance will vote on the association's slate of officers.

The meeting agenda includes a year-in-review presentation by the 2005 MSA president, Mansfield Selectman Michael McCue, and a strategy session on the role of selectmen in their communities, particularly in terms of relationships with other elected and appointed boards.

The meeting is once again 90 minutes to allow ample time for discussion.

Contact: MMA Member Services Coordinator Ellen Stoolmacher

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Lack of daylight can spur mood disorder

By Sandy Sarni

The late fall and winter months can spur depression-like symptoms among sufferers of what is known as Seasonal Affective Disorder. Symptoms can include difficulty staying awake, overeating and weight gain, lack of interest in social interactions, and an inability to maintain a regular schedule. An estimated 10 million Americans may suffer from SAD, many without knowing it.

"SAD is a true mood disorder that requires diagnosis and may require treatment," says Dr. Douglas Jacobs, a psychiatry professor at Harvard Medical School. "If you regularly experience a significant, lasting, downturn of mood when the weather gets colder and daylight lessens, then you should consider consulting a psy-

chiatrist or other health professional to discuss your symptoms."

The disorder has been linked to a biochemical imbalance brought on by the lack of sunlight in winter. This lack of light can diminish the body's level of serotonin, a neurotransmitter that improves our mood. Conversely, melatonin, a sleep-related hormone secreted by the pineal gland in the brain, is produced at increased levels in the dark. Higher levels of melatonin may result in feelings of depression.

Although SAD and depression can look the same, there is a distinction. The symptoms of depression are more severe and don't improve with seasonal change. Both SAD and depression, however, can result in work-related problems including

an inability to complete tasks, increased difficulties with co-workers, and increased job absences.

Those suffering from mild cases of SAD can benefit from additional exposure to daylight. This can include a long walk outside, which is beneficial even on cloudy days. For many suffering from more severe cases, light therapy (phototherapy) has proven effective. This involves exposure to very bright light, usually from a special fluorescent lamp, for a few hours each day. Criteria for the purchase of light boxes and guidelines for their use can be found at www.cet.org. Professional monitoring of phototherapy is recommended, as there can be side effects.

The MIIA Health Benefits Trust offers education and resources on SAD, depres-

sion, fatigue, mood, diet and exercise. Offerings include on-site fitness classes, yoga, tai chi and other "feel good" wellness programs. Municipal groups with employee assistance programs are encouraged to promote programs such as these.

Those who feel they are suffering from SAD are urged to consult with their doctors. To locate an American Psychiatric Association district branch for a psychiatric physician visit www.psych.org and click on "District Branches & State Associations." To locate a depression screening site visit www.mentalhealth-screening.org.

For more information on SAD and additional resources, visit www.sada.org or www.nami.org.

Sandy Sarni is a MIIA Wellness representative.

Take steps to prevent pipes from freezing

With the price of heating oil on the rise, many communities are scaling back thermostats when municipal buildings are unoccupied. Because lowering the building temperature can contribute to pipes freezing and signifi-

cant water claims, municipalities are advised to keep thermostats at a temperature of least 55 degrees when buildings are closed. This is particularly important on weekends - especially long weekends - because burst pipes and

water damage may go undetected for 24 to 48 hours or longer.

Preventing frozen pipes avoids property damage, clean-up, lengthy repairs

and building closure.

For more information, contact MIIA Loss Control Manager Jeff Siena at (617) 426-7272, ext. 259, or jsiena@mma.org.

MIIA moving to new office

MIIA will relocate its offices to One Winthrop Square effective Feb. 1. The organization's phone numbers and e-mail addresses will not change.

The new location is about

two blocks from MIIA's current office space at 60 Temple Place. In the new office, the MMA and MIIA will be located together on the second floor of the building. *

MIIA to hold Annual Meeting Jan. 14

The MIIA Annual Meeting and luncheon will be held on Jan. 14 in conjunction with the MMA Annual Meeting & Trade Show at the Hynes Convention Center in Boston. MIIA staff will report on the highlights of fiscal 2005, and MIIA Wellness and Loss Control awards will be presented. *

3 from Mass. win youth service awards

By Stephanie Ackert

Brockton, Cambridge and Barnstable County have been recognized as among the country's "100 Best Communities for Young People."

The recognition came from America's Promise, an organization formed in 1997 with the blessing of several U.S. presidents and originally chaired by Colin Powell. Powell, who stepped down as secretary of state at the beginning of last year, launched the competition in May, and a panel of national civic, business and nonprofit leaders made the choices from among 1,200 entries.

Each community provided information about its efforts to fulfill five promises seen as critical to the well-being of young people: caring adults who are actively involved in their lives; safe

places in which to learn and grow; a healthy start toward adulthood; an effective education that builds marketable skills; and opportunities to help others.

Cambridge highlighted a number of collaborative projects, including The Agenda for Children's Out of School Time initiative. Supported by the city as well as by the Cambridge Community Foundation, this initiative provides training and on-site coaching to help after-school programs enhance quality. The Neighborhood Service Project is a 10-week paid service-learning program that introduces young people to the world of work by engaging them in developing projects that enhance their neighborhoods. Teens, led by a community liaison, identify a need in their com-

munity, design a project to address the need, and showcase their work to the community at large.

Brockton was recognized for "Brockton After Dark," a summer recreation program that originated in 2002, when youth crime in the city had been increasing. In three years, the incidence of crime has decreased. As of the summer of 2004, there were 500 registered youth participants and more than 200 youth and adult spectators and volunteers at seven sites in the city. Teens participated in free activities including basketball, performing arts, open swim, tennis, soccer, volleyball and an open mike night. Through the Family Life Center at the Old Colony YMCA, Brockton is also providing permanent supportive housing to formerly homeless families with children.

Barnstable County was recognized for the Barnstable County Council for Children, Youth and Families, which includes local officials

and private entities as well as organizations that serve children and youth. The council emphasized its partnership with the Barnstable County Department of Human Services and its Human Condition data-collection project, as well as numerous programs, organizations and agencies throughout the county or in individual towns on the Cape.

The winning communities were honored on Nov. 2 in Washington, D.C. A year-long celebration sponsored by America's Promise will include a special day in each of the communities as well as a series of regional forums that will enable cities, towns and counties to share their success stories and exchange strategies.

For details about the 100 Best competition, visit www.americaspromise.org.

Stephanie Ackert is planning and development director for Cambridge's Department of Human Service Programs.

Technical assistance offered to municipalities

The Department of Environmental Protection has announced that it will be increasing its technical assistance and outreach to the state's municipalities in 2006.

The commitment reflects the DEP's recognition that cities and towns face a multitude of complex issues, including a host of environmental regulatory challenges.

This year, the DEP will provide increased assistance to municipalities to help them protect the environment, ensure sustainable growth practices, and avoid noncompliance with environmental rules.

Workshops and assistance materials will be announced in The Beacon and www.mma.org when they are made available.

Information about the

DEP and environmental regulatory requirements is available on the new DEP Web site (www.mass.gov/dep).

Municipal officials are encouraged to contact the closest DEP Regional Office with any questions.

- Central Region (Worcester): Martin Suuberg, (508) 767-2729
- Northeast Region (Wilmington): Dick Chalpin, (978) 694-3345
- Southeast Region (Lakeville): Gary Moran, (508) 946-2712
- Western Region (Springfield): Mike Gorski, (413) 755-2213

For a listing of municipalities covered by each regional office, visit www.mass.gov/dep/about/region/findyour.htm.

Latest Annual Meeting details available on mma.org

The MMA Web site is the best source of up-to-date information about the MMA's 2006 Annual Meeting & Trade Show. Information about schedules, workshops, speakers and the MMA Business Meeting is available on www.mma.org.

Program and hotel registration forms are available online, as is an attendee information brochure. The Web site also features information about the Hynes Convention Center and Sheraton Boston Hotel, including directions and parking information.

Boston Attractions lists things to do and see while visiting the city, as well as descriptions of local restaurants within walking distance of the Annual Meeting site.

To access Annual Meeting information online, visit www.mma.org and click on the MMA Annual Meeting link on the home page. *

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Littleton

Ads offered on police cars

Lacking money to lease new cruisers, the Littleton Police Department has launched a three-year pilot program that invites local businesses to help shoulder the cost in exchange for advertising space on the back of the patrol cars.

Police Chief John Kelly said he pursued the idea after having to lay off four of his patrolmen, two of them permanently, and learning that there was no money in the department's budget to replace patrol cars that had as much as 150,000 miles on them.

While the concept of selling ad space on police cruisers is not unheard of, Kelly said that even with the help of the International Association of Chiefs of Police he was unable to find examples of communities that have done it successfully. Kelly's plan, which has the backing of the Board of Selectmen and was approved by Town Meeting on Nov. 8, calls for raising from sponsors the cost of a three-year lease - \$36,000 - for each of up to three cruisers.

Donelan's Supermarkets has agreed to pay \$12,000 for space slightly larger than a bumper sticker (six inches by two feet) on either the rear fender or the back of the trunk hood of one of the cruisers. Two other businesses have expressed interest, Kelly said. The advertisements will say "in partnership with" followed by the company's logo.

Kelly discounted suggestions, made during Town Meeting, that the police de-

partment would be prone to give preferential treatment to its sponsors. When one resident suggested that it was "only human nature" to do so, Kelly said he replied, "It's also only human nature that we don't like all of our citizens, but we still go to their homes" when summoned.

Gardner

Web site helps businesses

In late November the city of Gardner added an unusual feature to its presence on the Internet: an index of the range of grants, loans, tax credits and technical assistance available to local businesses.

"Gardner4Business," which is linked from the city's home page (www.gardner-ma.gov), is maintained by the British firm J4B at a cost of \$7,500 a year, according to the Gardener Redevelopment Authority. Gardner is the first Massachusetts city to sign up with J4B, which has created customized business-assistance sites for about 200 cities and other government entities in Britain, according to the firm.

The Gardner site features five main categories: "Local Support," "Finance Search," "Loans," "Grants," and "Venture Capital & Tax Credit." Each category includes sub-categories. The "Local Support" category, for example, includes a link labeled "local grants and funding." Clicking on that link calls up a list of nine programs, such as the "Grow Gardner Fund" and "Brownfield Site Assessment Grants," each with a Web page of its own.

The Gardner Redevelop-

ment Authority had been planning to spend money on more conventional means of promoting economic development, such as publishing a glossy brochure, when it heard about J4B, said Robert Hubbard, the city's planning director. The redevelopment authority, which Hubbard also heads, was already in the process of re-vamping the city's Web site.

Hubbard said it's too early to predict how valuable the project will be in attracting and retaining businesses. One question, he said, is whether it would make more sense to operate a Web site of this type on a regional scale rather than to limit it to a single city.

"I decided that if I was going to be able to answer that question, the best thing to do was to get the site up and running," Hubbard said.

Cambridge

Literacy program showcased at NLC conference

For the second year in a row, Cambridge took part in a National League of Cities event that showcases innovative programs.

Cambridge's "Let's Talk ... it makes a difference!" campaign, a program that promotes oral development among very young children as a means of advancing literacy skills, was among about 50 programs chosen for display at the NLC's Congress of Cities conference last month in Charlotte, N.C.

The "Let's Talk" program is part of a broader initiative, involving several city departments as well as community organizations,

known as The Agenda for Children.

"Let's Talk," which was introduced in 2002, is based on research showing that vocabulary is the most important determinant of a child's ability to learn to read. The program, which is promoted through maternity visits, home visits and work shops, is designed to create greater awareness among parents of the value of interacting with very young children as well as techniques for encouraging conversation.

Lei-Anne Ellis, the Agenda for Children's literacy coordinator, was at the NLC conference to answer questions about "Let's Talk." Among the visitors to the Cambridge booth, she said, was a woman from Grand Rapids, Mich., who spoke enthusiastically of having replicated the "Cambridge Walks" program that was showcased at the NLC conference the year before. The visitor from Grand Rapids, according to Ellis, said she looked forward to modeling a program on "Let's Talk" as well. *

How to reach us

We encourage readers to send their comments, story ideas, news items, and notices of upcoming events to The Beacon. Address mail to: Beacon editor, 60 Temple Place, Boston, MA 02111. Or fax items to (617) 695-1314, or e-mail them to editor@mma.org. *

Contract enables Belmont to lock in energy savings

Everyone knows that installing energy-efficient features in public buildings can save money over the long run. But the upfront costs for some measures can be prohibitive, particularly in an era of tight budget constraints.

In a move that may become more common as a result of legislation that late last month was close to winning final approval, Belmont last spring signed a \$1.7 million contract with what is known as an energy services company. The contract guarantees the town at least \$200,000 in cost savings over each of the next 10 years. The guaranteed savings are possibly in part because energy service companies (known as ESCOs) have the resources to make the energy- and conservation-related improvements in a very short time.

"We would not have had the manpower to do this all at once," says Jenny Fallon, chair of the town committee that entered into the agreement with Westborough-based Noresco, an ESCO that is active throughout

New England.

Perhaps most significant is that the guaranteed savings enable Belmont to fund the improvements to six of its schools and five town government buildings out of its operating budgets rather than as capital expenses.

Energy service companies, according to Marc Breslow of the advocacy group Massachusetts Climate Action Network, typically couple measures that bring quick savings, such as energy-efficient lighting, with projects that only slowly pay for themselves, such as replacing boilers.

In Belmont, lighting-related improvements account for about 50 percent of the overall project's projected savings. Other money-saving measures include energy-monitoring systems in three elementary schools, boiler controllers, an insulating cover for the high school swimming pool, and water-conserving toilets.

A contract with an ESCO can also include projects not directly related to conservation.

In Belmont, Fallon says, "We are replacing six heating and ventilating units on

the roof of the high school. That's not something that will save us any money in energy costs. But what it will do is make sure that the [heating and ventilation] system continues to work."

The town, according to Fallon, is the first in Massachusetts to contract with an ESCO for a project that involves both school and town government buildings. The idea originated with Selectman Paul Solomon, who in early 2003 formed an ad hoc committee that included the head of Belmont's municipal light department as well as the building services managers for both the town and the school system.

That more than two years passed before the contract was entered into with Noresco is partly the result of procedural uncertainties. The initial members of the ad hoc group, according to Solomon, assumed that it wasn't necessary for Town Meeting to authorize the contract, since the arrangement with the ESCO would not require that any money be appropriated.

But Solomon says that others who became involved later on, including the town

treasurer, urged the group to seek Town Meeting approval. In April 2004, Belmont residents authorized creation of the more formal group headed by Fallon. That group, known as the Facilities Energy Management Project Committee, had to re-do some of the steps already taken, including reissuing the project's request-for-proposal.

John Kauppinen, senior account executive at Noresco, says that pending legislation – approved by lawmakers in November but sent back to the Legislature by Gov. Mitt Romney for minor modifications – should lead to a more streamlined approach for municipalities to follow. Also likely to make ESCOs more attractive, of course, are rising energy costs.

"I felt that I probably couldn't have sold this solely on the basis that it was environmentally friendly," Solomon recalls. "But I did think that I could sell it on the basis that it would save money."

For more information, contact Jenny Fallon at (617) 489-3860.

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local budgets in 2001 to 10.6 percent in 2005, a 62 percent increase in just four years. For most communities, approximately 80 percent of the annual property tax increase allowed under Proposition 2 1/2 is consumed by health insurance increases. For a substantial number of communities, the entire property tax revenue increase goes to health in-

surance.

The MMA will be working with legislative leaders to secure for local government the same flexibility as the state has in providing health insurance.

Legislators can also expect to hear concerns from cities and towns building school projects from the "grandfathered" waiting list and finding that cost standards tem-

porarily frozen by law two years ago simply aren't keeping pace with the skyrocketing cost of construction materials and other project components.

The dramatic increase in the local share of school projects that are under way or planned comes at a difficult financial time for cities and towns that are still trying to deal with deep local

aid cuts from two years ago, depleted reserves, and unrest over high property tax bills. With a new \$500 million per year state-share school building program slated to start in fiscal 2008, legislative involvement will be needed to make sure that necessary inflation-driven funding for waiting list projects isn't left solely to local property tax payers. *

PEOPLE

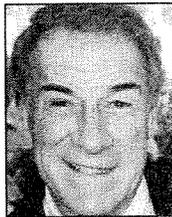
Michael Rourke, chief administrative office in Newton since 1998, is set to retire on Jan. 4. Prior



Rourke

to assuming the position in Newton, Rourke worked for the town of Natick for more than three decades, 17 of them as deputy town administrator. Newton Mayor David Cohen said of Rourke, "[He] handled the responsibilities of his position with dignity and grace, with class and intelligence. ... I have relied on Mike's wisdom, levity, and on his ability to get things done."

In Edgartown, Town Administrator **Peter Bettencourt** is retiring after 36 years in the position,



Bettencourt

which until 1998 carried the title of executive secretary. The new town administrator is **Pamela Dolby**, who has a total of 28 years experience in Edgartown government positions, most recently as parks commis-

sion administrator.

In Randolph, **Michael Carroll** takes over this month as executive secretary, a position that **Paul Connors** has held for the past 13 years. Connors, who was set to retire at the end of December, was on the Randolph Board of Selectmen for an additional 21 years and also was on the Board of Health for more than two decades. Carroll has served as both a selectman and as executive secretary in Wrentham.



Connors

Richard MacDonald, Duxbury's acting town manager since last June, has been appointed to the position on a permanent basis. MacDonald, Duxbury's long-time inspection services director, became acting town manager after **Rocco Longo** left to become town manager in Billerica.

The Uxbridge Board of Selectmen on Dec. 12 chose **Timothy McInerney**, the former town administrator in Seekonk, to serve as in-

terim town manager. **Allan Klepper**, the former town manager in Uxbridge, is serving as interim town administrator in Sutton. Klepper is taking the place of **Patricia Nedoroscik**, who retired in early December.

Stephen Zanni was declared the victor in his race for a City Council seat in Methuen following a Nov. 30 recount. Results on election night on Nov. 8 had shown Zanni holding a five-vote lead over the next-closest candidate.

In Watertown, where a council race also required a recount, **Angeline Kounelis** was declared the winner. Kounelis defeated incumbent Salvatore Ciccarelli.

Jan Silva, administrative assistant to Sudbury selectmen since 1976, was set to

retire at the end of last month. "She's been our right arm, our institutional memory, and she will be sorely missed by all who have worked with her," Town Manager Maureen Valente told the MetroWest Daily News.

Louis Andrews, 77, Watertown's first Town Council president, died on Dec. 2. Andrews chaired the chart commission that in 1980 led to Watertown's transition to a council-manager form of government.

Robert A. Parker Jr., 8 former police chief in Spencer, died on Nov. 26. Parker, who served as police chief for 33 years, until 1990, was shot and seriously wounded in an incident involving a fugitive from a Connecticut mental hospital in 1971.

MMPA salary survey available this month

The Massachusetts Municipal Personnel Association's 2006 Benchmark Title Salary Survey will be published this month.

The annual salary survey collects a range of information about the work hours and the maximum and minimum annual pay for various key municipal positions across the state. The MMPA publishes the information in a precise and usable format.

This book and other MMPA publications will be available for sale at the MMPA booth (1129) at the MMA Annual Meeting & Trade Show in Boston.

MMPA members, who receive one free copy of the survey as part of their membership, are encouraged to pick up their copy at the MMPA booth. The MMPA will mail the book to communities that do not receive their complementary copy at the MMA Annual Meeting.

Nonmembers may purchase the volume at a nominal price, with a reduced price offered for those who participated in the survey.

Contact: MMA Administrative Assistant Kristi Williams

MTF

continued from page 3

achusetts economy will fail to live up to its potential to compete and thrive until local aid to cities and towns is substantially increased.

The study, commissioned by the MMA, is a comprehensive assessment of key economic trends and principles regarding attracting

and retaining jobs and people, as well as a detailed examination of the treatment of local aid over the past 25 years. The final report will be released at the MMA's 2006 Annual Meeting on Jan. 14.

The MTF report is available at www.mma.org. *

Executive director's report

continued from page 2

these problems? Will you delegate this work to others? For example, will you commit to meeting directly with the Local Government Advisory Commission and take other steps to ensure access, dialogue and shared involvement in finding solutions and policies to unite state and local government?

- What will you ask of local leaders, and how will you call on us and challenge us?

These are some of the questions that should be

asked and answered during this campaign.

But first, even as local officials get to know the candidates, ask these questions, and judge who will be the best person to build a lasting and mutually beneficial state-local relationship for the future, we also know that Gov. Mitt Romney is committed and engaged in his job, and we all want his final year in the Corner Office to be a strong and successful one.

In just a few weeks, the governor will submit the

final state budget plan of his administration. For this to be a strong and successful year, we call on the governor to fully uncap the Lottery in fiscal 2007, to ensure that Chapter 70 aid is significantly increased, including guaranteed per-student minimum aid increases in all districts and a plan to renew and reform the formula and the foundation budget, and to fully fund the core local aid accounts that are so vital to the fiscal health and service capacity of municipali-

ties.

With these necessary priorities included in the budget, 2006 will be a strong and successful transition year as we move to build a lasting revenue-sharing compact for the future.

Without these priorities, 2006 will be a missed opportunity and today's serious problems will get even worse.

Let the questions and answers begin.

Best wishes for a strong and successful New Year for us all. *

March conference to examine compost facilities

A two-day conference in March on managing food waste and composting in Massachusetts will include a discussion of public-private partnerships as a means of increasing recycling and composting capacity.

"The Massachusetts Organics Recycling Summit: Growing Business Opportunities in Organic Recycling," will be held at the Best Western Royal Plaza in Marlborough March 1 and 2.

The event will also feature visits to local compost facili-

ties and businesses such as supermarkets that divert food waste.

The agenda and registration information for the event will be posted on the Department of Environmental Protection's Web site at www.mass.gov/dep/recycle/reduce/composti.htm.

Information also may be obtained by contacting the DEP's Steve Long at stephen.long@state.ma.us or (617) 292-5734; or Sumner Martinson at sumner.martinson@state.ma.us or (617) 292-5969. *

MMMA offers resources about forms of government

If your town is considering a change in its form of government, the Massachusetts Municipal Management Association offers some free resources that can help.

The MMMA has compiled an information kit that answers many frequently asked questions, describes the different forms of government

with a manager, and provides information from the International City/County Management Association on recruiting qualified manager candidates.

The MMMA has also organized a speakers bureau of members that are prepared to meet with charter commissions, boards of selectmen, or citizens groups to

discuss the options available to communities.

For more information,

contact MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker. *

Send us your address changes

In order to maintain accurate records – and to assure that our members receive MMA publications – we need to know when you change your address or role in your community.

Please send us any changes, and include your title, municipality or organi-

zation, address, and phone and fax numbers.

Changes should be sent to MMA Database Coordinator Michael Pingpank at 60 Temple Place, Boston, MA 02111 or database@mma.org.

Call (800) 882-1498 if you have any questions. *

Water management conference is April 18

The Executive Office of Environmental Affairs and the Office of Technical Assistance will present the conference "Water Resource Management: Policies and Successful Strategies" on April 18 in Boxborough.

The conference will provide tools and strategies to help industries and municipalities conserve water resources, which are increasingly stressed by growth in the state.

Topics include technologies for improving water efficiency, water reuse, innovative approaches to finding "new" water, addressing peak demand, best management practices for industries, and the regulatory environment.

Additional conference sponsors are the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, the 495/MetroWest Corridor Partnership, and Associated Industries of Massachusetts.

More information will be posted at www.mass.gov/envir/ota. *

H MASSACHUSETTS MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION 2006 Annual Meeting & Trade Show

Sheraton Boston Hotel January 12, 13, 14, 2006

HOTEL ROOM RESERVATION FORM

The Sheraton Boston Hotel is the host hotel for the 2006 MMA Annual Meeting & Trade Show. The Friday and Saturday night banquets will be held at the Sheraton, as well as Friday morning's opening session.

Located in Boston's Back Bay neighborhood, the Sheraton Boston is easily accessible from the Mass. Pike and public transportation. Just steps away from the hotel, guests will find world-class restaurants, the Prudential Center Mall, and Newbury Street. The hotel is connected to the Hynes Convention Center, allowing easy access to conference activities. The hotel features new plush-top mattresses and Boston's largest indoor/outdoor pool.

The MMA has negotiated special room rates at the Sheraton for all Annual Meeting participants. Use this form to register directly with the hotel, not the MMA. The following conditions apply:

- All reservations will be honored on a first-come, first-served basis and are subject to availability.
 - Room reservations must be made by Dec. 22, 2005, to be eligible for the special MMA rates.
 - A deposit of one night's accommodation plus tax (12.45%) for each room reserved must accompany each reservation.
 - Cancellations must be made at least 72 hours prior to your stated arrival time in order to have your deposit refunded.
 - If you do not arrive on your stated arrival date, you will lose your deposit and the hotel will cancel the rest of your reservation.
 - Hotel check-in is after 3 p.m.; check-out is by noon. Baggage storage space is available if you arrive before check-in time.
- Please use a separate Hotel Reservation Form for each room you wish to reserve.

I wish to reserve one room for (check one):

- Single occupancy - \$129 plus tax
- Double occupancy - \$139 plus tax
- Additional person - \$40 plus tax

For the following night(s) (check as many as apply):

- Thursday, January 12
- Friday, January 13
- Saturday, January 14

Rate will be honored 3 days prior to and after meeting dates based on availability.

- I would like to receive hospitality suite rental and catering information.
- I desire a handicapped-accessible room.
- I prefer a non-smoking room.

First night deposit enclosed.

Charge my credit card.

I will use this to settle my account Yes No

Credit Card type:

AMEX Visa MC Diner's Discover

Credit Card # _____

Expiration Date _____

Cardholder's Signature _____

I have enclosed a deposit of (circle one) \$129 / \$139 plus tax (12.45%) payable to Sheraton Boston Hotel.

Name (please print) _____ Phone _____

Mailing Address _____

City/Town _____ State _____ Zip _____

Sharing room with _____

Arrival Date _____ Arrival Time _____ Departure Date _____

Signed _____ Date _____

Please confirm my reservation.

For your special MMA room rate, please mail this form with deposit to:
Sheraton Boston Hotel, 39 Dalton St., Boston, MA 02199

Phone: (800) 325-3535 Fax: (617) 236-6061

If you have needs that require special accommodations, please call the hotel reservations desk directly.

P

MASSACHUSETTS MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION 2006 Annual Meeting & Trade Show

January 13 & 14, 2006

Hynes Convention Center and Sheraton Boston Hotel, Boston

PROGRAM REGISTRATION FORM

Please fill out form completely.

Name (please print or type)

Title

Municipality, organization or other affiliation

First name or nickname for badge

Guest's name (include first name or nickname for badge)
Please note: "Personal guest" registration category is not for use by
co-workers or associates within your community.

Billing address

City or town State ZIP code

Daytime phone number Fax number

E-mail address

ARE YOU A MEMBER OF:

- Association of Town Finance Committees
- Massachusetts Mayors' Association
- Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association
- Massachusetts Municipal Management Association
- Massachusetts Municipal Personnel Association
- Massachusetts Selectmen's Association
- Small Town Administrators of Massachusetts

Please check one:

Two-Day Program

Member.....\$175 Nonmember.....\$315

One-Day Program

Member.....\$130 Nonmember.....\$220

Please choose one: Friday only Saturday only

Amount due for registration (subtotal) \$ _____

EVENTS

of Tickets

_____ Friday Dinner @ \$39 per person \$ _____

_____ Saturday Dinner @ \$45 per person \$ _____

_____ Women Elected Municipal
Officials lunch (Friday) @ \$25 per person \$ _____

Amount due for events (subtotal) \$ _____

_____ Payment enclosed

_____ Please invoice (add \$5 invoice charge) \$ _____

TOTAL DUE \$ _____

(Make check or money order payable to Massachusetts Municipal Association.)

Your registration fee includes admission to the keynote address, all workshops, your member group business meeting, the trade show, opening and presidents' receptions. Two weeks prior to the meeting you will receive a confirmation of your registration, directions and parking instructions, and other pertinent information.

Refunds will be made in full for registration or meal tickets ONLY if you notify the MMA by a letter postmarked no later than December 12, 2005. Please use municipal letterhead to request a refund.

Hotel reservations must be made directly with the Sheraton Boston Hotel at (800) 325-3535.

Please complete this form and mail it to:

Annual Meeting, Massachusetts Municipal Association

60 Temple Place, Boston, Massachusetts 02111

or fax to (617) 695-1314

For up-to-date info, see www.mma.org

(617) 426-7272

(800) 882-1498

For Office Use Only: Amount: _____ Check #: _____ Date: _____

MMA Publications Order Form

The MMA and its member groups and affiliated organizations publish a number of periodicals, guidebooks and reference manuals related to municipal government in Massachusetts. This form may be used to order any of these regularly published materials. Member prices apply to local officials from MMA member communities. For more information, call the MMA at (800) 882-1498, or visit www.mma.org. (Revised Dec. 2005)

The Beacon (1 year subscription, 11 issues)
 Members: \$18 Nonmembers: \$36 Quantity _____ Subtotal _____
 Postage and handling: \$5 per subscription

Municipal Advocate (1 year subscription, 4 issues plus Massachusetts Municipal Directory)
 Members: \$49 Nonmembers: \$99 Quantity _____ Subtotal _____
 Postage and handling: \$5 per subscription

2005-2006 Massachusetts Municipal Directory
 Members: \$49 Nonmembers: \$99 Quantity _____ Subtotal _____
 Postage and handling: \$4.50 for one; \$1.50 for each additional

Handbook for Massachusetts Selectmen (revised 1998)
 Member selectmen: \$10 Other MMA members: \$20 Nonmembers: \$35 Quantity _____ Subtotal _____
 Postage and handling: \$3.20 for first 2 copies; \$1.10 for each additional

ATFC Finance Committee Handbook CD-ROM (revised 2004)
 Free for dues-paying ATFC members ATFC member community: \$20 Nonmembers: \$35 Quantity _____ Subtotal _____

Mass Innovations: A Three-Year Compendium of Creative Municipal Programs
 Price: \$3 Postage and handling: \$2 per copy Quantity _____ Subtotal _____

MMPA Fiscal 2006 Annual Benchmark Titles Salary Survey
 MMPA members: \$30 Nonmember participants: \$35 Nonparticipant, nonmember: \$75
 (prices include postage) Quantity _____ Subtotal _____

MMPA Fiscal 2005 Police and Fire Compensation and Benefit Survey

<i>Single book</i>	MMPA members: Participant: \$35 Non-participant: \$40	Quantity _____	Subtotal _____
<i> </i> police OR fire <i> </i> (circle one)	Nonmembers: Participant: \$40 Non-participant: \$125	Quantity _____	Subtotal _____
<i>Both books</i>	MMPA members: Participant: \$60 Non-participant: \$70	Quantity _____	Subtotal _____
	Nonmembers: Participant: \$70 Non-participant: \$250	Quantity _____	Subtotal _____

Payment enclosed Please invoice (add \$5 charge) Invoice charge _____
TOTAL _____

Name and title _____
 Organization _____
 Mailing address _____
 City, state and ZIP _____
 Phone _____ Fax _____

**Return this form to: MMA Publications, 60 Temple Place, Boston, MA 02111, or fax to (617) 695-1314.
 Note: Address as of Feb. 1: One Winthrop Square, Boston, MA 02110**

For MMA use only.	Date:	Amount Received:	Check Number:
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Massachusetts Municipal Association Partnership Program Application

Partnership Program Benefits

A subscription to *The Beacon*, the MMA's monthly newsletter. *The Beacon* contains the latest news on state and federal legislation and association activities. Regular features include an events calendar and classified advertisements. (Additional issues can be purchased at a reduced rate.)

A subscription to the *Municipal Advocate*, the MMA's quarterly news magazine. The *Municipal Advocate* contains in-depth feature articles on various aspects of municipal management, information processing, public works, budgeting, personnel management and land use issues. (Additional issues can be purchased at a reduced rate.)

The MMA's *Massachusetts Municipal Directory*, printed annually, offers a complete listing of key officials in each of the state's 351 cities and towns, along with information about county government, regional planning agencies, charter schools and other statewide organizations.

Access to Massachusetts Local Net, the MMA's members-only online information service. This service enables members to download information on a variety of relevant topics.

Reduced rates on special MMA publications.

About the MMA

The Massachusetts Municipal Association is a private, non-profit, nonpartisan organization of cities and towns established in 1979 to improve the effectiveness of local government in the commonwealth. Massachusetts cities and towns are the workhorses of government, delivering essential services to every citizen every single day: police and fire protection, public education, library programs, road maintenance, safe drinking water, sewer disposal, trash collection and much more.

The MMA serves as an advocate for its members before the Massachusetts Legislature, the administration, regulatory bodies and the courts; develops and pursues a municipal policy that meets present and future needs of their state's communities and the people who live in them; provides training, news information, insurance, legal aid, policy research and management assistance to municipal officials to help them improve the quality of local government.

Membership Fees

The MMA Partnership Program for Businesses has been designed for private sector companies who provide products and services to municipalities in the commonwealth. Participating companies have access to the MMA through publications, sponsorship programs and informal networking opportunities.

The MMA Partnership Program for Nonprofits has been designed for organizations that support the objectives of cities and towns.

Please check one:

- Business Partner \$400
- Non-profit Partner \$300

Organization _____

Contact _____

Title _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Fax _____

Web site _____

E-mail _____

Description of Services _____

Return completed form with payment to:
Database Manager
Massachusetts Municipal Association
60 Temple Place, Boston, MA 02111
(617) 426-7272
www.mma.org

Important Notice

Upon acceptance, a duplicate copy of this form will be signed by the MMA and returned to the Partnership Program applicant. The MMA reserves the right in its sole discretion to refuse or decline this application, in which event payment will be returned.

Authorized Signature (applicant) _____ Print Name _____ Date _____

Authorized Signature (MMA) _____ Print Name _____ Date _____

BULLETIN BOARD

SEEKING INFORMATION

DEMOLITION DELAY BYLAWS

The town of Truro seeks copies of demolition delay bylaws from Massachusetts towns. Please send to Town Administrator Pamela Nolan at townadm@truro-ma.gov or Town Hall, 24 Town Hall Road, Truro, MA 02666. (1/06)

HISTORIC REVIEW BYLAWS

The town of Truro seeks copies of historic review bylaws from Massachusetts towns. Please send to Town Administrator Pamela Nolan at townadm@truro-ma.gov or Town Hall, 24 Town Hall Road, Truro, MA 02666. (1/06)

INTERNET USE POLICIES

The town of Rockport seeks information from communities that have developed e-mail and

Internet use policies. Please send copies and/or information to Michael J. Racicot at mracicot@town.rockport.ma.us or Town of Rockport, 34 Broadway, Rockport, MA 01966. (1/06)

SELECTMEN POLICIES – The town of Chelmsford seeks information from other communities that have a selectmen's policy manual available for review. Please send information to Kellie Hebert, assistant to the town manager, at

khebert@townofchelmsford.us or Chelmsford Town Offices, 50 Billerica Road, Chelmsford, MA 01824, or call (978) 250-5202. (12/05)

Local officials may submit items for publication in the *Bulletin Board*, either *Seeking Information* or *Offering Information*, free of charge. Please limit submissions to 50 words. Send them to Jason Imbesi at the MMA (60 Temple Place, Boston, MA 02111; fax: (617) 695-1314; e-mail: bullboard@mna.org).

Budget

continued from page 1

fore taking into account proposals for expanded health care coverage and other new spending initiatives that are now under consideration.”

At a mid-December meeting with the governor's new chief budget officer, Thomas Trimarco, the MMA asked that the governor propose in his budget the complete elimination of the Lottery cap next year rather than over the four-year schedule adopted by the Legislature last year. With Lottery revenues expected to grow very little next year, the MMA estimates that ending the Lottery cap in fiscal 2007 would provide an increase of about \$126 million in Lot-

tery distributions for cities and towns.

MMA President and Brookline Town Administrator Richard Kelliher and MMA Vice President and Northampton Mayor Clare Higgins also asked Secretary Trimarco to make sure that the budget include the state's share of growth in local “foundation budgets” under the state's Chapter 70 school aid law, and to provide minimum aid of at least \$50 per student and start an overhaul of the equity provisions in school aid law.

The governor's budget recommendation for fiscal 2007 is scheduled to be filed with the Legislature by Jan. 25. *



ICMA president speaks

Michael Willis, president of the International City/County Management Association, speaks during the fall conference of the Massachusetts Municipal Management Association on Nov. 17 in Amherst. Willis, who is the general manager of the Blue Hills City Council in Katoomba, Australia, attended an ICMA board meeting in Boston a week earlier. Boston has been chosen as the site for the ICMA Annual Conference in 2013.

Yarrow

continued from page 1

ing music for more than 40 years. Over the decades he has championed a number of social causes, including civil rights and alleviating hunger and homelessness.

Bethany Yarrow in 2003 released her debut CD, “Rock Island,” described by one reviewer as “a collection of traditional folk songs brought back to glorious,

pulsating, dramatic life by an artist whose delicate voice breathes from the depths of a gothic spirit.”

The Yale University graduate also won critical acclaim for a documentary film she made in the early 1990s about the lives of black women in the townships of Cape Town, South Africa.

– Mitch Evich

Resolution

continued from page 5

error must grant cities and towns more effective tools to address health insurance and other employee benefit costs, including changes to how employer-employee contribution rates and benefit plan features are determined, at a minimum allowing cities and towns to make these decisions in the same way that state government is able to make similar decisions regarding benefits for state employees;

The division of financial responsibility between the state and cities and towns for government services needs to be revisited to ensure that local property tax revenues are not being diverted to pay for state or authority-

related obligations, including for county government and transportation authorities;

State government must begin to work collaboratively with cities and towns to develop solutions to the catastrophic financial impacts posed by employee post-retirement health care costs to both state and local governments; and

Cities and towns need to move toward regional approaches to service delivery and cost-sharing using changes to state law to facilitate regional structures and strong technical assistance and financial incentive programs. *

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Town Clerk

Town of Wilmington

The town of Wilmington is seeking qualified and experienced applicants for the position of Town Clerk. The successful candidate must have thorough knowledge of all facets of this senior level position including, but not limited to, records management, election and town meeting administration, licensing, and census and voter registration. Applicants should possess knowledge of appropriate Mass. General Laws and be familiar with the local bylaw process. Excellent communication, interpersonal, organizational, management and computer skills required. A minimum of five years' related experience required. Bachelor's degree and supervisory experience preferred. Successful candidate will replace retiring Town Clerk in March of 2006. Salary range: \$47,363.68-\$59,933.64 with excellent benefits. Please send letter of interest and resume by Jan. 20 to Michael A. Cairra, Town Manager, 121 Glen Road, Wilmington, MA 01887-3597. AA/EOE

Town Administrator

Town of Sutton

The town of Sutton (pop. 9,388), a beautiful Central Massachusetts/Greater Worcester area community, is seeking qualified candidates for the position of Town Administrator to serve as Chief Administrative Officer and primary appointing authority for most municipal non-school positions. This position oversees and manages daily town operations including all non-elected departments, and is responsible for preparation and maintenance of an annual \$21-plus million operating and capital budget. Supervises, directs and is responsible for administering all municipal capital and infrastructure projects and municipal purchasing. Candidates must have proven organizational development, communication and writing skills. Must have experience in budget development, conducting negotiations, labor relations, economic development, staff development and supervision, facility and infrastructure planning and oversight, and in effective delegation

of assignments and tasks. Applicants must have at least five years of responsible and significant municipal administrative experience in a similar position, and extensive experience working with the public and responding to customer service requests. Prior experience in a Massachusetts community strongly preferred. Master's degree in public administration is desired and preferred; a bachelor's degree in a related field is required. Send resume, cover letter, salary history and requirements, and three professional references to Town Administrator Screening Committee, 4 Uxbridge Road, Sutton, MA 01590. Salary negotiable DOE/DOQ from mid-\$70s. Deadline for submission of applications is noon on Jan. 27. AA/EOE

Finance Director/Assistant Town Manager

Town of Ashland

This is an opportunity to be part of a leadership team in a community with exciting possibilities. The town of Ashland, Mass. (pop. 16,000, located west of Boston) is seeking a Finance Director/Assistant Town Manager working under the supervision of the Town Manager. This highly responsible position will provide backup for the Town Manager; oversee the Finance Department; and oversee municipal finance operations. Applicants must possess a bachelor's degree in a related field and a minimum of five years' experience; must have a thorough knowledge of finance operations; demonstrated supervisory, customer service and public presentations skills. Salary range is \$75,000-\$98,000 and includes excellent benefits. Qualified applicants should send letter of interest and resume to Town Manager, 101 Main St., Ashland, MA 01721 or e-mail: jpetrin@Ashlandmass.com. Position open until suitable candidate is found. AA/EOE

Police Chief

Town of Chelmsford

The town of Chelmsford (pop. 33,858) seeks qualified candidates for the position of Chief of Police. The Chief of Police reports to the Town Manager and supervises a department of 55 sworn officers, dispatchers, auxiliary and civilian support personnel with an operating budget of \$4.9 million. Candidates

Classified advertising rates and information

The Beacon accepts classified ads from units of government, public agencies, and individuals.

Classified advertising categories are: Employment Opportunities, Requests for Proposals, Situations Wanted, Services, and Items for Sale.

Only one job opening, request for proposals, or item for sale can be listed per ad. The MMA cannot assume responsibility for information or claims made in any advertisement.

Employment advertising rates

Employment classified ad rates include publication in The Beacon and on the MMA's Web site (www.mma.org), though a discount is available for those who request placement of an ad only in The Beacon or on the Web.

Member rates: \$95 for first 100 words; \$45 for each additional block of up to 50 words (Rate for one format only [print or Web]); \$70 for first 100 words, \$35 for each additional block of up to 50 words)

Nonmember rates: \$145 for first 100 words; \$70 for each additional block of up to 50 words (Rate for one format only [print or Web]); \$105 for first 100 words, \$55 for each additional block of up to 50 words)

Other classified advertising rates (no Web placement)

Member rates: \$70 for first 100 words; \$35 for each additional block of up to 50 words

Nonmember rates: \$105 for first 100 words; \$55 for each additional block of up to 50 words

Web ad guarantee

The MMA will publish employment ads sent electronically – by e-mail or via our online form – on its Web site within two business days of when they are received. Ads sent by mail or fax will be posted within three business days of when they are received. For more information about Web advertising, see www.mma.org/jobs.

Beacon deadlines and publication dates

The Beacon is published on the first business day of each month, except in the summer, when a combined July-August issue is printed in mid-July.

The following is the upcoming schedule:

February Beacon

Ad deadline: January 17

Publication date: February 1

March Beacon

Ad deadline: February 14

Publication date: March 1

April Beacon

Ad deadline: March 16

Publication date: March 31

Placing an ad

If possible, ads should be e-mailed, preferably with the text placed in the body of the e-mail message, to beacon_ads@mma.org. Otherwise, they may be faxed to (617) 695-1314 or mailed to the MMA.

For more information, call Jason Imbesi at the MMA at (617) 426-7272.

Missed the Beacon deadline for an employment ad?

You can still get the word out – right away.

See www.mma.org/jobs for details.

must have a minimum of a bachelor's degree in criminal justice or related field (a master's degree is preferred) and 10 years of progressive experience in law enforcement with five years of supervisory experience. The ideal candidate will have strong leadership and supervisory skills, excellent interpersonal skills to include public speaking, mediation and facilitation skills, prior financial management experience, and a commitment to the training/development and coaching of department staff. Salary range is \$83,082-\$97,344. Please send a letter of interest and resume by Jan. 16 to Personnel Director, 50 Billerica Road, Chelmsford, MA 01824 or e-mail: jparziale@townofchelmsford.us. AA/EOE

Human Services Director

Town of Chelmsford

The town of Chelmsford (pop. 33,858) seeks qualified candidates for the position of Human

Services Director. The Human Services Director reports to the Town Manager and oversees the daily operations of an active center directing a wide range of human services programs in the town. Manages over 20 full- and part-time staff providing the best and most efficient services to an elder population. Candidates must have a minimum of a bachelor's degree in social science study or related field and 10 years' experience in human services with five years of supervisory experience. The ideal candidate will have strong leadership skills, excellent interpersonal skills to include public speaking, prior financial management and grant writing experience. Must be proficient in Excel, Word, Outlook and familiar with PowerPoint. A detailed job description is available upon request. Salary range is \$49,433-\$57,327 DOE. Please send cover letter and resume by

EMPLOYMENT, continued on 24

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Continued from page 23

Jan. 20 to Personnel Director, Town of Chelmsford, 50 Billerica Road, Chelmsford, MA 01824 or e-mail: jparziale@townofchelmsford.us. AA/EOE

Town Manager

Town of Winthrop

Winthrop is a community of 18,500 residents immediately north of Boston. The town recently adopted a Home Rule Charter and is seeking its first Town Manager. Election of the first nine-member town council, including a council president, was held on Nov. 8. The new government takes office Jan. 3. The Town Manager is nominated by the council president and appointed by the town council. The Town Manager is the chief administrative officer and coordinates the delivery of a full range of municipal services and is responsible for appointing department heads, preparing and administering a budget of \$40.3 million, including schools, and preparing the town's capital outlay program. Other specific responsibilities include work with the council president and town council as they develop policies and implement those policies, negotiate collective bargaining agreements, administer the human resources functions and work collaboratively with town agencies and community organizations. The successful candidate must have proven leadership qualities, strong communicative skills, both oral and written, possess thorough knowledge of pertinent state municipal and labor laws and have sound financial and budgeting skills. The charter has established a salary range for the first Town Manager between \$95,000-\$110,000. Qualifications: a master's degree in public administration, business administration or equivalent work experience preferred. A minimum of eight years' senior administrative experience in municipal government, or comparable managerial experience, overseeing wide range of services is required. Massachusetts experience preferred. Applications and resumes, or inquiries, in confidence to Groux & Associates, c/o Thomas J. Groux, PO Box 395, N. Chatham, MA 02650 or e-mail: tgroux@cape.com. Applications must be received no later than

Jan. 27. Prior applicants are welcome to re-apply. The town of Winthrop is an AA/EOE.

Assistant Director of Recreation

Town of Hudson

The Hudson Division of Recreation is seeking a self-motivated individual to fill a full-time position in a fast-paced municipal Recreation Department. Candidates must possess excellent communication skills, knowledge of administration of recreation programming and services, planning and organizational skills, and the ability to act independently. Duties consist of customer service, recording keeping, interpretation and implementation of policies and procedures; assist in the development and promotion of programs and services; solicitation of donations and collection of program fees; recruitment and supervision of seasonal staff; and scheduling of facilities. Applicant must have excellent computer skills. Applicants must be flexible as the hours of this position vary, based on programs, fundraising/community events, and meetings. Minimum qualifications are a bachelor's degree in recreation management or a related field; municipal experience in a supervisory capacity and or equivalent combination of education and experience. Salary range: \$36,741-\$47,400. A full job description is available at the Division of Recreation, 78 Main St., Town Hall, Hudson, MA 01749. Please submit resumes and cover letter to the same address. For more information, contact Linda Ghiloni, Director of Recreation, (978) 568-9642 or by e-mail: lghiloni@townofhudson.org. The town of Hudson is an AA/EOE.

Recreation Director

Town of Hingham

The town of Hingham, Mass., is seeking a full-time Recreation Director who possesses vision and experience to provide professional management and administration in preparing, coordinating, and implementing an overall community recreation program. Duties include recruiting, training, and supervising staff; developing and administering budget and revolving funds; maintaining records; and performing public relations functions for the department. Bachelor's degree in recreation or related field and five years of

experience in recreation management, including at least two years in a supervisory capacity, or any equivalent combination and certification by National Recreation and Parks Association is desirable. Candidate must be able to work independently, have strong communication, customer service and organizational skills and the ability to work cooperatively with various organizations and other town departments. Salary range: \$49,677-\$62,616 with excellent benefits. Send letter of interest and resume by Jan. 17 to HR, 210 Central St., Hingham, MA 02563. Fax: (781) 741-1454, phone: (781) 804-2479. AA/EOE

Town Treasurer

Town of Ashburnham

The town of Ashburnham (pop. 5,900) seeks qualified for the position of Town Treasurer. Working under the administrative direction of the Town Administrator, the Treasurer is responsible for the administration of all town funds including short- and long-term investments, borrowings, cash analysis, payroll preparation, employee benefits administration, trust funds management, etc. Applicants should have a background in progressively responsible financial management positions, with at least three-five years experience in municipal financial management, or a comparable combination of education and experience. Experience as a municipal Treasurer as well as Mass. certification preferred. Experience with Excel spreadsheets required and experience with MUNIS software is preferred. The successful appointee must be bondable. This position supervises one full-time clerk and has a flexible part-time schedule averaging 20 hrs/wk. Salary is negotiable with the successful candidate but is not expected to exceed \$35,000 annually. Interested candidates may submit a cover letter and resume to Town Administrator Kevin Paicos, Town Hall, 32 Main St., Ashburnham, MA 01430 or by e-mail to KPaicos@ashburnhamma.gov. Ashburnham is an AA/EOE. This position will remain open until a suitable candidate is appointed.

Sewer Superintendent

Town of Abington

The Board of Sewer Commissioners is accepting applications for the position of Sewer Super-

intendent. The Sewer Superintendent administers the operations of the town's Sewer Department and wastewater collection system, including oversight of approximately seven department employees. He/she supervises, implements, and directs all aspects of the operation of a municipal wastewater collection system, including planning the use of manpower and equipment; overseeing the execution of department programs; and planning, budgeting, and scheduling construction projects. Administrative responsibilities include payroll; development and administration of the department's budget; oversight of all departmental expenditures, disbursements, and collected funds; consultant oversight; intermunicipal negotiations; and coordination with all other town departments. Necessary skills include excellent verbal and written communications, computer proficiency, technical knowledge and understanding of municipal wastewater collection systems, and an ability to deal well with the public. Education and experience: high school diploma combined with a minimum of seven years of progressively responsible experience in the administration and management of municipal wastewater collection systems, including three years of supervisory experience; Grade 4 Collections System Operator's License; college engineering degree preferred, or any equivalent combination of education and experience. Resumes will be accepted by the Board of Sewer Commissioners until Jan. 27, or until the position is filled, at the following address: Board of Sewer Commissioners, 350 Summer St., Abington, MA 02351. Contact person: Kristin O'Sullivan, Phone: (781) 982-2122, fax: (781) 982-2126, e-mail: kosullivan@abingtonsewer.com.

Town Administrator

Town of Maynard

Community of 10,500 residents northwest of Boston seeks professional manager to lead a growing, vibrant community facing many challenges. Will coordinate delivery of the full range of municipal programs and services and implement a (non-school) budget of approximately \$14 million with 150 employees. Will manage operating and capital budget development process. Other specific

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responsibilities include working with Selectmen as they develop policies; negotiating collective bargaining agreements; working on economic and community development projects; working with advisory committees on IT and DPW issues; consulting with and providing information to boards and committees; seeking feedback from residents and the local business community and resolving issues. The successful candidate must have proven leadership qualities, demonstrate strong communication skills and knowledge of economic and community development programs. He/she should have current knowledge of best practices in local government, understand pertinent laws including labor law, have sound financial abilities and work collaboratively with dedicated boards and committees. The town has open town meeting form of government and the position reports to a five-member Board of Selectmen. Minimum qualifications: bachelor's degree in a relevant field with six or more years' senior administrative and supervisory experience required, predominantly in Massachusetts municipalities. The town charter can be viewed online at the Maynard Web site. Master's degree (public administration or business administration) preferred. Salary: \$75,000-\$90,000 negotiable, DOQ. An Interim Town Administrator is holding the position until it is filled. Send cover letter, resume, and references by Feb. 3 to Chair, Town Administrator Search Committee, Town of Maynard, 195 Main St., Maynard, MA 01754.

Police Chief

Town of Salisbury
The town of Salisbury (pop. 8,000) seeks a qualified law enforcement professional to serve as Chief of Police. The town is a beachside seasonal resort community with an increased population in the summer. This senior management position is non-civil service, appointed by and reporting to the Town Manager. The Police Department consists of 13 sworn officers, six civilian dispatchers and 16 special officers, with an annual budget of \$1.8 million. Required qualifications include a minimum of an associate's degree in criminal justice or related field (bachelor's or higher degree preferred) and three years' supervisory experience (five years or

more preferred); thorough knowledge of effective community policing strategies; commitment to state-of-the-art training techniques; proven grant writing experience preferred. Strong leadership skills and personal integrity are essential. Salary range: \$70,000-85,000 plus educational incentive benefits. Send cover letter, resume and three-five professional references to Neil Harrington, Town Manager, 5 Beach Road, Salisbury, MA 01952. Applications must be received by Jan. 13. AA/EOE

Town Manager

Town of Framingham
Framingham, a community of 67,000 residents, 20 miles west of Boston, is seeking a new Town Manager. Salary competitive DOQ/E. One manager since 1999. The Town Manager is the chief administrative officer of the town and oversees the delivery of a full range of municipal programs and services, and has responsibility for managing and implementing a budget of \$186.6 million, including schools. The successful candidate must have proven leadership qualities, demonstrate strong communication skills, understand pertinent state municipal finance and labor laws, have sound financial and budgeting abilities, and work collaboratively with town agencies and community leaders. Complete job posting may be viewed on the town's Web site at: www.framinghamma.gov. Minimum qualifications: bachelor's degree (master's degree preferred) or theoretical knowledge normally learned through this level of education with at least 10 years' experience as a town or city manager, assistant town manager or other such position that oversees and manages the day-to-day operations of a public or private entity. Letters of interest and resumes in confidence to Groux & Associates, c/o Thomas J. Groux, PO Box 395, North Chatham, MA 02650; (508) 945 3160; e-mail: tgroux@cape.com. Applications accepted until position filled. The town of Framingham is an AA/EOE.

Town Administrator

Town of Southborough
The town of Southborough, in central Massachusetts, is a community of 9,580 with a \$36 million annual budget. The Town Administrator performs management and supervisory work that requires significant independent

judgment under the policy direction of a three-member Board of Selectmen. These complex management duties require excellent communication skills, thorough knowledge of MS Office, strong organizational skills and the ability to manage multiple projects and build consensus. Qualifications: knowledge of municipal finance, budgets, personnel, collective bargaining, intergovernmental relations, and applicable statutes and bylaws. A bachelor's degree with five years of related experience is required; a master's degree in public administration or related field is desirable. Any equivalent combination of education and experience may be considered. Salary: \$85,000-\$115,000. Employment shall commence in June of 2006. Please submit a cover letter, resume and three references by Feb. 10 to the Town Administrator Search Committee, 17 Common St., Southborough, MA 01772.

Town Accountant

Town of Norwell
The town of Norwell (pop. 10,300) is seeking qualified applicants for the position of full-time Town Accountant. The Town Accountant will be responsible for the efficient and accurate operation of the accounting department and maintaining/controlling the expenditures and financial records pertaining to all town appropriations. The position requires knowledge of UMAS and GASB regulations. Minimum requirements: degree in finance, accounting, or related field; three-five years of progressively responsible municipal accounting experience; and demonstrated proficiency in information systems operations. The salary range: \$59,074.61-\$73,983.74. Job description is available in the Selectmen's Office. Please submit cover letter, resume, and three references to Town Administrator, Norwell Town Hall, 345 Main St., Norwell, MA 02061 by noon on Jan. 16. AA/EOE

Treasurer/Collector

Town of Uxbridge
The town of Uxbridge (pop. 12,400, budget \$32 million) is seeking qualified applicants for the full-time position of Treasurer/Collector. The Treasurer/Collector is an integral part of the town's financial team. Responsibilities include revenue billing and collection activities including RE, PP, MVE, W/S, ambulance,

and other revenue; tax title and foreclosure activities; cash management; investments; managing debt service functions; administration of payroll, including health insurance and related personnel requirements; account reconciliation; coordinates with and works closely with Town Accountant and Principal Assessor. Applicants must have a bachelor's degree in accounting, business administration, finance, or related field and a minimum of five years of municipal finance experience; or an acceptable equivalent combination of education and experience. Successful candidate must have a working knowledge of municipal finance laws, DOR regulations, and other applicable federal and state laws; supervisory experience (supervises four staff members); demonstrated knowledge of data processing and applications; excellent verbal, written, and analytical communication skills. Candidate must be certified or certifiable as a Treasurer and Collector. Must be bondable. Salary DOQ. Please submit cover letter, resume, three references and salary history to the Town Manager's Office, 21 South Main St., Uxbridge, MA 01569. Position open until filled.

SERVICES

Consulting Services

The nation's leading consulting firm offers effective, affordable and defensible assessment solutions with a new and expanded line of products and services for selecting entry-level through upper command rank personnel. Our commitment to client performance and success will help improve and maximize your overall hiring and promotional process. Fire and police employment testing with results you can trust. For more information, please contact I/O Solutions, Inc., Public Safety Selection Specialists, Kate Kinsella, Sales/Marketing Manager, ktk@iosolutions.org, www.iosolutions.org. Phone: (888) 784-1290, fax: (708) 410-1558.

Labor Relations/Human Resources Consulting

Gerard J. Hayes, with many years of broad local government labor relations/human resources

SERVICES, continued on 26

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Continued from page 25

experience, offers individualized consulting services to public employers. Services include labor contract negotiations; contract administration advice; grievance and internal complaint investigations; hearing officer assignments; HR program audits; new policy development and training; supervisory training and coaching; interim HR management; and special projects. For more information, or to discuss your needs, please contact Gerard J. Hayes, 49 Gorham Ave., Brookline, MA 02445. Telephone: (617) 277-0002, e-mail: hayeshrc@aol.com.

Human Resources Consulting

Human Resources Services, Inc. provides a full range of human resource management consulting services to Massachusetts local governments and other public agencies. Specialization includes compensation and classification, performance appraisal and merit systems, job evaluations, salary and benefits surveys, job descriptions, personnel policies and handbooks, staffing and organizational management studies, personnel bylaws/ordinances, recruitment and selection, HR audits and assessments, HR training services, and special projects. Please contact Sandy Stapczynski, President, Human Resources Services, Inc., 9 Bartlet St., Suite 186, Andover, MA 01810; phone: (978) 474-0200; fax: (978) 475-7925; e-mail: hrsconsulting@comcast.net. SOMWBA-certified woman-owned business enterprise (WBE).

Alternate Dispute Resolution

Grievance and interest arbitration, fact-finding, mediation, internal investigations and hearings officer. Everett J. Marder, Esq. - licensed to practice law in Mass., N.H., Vt.; 20 years' experience in labor law; retired Colonel US Army Military Police; former school board chair and school administrator; certified by American Arbitration Association, Mass. Board of Conciliation and Arbitration, and NHPPELRB. Phone: (603) 359-7544; emarder@interdial.net.

Municipal Accounting, Treasury and Payroll Software

City & Town Municipal Accounting, Treasury and Payroll software is the most comprehensive Windows-based program available to cities and towns today.

This software is a complete package capable of organizing your municipality's books and records in one easy program. It features extensive budgeting, reporting, payroll, check writing, bank statement reconciliation, treasurer cash management, vendor and payroll warrant processing and many other accounting features. City & Town starts at \$12,000 (all modules, complete systems) installed and operating, up to four users. For more information or to arrange for a demonstration, call Scott M. Sawyer, CPA, at (413) 774-6811 or e-mail: smsacct@msn.com.

Management Consulting Services

The Matrix Consulting Group is a management consulting firm that provides detailed analysis of public sector agencies in New England. The firm's services include management, staffing, organizational and operations studies of every local government function, as well as feasibility studies, classification and pay, fleet management and facilities needs. Our staff expertise encompasses police, fire, public works, utilities, planning and building, recreation, finance and administrative functions. For more information, please contact Susannah Leigh, Manager, at (781) 839-7393. We are located at 1050 Winter St., Suite 1000, Waltham, MA 02451. AA/EOE

Municipal PC and PDA Software

GeoTMS (Geographic Total Municipal Solution) from DesLauriers Municipal Solutions, Inc. introduces PDA field software. Record building permit and building code inspections, fire code and health code inspections at the job site using a Pocket PC. Issue and print violations on the spot. Conduct inspections at any address, anywhere and anytime. Check permit status in the field. GeoTMS is a modular award-winning software package serving building, fire, health, conservation, zoning board, planning, and licensing departments. For a free demonstration and more information, call (888) 443-6867 or visit: www.GeoTMS.com.

Legal Counsel Services

Experienced legal counsel available to assist municipalities and City Solicitors/Town Counsel in the defense of civil rights, dis-

crimination and general liability claims, as well as representation in the specialized areas of eminent domain, public construction, local taxation and tax collection/Land Court foreclosure practice. Our extensive practice before administrative agencies, including the MCAD, ATB and DEP and at all levels of state and federal courts combined with years of experience representing municipalities and municipal officials in a broad range of legal matters enable us to provide highly skilled, yet cost effective, legal services. Call Douglas Louison or Patrick Costello at Merrick, Louison & Costello (617) 439-0305 when specialized counsel services are required. Address: 67 Battery-march St., Boston, MA 02110; e-mail: dlouison@merricklc.com or pcostello@merricklc.com.

Financial and Administrative Consulting

Financial Advisory Associates Inc. (FAA) is a financial and administrative consulting practice serving municipalities, school districts, retirement boards and other governmental clients. We cover all aspects of municipal finance. We provide long-term and interim financial management positions, strategic planning, training, financial executive searches and long-range budgeting and capital planning. Municipalities and districts providing water and sewage systems utilize our rate study services. Retirement systems rely on us during staffing shortages, for training, for systems redesign and rehabilitation and for other special projects. School districts have come to depend on us for enrollment and demographic studies and capital planning. FAA has extensive experience assisting communities involved with regional school district decision-making. For further information, visit our Web site at: www.faa-inc.com or contact Michael Daley, President, Financial Advisory Associates Inc., 258 Main St., Buzzards Bay, MA 02532; (508) 759-0700; e-mail: mdaley@faa-inc.com.

GIS Mapping Services

Chas. H. Sells, Inc. of Charlton, Mass. has provided aerial photography, GPS land survey, digital orthophotography and/or digital mapping for GIS and tax mapping programs to over 35 New England municipalities. The largest mapping firm in the re-

gion, we specialize in large scale (1"= 40' and 1"= 100') planimetric and topographic mapping, and digital orthos. Looking at GIS and the desire to have accurate mapping information? Please call us to discuss your project. We will also assist you with plans for developing municipal wide GIS implementations, including budgets. In addition, SELLS also provides quality mapping to support the planning and design of roads, bridges, water/sewer/CSO, brownfields development, bike/pedestrian paths, parks, etc. We can expand on an existing GIS base mapping with custom needs assessments for interested departments. Stock photography is now available for your mapping needs - 500-plus sq. mi. here in Massachusetts. Please call Mike Doyle at (508) 248-1970 or e-mail at: midoyle@chashesells.com. Web: www.chashesells.com.

Legal Services

Deutsch Williams Brooks DeRensis & Holland, P.C. is available to provide legal services to government entities at the state, county, city, town or regional district level. Legal services available include procurement law, contracts, eminent domain, labor relations, civil rights and school committee matters. Contact Elizabeth Valerio or Peter Berry for labor matters, employment matters and school law issues or Paul DeRensis for other public law issues at (617) 951-2300.

Town Counsel Services

Pickett, Miyares & Harrington is dedicated to practicing law in the public interest and concentrates its practice in local government, land use, environmental and related areas of law. We provide a full range of municipal legal services, including consultation, advice, negotiation and litigation services in all courts of the commonwealth, as well as federal courts, and in adjudicatory proceedings before administrative agencies such as the Department of Environmental Protection, the Housing Appeals Committee, the Appellate Tax Board, the Energy Facility Siting Board, and the Division of Administrative Law Appeals. We devote a substantial portion of our attention to preventative maintenance and believe that proper legal advice helps to prevent problems before they arise.

CLASSIFIEDS

We are available to our municipal clients at all times, day and night, seven days a week, to answer questions that require immediate attention. We place great importance on giving personal, direct and responsive legal counsel to the municipalities that we serve. We offer small-firm rates, years of municipal law experience, the personal service of the firm's partners, diligent attention to our clients' interests, and consistently good humor. For an initial consultation, contact Judith Pickett, J. Raymond Miyares or Thomas Harrington at (617) 923-0880.

Public Management Consultants

MMA Consulting Group Inc. provides consulting services to cities, towns and other public agencies. We specialize in public safety/emergency response (police, fire, EMS), human resources (classification, compensation, recruitment, assessment centers, oral panels, policies and practices), public works (management and rate studies), organizational design, interlocal cooperation, financial management, and special projects. For information, contact Mark Morse, President, MMA Consulting Group Inc., 41 West St., Boston, MA 02111; (617) 426-8049; mmacg@aol.com.

Town Counsel Services

Kopelman and Paige is a municipal law firm. With offices in Boston, Worcester, Northampton and Pittsfield, we serve as town counsel to more than 120 towns throughout Massachusetts, from Provincetown to Williamstown, and as special counsel to another 90. For more than 30 years, we have devoted ourselves to municipal law and have become experts in the defense of all municipal trial matters. We have specialists in all areas of municipal law and maintain an environmental-land-use law department that is on the cutting edge of planning, zoning and conservation. Kopelman and Paige is highly sensitive to the limited legal services budgets of Massachusetts communities and thus has highly competitive billing rates to give your town the best quality legal counsel in the most cost-efficient manner. There is never a need for special counsel. Our breadth of experience keeps our cost per opinion to a minimum and enables us to service

our clients quickly and efficiently, consistent with our commitment to excellence. For additional information on the legal services that Kopelman and Paige provides, please call Leonard Kopelman at (617) 556-0007, or toll-free at (800) 548-3522.

Municipal Management Consulting

Bennett Yarger Associates is a national public management consulting firm specializing in comprehensive policy and technical assistance to cities and towns. We have served more than half of the commonwealth's communities, as well as state agencies that affect local government. Our professional reputation is based on the proven ability to work in complex governmental settings free from the constraints imposed by conflicting local and state pressures. Specifically, our services include form-of-government studies, charters, special acts, financial management including retrenchment planning and implementation, public works issues, regional consolidation of services, human resources ranging from executive recruitment to affirmative action, public safety issues, classification and compensation plans, human services, land use, growth management, and fair housing. For assistance, including a no-obligation visit to discuss your needs in detail, please call Dick Bennett at (781) 545-7616, ext. 12; fax: (781) 545-8565; Bennett Yarger Associates, 23 Doctors Hill Drive, Scituate, MA 02066.

Municipal Consulting Services

Groux & Associates is a Massachusetts-based municipal consulting firm specializing in charter studies for charter commissions; reorganization plans; executive recruitment for key municipal positions; and interim management assignments. Groux & Associates has extensive experience in northeastern states including New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Massachusetts. Available for on-site, no obligation visits to review your needs and our services. Contact: Thomas J. Groux, Groux and Associates, PO Box 395, North Chatham, MA 02650. Phone or fax (508) 945-3160. E-mail: tgroux@cape.com.

Municipal Financial Management, Fund Accounting and Tax Collection Software
VADAR Systems, a Massachu-

setts-based corporation, is a highly specialized, national municipal software company, providing custom developed, PC-based, Windows-based, graphical financial management and tax collection systems to municipal, county and state governments throughout the United States. VADAR develops and supports specific product lines devoted to financial management applications, multiple fund accounting, property tax billing, utility billing and motor vehicle excise billing and collections. VADAR provides customized software applications to meet each client's individualized local and state requirements. For additional information about VADAR's state-of-the-art software suite, call us toll free at (877) 823-2700, or visit us on the Web (www.vadarsystems.com).

Tax Title Legal Services

Kopelman and Paige provides a full range of legal services for municipal treasurers and collectors in the tax title and Land Court practice areas. Our experienced tax title attorneys draft collection letters and payment agreements; prepare all instruments relative to tax takings and tax sales; draft all pleadings for Land Court foreclosure proceedings; and provide full representation of the town in Land Court actions. We encourage the exhaustion of all administrative collection procedures before commencing litigation. We have extensive experience in the Land Court, which is located only five minutes from our Boston office. The breadth of our experience and volume of work we perform in the tax-title area enables us to provide prompt, cost-effective service. For additional information on our tax-title services, please call Leonard Kopelman at (617) 556-0007, or toll-free at (800) 548-3522.

Government Management Consulting

The Government Consulting Group Inc. works with leaders in government and education to meet constituent expectations within declining resources. Our specialties include organization performance management, performance measurement, human resources administration (including classification and compensation, performance review and recruitment), interagency cooperation and shared services, information technology reviews,

financial plans and analyses, organization and operations audits including infrastructure management, VATS implementation (Value Added Transition System), operations cost reduction analysis, and interim town/city management services. We have established and maintained partnerships with clients throughout New England for more than 11 years. Contact Jared Clark, Government Consulting Group, Inc., 24B Hawthorne Village, Franklin, MA 02038-2696. Phone: (508) 533-7119; e-mail: jsaclar@govt-consulting-group.com; Web site: www.govt-consulting-group.com.

Municipal Counsel Services

Brackett & Lucas is an established municipal law firm providing expert legal services to a variety of public sector clients. Gary S. Brackett is the former city solicitor of Worcester and former town counsel of Watertown. He has served as president of the Massachusetts City Solicitors and Town Counsel Association and as chairman of the Municipal Law Committee of the Massachusetts Bar Association. Elaine M. Lucas is the former chief of litigation for the city of Worcester. She served as the chair of the Municipal Law Section of the Worcester County Bar Association. The partners have more than 30 years of experience representing cities and towns. With its wide range of municipal law experience, including litigation, land use, contracts and finance, the firm is able to serve its clients in a highly efficient and economical manner. For more information, please call Gary Brackett at (508) 799-9739, or write to 19 Cedar St., Worcester, MA 01609.

GIS Services

Why pay \$7,000 to put your GIS on the Web? Full Circle Technologies' quality service will put your town's GIS on the Web at a cost you can afford, with our new annual pricing. See VectorEyes for yourself at www.full-circletech.com and check out our client testimonials. Why pay \$17,000 to create your GIS? Our comprehensive GIS services and application solutions make complicated GIS projects easy to implement and use, at highly attractive prices. Full Circle Technologies, Inc., 6 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108; Phone: Stan Karlin at (617) 367-3553.

CALENDAR

JANUARY

13-14 MMA Annual Meeting & Trade Show, Hynes Convention Center and Sheraton Hotel, Boston. Largest annual gathering of local officials in Massachusetts, featuring workshops, a Trade Show, seminars, business meetings, guest speakers, receptions, award presentations and other activities. Contacts: Marisa Lutz regarding Annual Meeting, Karen LaPointe regarding the Trade Show, both at the MMA

FEBRUARY

8 Massachusetts Selectmen's Association, executive committee, 3-6 p.m., location to be announced. Contact: MMA Member Services Coordinator Ellen Stoolmacher

9 Association of Town Finance Committees, Governing Board, 8:30-10 a.m., Wyndham hotel, Westborough. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker

14 MMA Board of Directors, 9:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m., location to be announced, Boston. Followed by Local Government Advisory Commission meeting, 1-2 p.m., State House, Boston. Contact: MMA executive director's office

14 Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association, executive committee, 2:15-3:45 p.m., State House, Boston. Contact: MMA Member Services Coordinator Ellen Stoolmacher

15 Massachusetts Mayors' Association, monthly meeting, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., location to be announced. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker

16 Massachusetts Municipal Management Association, monthly meeting, 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m., Stow Acres

Country Club. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker

MARCH

3 Massachusetts Municipal Personnel Association, program meeting, 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m., Cordaville Hall, Southborough. Contact: MMA Member Services Coordinator Ellen Stoolmacher

9 Association of Town Finance Committees, Governing Board, 8:30-10 a.m., MMA office, Boston. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker

16 Massachusetts Municipal Management Association, monthly meeting, 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m., location to be announced. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker

APRIL

11 MMA Board of Directors, 9:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m., location to be announced, Boston. Followed by Local Government Advisory Commission meeting, 1-2 p.m., State House, Boston. Contact: MMA executive director's office

25 Massachusetts Municipal Management Association, professional development workshop, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m., College of the Holy Cross, Worcester. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker

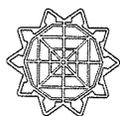
MAY

9 MMA Board of Directors, 9:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m., location to be announced, Boston. Followed by Local Government Advisory

Commission meeting, 1-2 p.m., State House, Boston. Contact: MMA executive director's office

17-18 Massachusetts Mayors' Association, Spring Conference, Cranwell Resort, Lenox. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker

For more information on MMA events, visit www.mma.org or call (800) 882-1498



The Beacon

Massachusetts Municipal Association
Sixty Temple Place, Boston, MA 02111

PERIODICALS

*****CAR-RT LOT**CO15
MR. GREGORY NIEMYSKI
PLANNING BOARD CHAIR
TOWN OF ACTON
472 MAIN ST
ACTON MA 01720-3952

Please check the address label on this newsletter. If any part of the address is incorrect, please cross it out, type or print the correction, and send the old label plus the correction to the MMA, Attention: Database Coordinator, 60 Temple Place, Boston, MA 02111.