

UPTOWN

Investment in cities is a must for a successful state

The opening session of the Municipal Association's Annual Meeting laid out the landscape for South Carolina in the new economy and focused on several elements specific to the role of cities.

The session spotlighted how cities must take a leadership role in the new economy South Carolina must develop to compete nationally and internationally. While the term "new economy" has been batted around for a number of years, its definition can vary from source to source.

Simply put, the new economy is based on the exchange of knowledge and ideas and not just the creation and sale of a product. Job creation and higher individual income will result from innovative ideas and technology advances that are embedded into existing (and new) services and manufactured products.

This definition might initially lead some to think new economy jobs are only those involving high-tech business or hydrogen development. In reality, success in the new economy results from new and traditional types of business creating new ways of using technology and working together to compete globally, not just locally. Traditional businesses don't go away, they reinvent themselves to thrive in this new economy.

Keynote speaker Ed Sellers drove home the role of strong cities in this new economy. Sellers is the chairman and CEO of Blue Cross Blue Shield of SC and chairman of New Carolina – SC Council on Competitiveness.

He opened his remarks by noting the importance of the idea of a fundamental city-centric society. "I stand in amazement as I watch folks wax

eloquently about how building our state is like building a bridge. They can produce the vision of the bridge but refuse to invest in the pilings that hold up the bridge." Those pilings, he said, are our state's cities and towns.

He said, "I'm on your side as you try to hold your place in this strange world we live in. The structure of politics of the state can allow one voice inside a state legislature to pursue a single agenda that can undermine the building of the bridge to get us to a better future."

Sellers said New Carolina was established to make South Carolina's economy stronger and more competitive in a new global environment. One key measurement in gauging South Carolina's success is individual, or per capita, income.

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MASC Road Shows revving up

MASC is hitting the road again this fall with a series of regional Road Shows making eight stops around the state. The Road Shows will bring local municipal officials together with MASC staff to learn more about incorporating our message of "strong cities" into communications with other community leaders.

Included in the agenda will be an insider's look at the upcoming legislative session and tips on incorporating our strong cities message when contacting legislators during the "off season."

Municipal officials will be treated to a meal and will leave the sessions with a toolkit chock full of tangible ideas to increase the visibility of the value of their city or town — regardless of size. From engaging local key influencers to building better relationships with the news media, the Road Show will provide a fast-paced agenda and plenty of time for questions and feedback.

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Investment in cities continued from cover

In a vacuum, South Carolina's per capita income of about \$26,000 is merely a number on a page. "The absolute number becomes interesting when you compare yourself to someone else," noted Sellers.

Compared to the rest of the country, South Carolina lags behind at only 82 percent of the national average. "Then compare us to Georgia and North Carolina," he said, which are at 92 percent of the national average. "We are at a distinct disadvantage to our closest neighbors."

Sellers said it's easy to blame our state's challenges on issues like race, a bad mix of industry or a rural economy. But none of these issues fully explains why we continue to lag behind in average individual income. New Carolina has done considerable research to determine the reasons behind these challenges.

First, Sellers said, our state's productivity lags behind the rest of the country. He noted this has nothing to do with the work ethic or even the products we turn out. Rather, this lag is due to other states embracing an increased use of technology in traditional industries like textile manufacturing and agriculture.

Second, South Carolina has a smaller percentage of available workers who are actually working. These two indicators can be changed with focus and hard work, Sellers said.

To combat these challenges, New Carolina is pursuing a three-pronged approach.

First, Sellers said, "We must embrace the idea of developing clusters for business development." Clusters, he explained, are businesses that traditionally might be competing with one another but now work together to build on their common interests. Cities are a critical element in developing successful clusters.

An example of a successful cluster is the California wine business. Wine growers realized to compete with France and Australia, they had to find ways to work together to market their products. They focused on the idea of California wine first and their individual products second. Profits increased for all involved. South Carolina must take a similar approach, and New Carolina has identified nine cluster areas that include businesses like agriculture, tourism, manufacturing and automotive.

Second, we must create an environment where new ideas can "live and breathe," Sellers said. This includes providing funding for businesses with new ideas to thrive. This also means ensuring we have an educated workforce to work in these new jobs. Also, we must provide the quality of life these workers will want.

Finally, we must connect the dots. Sellers noted, "South Carolina is a state where everyone likes to be in charge. We're working hard to get folks to work with each other within our state. Cheraw is not competing with Mullins for projects. We're competing against North Dakota, North Carolina and South Korea." Local leaders must work together and not against each other in this competitive environment.

Referring back to his initial bridge analogy, Sellers said, investment in our cities is a must for a successful state. By supporting the development of clusters and regional collaborations, cities become the conduits to connect the



Annual Meeting keynote speaker Ed Sellers, Chairman New Carolina

dots and make ourselves stronger to compete nationally and internationally rather than competing with our next-door neighbors.

Sellers' speech got good feedback from members attending the Annual Meeting, said Howard Duvall, MASC's executive director. "Our goal in having Ed as our keynote speaker was to get our hometown leaders thinking about how cities of all sizes have a role to play in this new economy. Based on the good questions his talk generated and the feedback from members, I believe he did a good job to begin connecting the dots."

MASC will continue to work with New Carolina and other business organizations to ensure leaders in the state's cities and towns have the resources and information they need to ensure all hometowns are successful in the new economy.

For more information about what New Carolina is doing, visit www.newcarolina.org.

Listen to Sellers' speech at www.masc.sc.

Road show continued from cover

MASC mailed invitations to all mayors, councilmembers, managers, clerks and public information staff in late August. While the meetings are scheduled around council of government regions, municipal officials can attend any of the eight sessions. Visit the MASC Web site to sign up and for details about locations and the agenda.

Date	Time	Location/Directions	City
September 25	11:30 a.m.	MASC Office, 1411 Gervais St.	Columbia
September 27	11:30 a.m.	Municipal Conference Center, 214 Park Ave. SW	Aiken
October 3	11:30 a.m.	Marriott Charleston, 170 Lockwood Blvd.	Charleston
October 11	11:30 a.m.	Simpsonville Activity and Senior Center, 310 West Curtis Street	Simpsonville
October 17	11:30 a.m.	Technical College of the Lowcountry, 921 Ribaut Rd.	Beaufort
October 25	5:30 p.m.	Hilton Garden Inn, 2671 Hospitality Blvd.	Florence
October 26	11:30 a.m.	Marriott Resort at Grande Dunes, 8400 Costa Verde Dr.	Myrtle Beach
November 1	11:30 a.m.	Bridges/Rockwell Room, Baxter Hood Center, York Technical College, 252 S. Anderson Rd.	Rock Hill

The Bridge Builder

Merl Code, luncheon speaker at the Annual Meeting, said municipal leaders must understand “you are building bridges for people who will never know you, have never seen you, never known you’ve existed 100 years from now.... [I hope in the future] someone will say you’ve built some bridges for others to cross.” To emphasize his point, Code shared “The Bridge Builder.”

An old man, going a lone highway,
Came, at the evening, cold and gray,
To a chasm, vast, and deep, and wide,
Through which was flowing a sullen tide.

The old man crossed in the twilight dim;
The sullen stream had no fears for him;
But he turned, when safe on the other side,
And built a bridge to span the tide.

"Old man," said a fellow pilgrim, near,
"You are wasting strength with building here;
Your journey will end with the ending day;
You never again must pass this way;
You have crossed the chasm, deep and wide-

Why build you a bridge at the eventide?"

The builder lifted his old gray head:
"Good friend, in the path I have come," he said,
"There followeth after me today,
A youth, whose feet must pass this way.

This chasm, that has been naught to me,
To that fair-haired youth may a pitfall be.
He, too, must cross in the twilight dim;
Good friend, I am building the bridge for him."

Author: Will Allen Dromgoole

Hometown enthusiasm and partnerships hit home run in Greenville

Greenville city leaders hit a home run when they scored partnerships with minor league baseball owner Craig Brown and developer Bob Hughes.

“The ability to partner is defined by three principles,” said Brown, co-owner and president of the Greenville Drive baseball team. “It takes a shared vision, strong enthusiastic leaders and a collaborative spirit.”

According to Brown and Hughes, Greenville’s city council and city manager followed these three key principles when they built the West End Field, a replica of Fenway Park, and RiverPlace, a mixed-use development. “The partnership benefited both parties,” said Brown during the “Hometown Enthusiasm and Partnerships” session at MASC’s Annual Meeting. “The city committed to overcome obstacles which served to strengthen the partnership.”

Brown encouraged other city leaders attending the session to engage in public-private partnerships and follow the Greenville example to the letter. He illustrated how Greenville’s city council organized public dialogue with neighborhood associations opposed to the stadium development. “Opponents backed away because councilmembers communicated the importance of the Drive’s positive impact on the city,” Brown said. “Their leadership didn’t stop there. They immersed economic agencies, the chamber, civic leaders and the business community in their vision to build the stadium.”

The City of Greenville also worked collaboratively with Greenville County to provide 500 free parking spaces for the Drive at nearby County Square. Trolleys are owned by the baseball team but are maintained and driven by city employees.

In return, the city has access to the trolleys during the Drive’s off-season.

Additionally, Brown emphasized how city leaders kept their commitments to the partnership. Streets leading up to the stadium were paved on time by the city. Water and sewer were installed on schedule.

Meeting commitments was a key element in Hughes’ partnership with the city when they built RiverPlace together. He described his partnership with Greenville to the elected officials attending the session as a ‘marriage.’ “It goes on forever,” he joked.

Using the marriage comparison, he explained the ‘pre-nup’ between the city and his company. “The city needed a great public space on the river, parking and money. The developer needed love and affection and some money,” he said. Therefore, the city agreed to spend \$11.5 million on the garage and public plaza and keep a high level profile on the project. Hughes agreed to invest a minimum of \$25 million, manage all the construction and handle cost overruns on the public improvements.

With the agreement in place, Hughes and the city kept its promises and developed the \$75 million mixed-use development in 2005. It includes the Hampton Inn, restaurants, retail stores, artist studios, condominiums and a parking garage which is wrapped around an iconic fountain and water feature.

Hughes highlighted the need for all cities to have good ordinances in place when tackling mixed-use developments with contractors. “You have to be ready for the partnership,” he said.

He also stressed innovation. The first level of one of the mixed-use buildings is reserved for artist studios. The 30-day



West End Field

leases provide enough time for individual artists to showcase their work. If they are not successful, they can be asked to leave in 30 days to make room for another artist to display their wares, Hughes said.

Hughes and Brown agreed: successful cities are defined by their private-public partnerships. Having a shared vision by strong leaders who have a collaborative spirit and meet commitments are key principles for all cities to follow.

However, the city has to be the leader of the partnership in order to make it a home run, according to Brown. "My first endeavor to build this stadium in another city lasted two years," he said. "In Greenville, we built the stadium in 13 months. Now, that's commitment!"



RiverPlace



Hometown Happenings

Each month, municipal officials have the opportunity to download materials that will help them share the value of cities and towns with the community and more specifically their key influencers. Through each suggested activity and corresponding materials, municipal leadership can form partnerships with the local business community, the media, local non-profit organizations and policy makers.

October *Hometown Happenings* information as noted below will be posted to the MASC Web site in early September. Let MASC know if you participate in a *Hometown Happening*. Call Casey Fields at 803.933.1256.

October

- **Fire Prevention Week** – The National Fire Protection Association declared October 7 – 13 as National Fire Prevention Week. This year's theme — "Practice Your Escape Plan" — encourages everyone to designate an escape plan in your home to help protect you and your family. Ask your fire department to host meetings on fire prevention and safety. Offer tours of your local fire stations and take time to say thank you to all firefighters in your hometown.
- **National Crime Prevention Month** – The National Crime Prevention Council designates every October as National Crime Prevention Month and encourages everyone, especially hometown residents, to be safe and vigilant. Provide tips to residents on how to protect their families and property. Host informational meetings on crime prevention and distribute crime prevention brochures in water or electricity bills. Join the National Crime Prevention Council and its crime prevention dog, McGruff, to take a bite out of crime in your hometown.
- **Women's Small Business Month** – It is important to recognize all business owners in your municipality. October offers you the opportunity to recognize women who are small business owners and enjoy your hometown as their place to work and live. Spotlight a female business owner in your newsletter, host a city hall reception or interview a female business owner and feature her on your local access channel. Show your thanks to women who are small business owners who enjoy everything your downtown has to offer.

Visit the MASC Web site to download *Hometown Happenings* materials in early September.

Hurricane preparedness survey reveals troubling statistics

According to a new survey of people in high-risk hurricane areas conducted by the Harvard School of Public Health Project on the Public and Biological Security, one-third of residents said that if government officials insisted they evacuate due to a major hurricane this season, they would not leave. This is an increase from 2006 when 23 percent said they would not evacuate.

The survey was conducted in eight states -- Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Texas -- and only included residents of counties within 20 miles of the coast. The poll included a special sample of the New Orleans metropolitan area.

The top reasons people give for not evacuating involve issues of safety and security. Three-quarters say their home is well-built and they would be safe there. Fifty-six percent feel roads would be too crowded while 36 percent of those responding believe evacuating would be dangerous. One-third worry their possessions would be stolen or damaged; one in four say they would not evacuate because they don't want to leave their pets.

"Public officials need to be concerned that the further we get from the severe hurricanes of 2005, the less willing people are to evacuate," said Robert Blendon, professor of Health Policy and Political Analysis at the Harvard School of Public Health.

"Officials need to remind people that many homes are vulnerable to major storms. They also need to ensure safe evacuation routes are available and the public is aware of them."

Evacuation and shelter conditions

If residents of high-risk hurricane areas have to evacuate because of a major hurricane, most would be concerned about the conditions of evacuation shelters if they had to go to one. The biggest worries people have: that shelters would be unsanitary (68 percent), there wouldn't be enough clean water to drink (66 percent), the shelter would be too crowded (65 percent), they would be exposed to sick people (62 percent), and medical care would be lacking (58 percent).

Hurricane preparations

Many residents of hurricane-prone areas have not made critical preparations for a major storm. If running water were cut off due to a hurricane, 23 percent would run out of clean water after two days, and 54 percent would run out after six days. If power were shut off, one in 10 would be without food after two days, and nearly half after six days.

Hurricane Katrina showed that families can be separated and communication can break down in the aftermath of a major storm, but most residents have not prepared for that possibility. Two out of three have not agreed on a meeting place if their family is separated; half have not agreed on a phone number outside the region that family members could call. Of the 13 percent who intend to evacuate and need help, half do not have that help lined up.

Key preparedness information

Past experience with hurricanes has identified some critical information people should know to prepare for a storm. Many residents in high-risk areas were unaware of some key information.

About 34 percent don't know if their home is located in an evacuation zone. Thirty-nine percent do not know the location of an evacuation center in their community where they could go if they had to.

A large majority of people would be at risk of eating food that has spoiled due to a loss of refrigeration in a power outage. The USDA recommends that perishable food should not be eaten if refrigeration has been turned off for four hours. Only one in five knew perishable food would be safe for just a few hours. One in three believes food is safe for up to one day, one in four said two days, and 16 percent said three or more days. In addition, one in five did not know that each household member requires at least one gallon of clean water per day, the amount recommended by the CDC.

Problems during past hurricanes

Nearly half of surveyed respondents live in communities damaged by a hurricane during the past three years. The survey asked them about the problems they had during these hurricanes to identify issues that could be prevented in future hurricanes. The most common problem: getting gas to evacuate (35 percent). Twenty percent reported they did not have enough money at some point, 14 percent did not have enough water and 12 percent did not have enough food. Of note, smaller numbers reported needing medical care but not receiving it (5 percent), getting injured (5 percent) or being threatened by violence (3 percent). One area where few people reported problems was getting the information they needed to keep themselves and their families safe (8 percent).

New Orleans

The survey included a sample of the New Orleans metropolitan area to see if residents there differed from other high-risk area residents. After their experiences with Hurricane Katrina, most residents there say they would evacuate for a future storm. Only 14 percent would not evacuate compared to 32 percent of residents of other high-risk areas. Sixty percent do not know the location of an evacuation shelter if they needed to go to one, which is significantly more than residents of other areas (38 percent). Despite the dramatic images of people stranded during Katrina, more than half (54 percent) of New Orleans residents are confident they would be rescued if they needed to be during a future storm.

"It is worrisome that New Orleans, the site of one of the most severe hurricanes in U.S. history, has such a large proportion of people who don't know the location of an evacuation center," Blendon said. "An important priority for government and voluntary agencies should be to inform people of the location of shelters well before a storm hits."

Even after Katrina, a substantial percentage of New Orleans residents are not prepared for a major storm. Half of New Orleans residents have not designated a

place for their family to meet if they get separated. Thirty-nine percent have not agreed on a phone number outside the region that family members could call. A sizable percentage of New Orleans residents — 23 percent — do not have more than two days of water if the water supply were cut off.

Hurricane Katrina illustrated the additional challenges facing minorities and the poor in these high-risk coastal areas during a major hurricane. This survey finds that although African-Americans (73 percent) and Latino-Americans (71 percent) are more likely than whites (59 percent) to say they would evacuate if government officials said they had to leave in the event of a major hurricane, they are also more likely to need help to do so. Seventeen percent of African-Americans and 10 percent of Latino-Americans say they need help to evacuate and don't have help lined up — compared to 3 percent of whites.

Low-income residents also would have more problems evacuating than those financially better off. Eighteen percent of those making less than \$25,000 a year and who intend to evacuate do not have the necessary help compared to 4 percent of those making \$25,000 a year or more.

If minorities and low-income residents are unable to evacuate because they do not have help, they are less prepared to stay in their homes and weather the storm and its aftermath. Approximately one-third of African-Americans, Latino-Americans and low-income residents say they aren't prepared should a major hurricane strike their community in the next six months. This compares to 14 percent of whites and 19 percent of those making \$25,000 a year or more.

A greater percentage of African-Americans (18 percent), Latino-Americans (11 percent) and low-income residents (14 percent) do not have enough food on hand to last more than three days compared to whites (6 percent) and those making \$25,000 a year or more (8 percent).

The Harvard School of Public Health Project on Public and Biological Security is funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention through a grant to the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials.

To view a full press release and survey data, including individual state reports and figures, visit www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/press-releases/2007-releases/press07242007.html.

Business licensing officials receive accreditations

Fourteen business licensing officials received their Accreditation in Business Licensing designation this summer: Rebecca Ard, director of business license, Sumter; Claudette Cochran, clerk/treasurer, Saluda; Stacy Craven, business license specialist, Sumter; Sharon Felder, business license inspector, Sumter; Amyee Hammonds, administration supervisor, Pendleton; Sharon Leahey, business license inspector, Surfside Beach; Angelia Locke,

business license officer, Greenville; Robert McDonald, business license deputy administrator, Columbia; Kristina Plymel, finance director, Summerville; David Seifert, director of finance and information technology, Greer; Hugh Smith, business license inspector, Easley; Paul Smith, business license enforcement manager, Spartanburg; Louis Streater, code enforcement officer, Lancaster; and Robert Urness, accountant, Greer.

Four business licensing officials received their Masters in Business Licensing designation: James Siemers, business license inspector, Charleston County; Sally DuBose, business license inspector, Sumter; Ellen Ravenell, business license official, West Columbia; and Debra Bivens, revenues manager, Georgetown.

For more information, contact Melanie Dozier at 803.933.1238 or mdozier@masc.sc.

City of Clemson saves money with GPS on garbage trucks

The City of Clemson is improving efficiency by putting fewer garbage trucks on the road. It's possible with the use of new technology, said Public Works Director David Conner.

The city's garbage trucks have been equipped with Global Positioning System devices. When crews are making their routine stops, they are able to punch in details about what kind of work needs to be done on a particular street. Workers might notice a pothole, a streetlight that needs repair, brush piles, low-hanging tree limbs, hazardous waste items or appliances that need to be picked up for disposal.

The worker presses a picture-coded icon on a screen mounted on the truck dashboard. The system records the location and type of work needed, Conner said. Later, when the crew returns to the public works department, the data is downloaded to a computer. A work order is created, with a map or street list and details of the job, and assigned to a specialized utility crew.

Because of the new system, different utility crews don't have to make random rounds in neighborhoods, checking to see if nonstandard waste items need collecting. "This sends us straight to the source," Conner said.

It saves manpower and money, reduces wear and tear on the streets and equipment, and prevents accidents that could be caused on residential streets by the large trucks, Conner said. Perhaps most notably, the system is expected to save the city about \$8,000 a year in fuel costs, Conner said.

"With the price of fuel now, that's significant," he said.

The system, Pinpoint-Public Works, has been up and running for several months. Clemson resident Jim Oswald, owner of O.A. Technology Group, developed the system after discussions with city and county administrators. Adjoining municipalities have expressed interest in the system, Conner said.

Pinpoint-Public Works went on the market nationwide in June. The system also allows voice notes, hand-entered data and can detect and alert crews to radiation in waste items.

City officials already have seen increased efficiency as a result of the system. On one occasion, a brush collection crew came to the public works facility

for lunch and asked the supervisor what to do for the rest of the day. When the supervisor told them to finish the routes as normal, they replied that they already were finished.

"The GPS directed them to the debris piles and they did not have to drive around each street locating the piles," said Assistant City Administrator Chip Boyles. "This saved one-half day of work." The supervisor then was able to direct them to collections scheduled for the next day, Boyles added. "I'm pleased to see our city departments looking for innovative ways to make themselves more efficient," said Clemson City Administrator Rick Cotton.



Pinpoint-Public Works Global Positioning System

General Assembly passes workers' compensation reforms

Reforms passed by the General Assembly, which took effect July 1, soon will have an impact on the state's workers' compensation laws.

The changes provide employers with more protection against fraudulent workers' compensation claims, tighten regulations about premium increases and begin to phase out the Second Injury Fund.

"On balance, we believe it's a good law," said Harvey Mathias, director of Risk Management Services for the Municipal Association of SC.

The workers' compensation system had become slanted toward workers' rights and began affecting the economy of South Carolina, Mathias said. Some businesses moved out of the state to avoid dealing with the system, he said.

"Going forward, it should be more balanced," Mathias said.

The reforms address some SC Supreme Court cases considered adverse to the system, Mathias said.

In one case, *Brown v. BILO*, the court ruled employers could not meet with an employee's doctor unless the injured worker gave his consent. This made it difficult for an employer to obtain information about when an employee could return to work and whether he would require any job restrictions, Mathias said.

The new legislation permits employers to speak with a physician after an employee files a workers' compensation claim. The law requires the employee be informed of the meeting and invited to attend.

The reforms also address issues raised in *Ellison v. Frigidaire*. In that case, an employee injured his leg in a workplace accident. He was given a 20

percent permanent impairment rating to the leg. However, the leg injury, in combination with other pre-existing medical conditions, left the man unable to work after the accident. He received full disability.

Under the legislation, employees no longer will be able to receive full disability if one injury combines with pre-existing conditions.

The new law requires medical expert testimony in medically complex cases, Mathias said. It also addresses repetitive trauma, such as carpal tunnel syndrome, he added.

The legislation also phases out the Second Injury Fund. That fund was created after World War II as a way to encourage employers to hire injured soldiers. The fund has had little purpose since the creation of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Mathias said. Employers were irritated because all industry was required to pay into the fund but very few received benefits, he said.

Under the new law, no claims will be accepted with an occurrence date after June 30, 2008. The fund is slated to be shut down in 2013, Mathias said.

"Regardless of the changes to the workers' compensation system, the ideal situation to lower costs is to avoid accidents in the first place," said Mathias. "The best way to do that is to have a good risk and safety program in place. In the long run, it is better for the employees and the employers to have a safe, productive workplace."

For more information about workers' compensation and establishing a safety program, contact Harvey Mathias at 803.933.1212 or hmathias@masc.sc.

News Briefs



■ Deannia Roberson, human resources specialist in Walterboro, has been appointed to serve an unexpired term on the SC Municipal Insurance and Risk Financing Fund's Board of Trustees. Chris Eldridge, administrator of Pickens, has been appointed to serve an unexpired term on the SC Local Government Assurance Group's Board of Trustees.

■ Chief Patty Patterson of Sumter was named Woman Law Enforcement Executive of the Year by the National Association of Women in Law Enforcement Executives.

■ The City of Charleston received a 2007 Award for Excellence in the Americas Competition, presented by the Urban Land Institute.

■ Mayor Bill Barnet of Spartanburg and Mayor Joe Riley of Charleston have been chosen by The Liberty Fellowship to mentor the participants in its two-year leadership program.

■ The Municipal Association of SC promoted Marisa Cebulski to staff associate for affiliate services. Cebulski will be the staff liaison to the Municipal Court Administration Association, the Municipal Attorneys Association and the SC Municipal Human Resources Association.



Classifieds

■ The City of Rock Hill is accepting applications for an Office Assistant for City Management at the Municipal Court. Apply at the Personnel Office, City Hall, Room 230, Main Floor, Rock Hill, SC or mail to City of Rock Hill, Office of Human Resources, PO Box 11706, Rock Hill, SC 29731.

MASC 2007-2008 Board of Directors

The Municipal Association's board of directors, comprised of both elected and appointed officials, sets policy for the Association. The officers (executive committee) were elected to one-year terms during the Association's July Annual Meeting:

President

Mayor Fred Cavanaugh of Aiken

First Vice President

Mayor Rick Danner of Greer

Second Vice President

Mayor Carol Burdette of Pendleton

Third Vice President

Mayor Kevin Johnson of Manning

Immediate Past President

Mayor Doug Echols of Rock Hill

Board members are elected to three-year terms. The board consists of representatives from each of the 10 regional councils of governments and three at-large seats.

Councilmember Chandra Dillard of Greenville.

Representing: Appalachian Council of Governments

Term expires: July 2008

Mayor Randy Randall of Clinton
Representing: Upper Savannah Council of Governments

Term expires: July 2009

Mayor H.C. Starnes of Great Falls
Representing: Catawba Regional Planning Council

Term expires: July 2009



Fred Cavanaugh, 2007-08 Municipal Association of SC president, told members, "In the coming year, we will ramp up our efforts to work with statewide organizations ... to ensure that the importance of strong municipalities is a focus for them as they work to make our state more competitive. Knowing that our voice becomes stronger when combined with others, we need to continue to develop partnerships that will help us better communicate local government concerns and needs to our state leaders."

Mayor Ed Kyzer of Newberry
Representing: Central Midlands Council of Governments

Term expires: July 2008

Mayor Paul Miller of Orangeburg
Representing: Lower Savannah Council of Governments

Term expires: July 2008

Mayor Joe McElveen of Sumter
Representing: Santee-Lynches Council of Governments

Term expires: July 2010

Mayor Michael Holt of Hartsville
Representing: Pee Dee Regional Council of Governments

Term expires: July 2010

Mayor Marilyn Hatley of North Myrtle Beach
Representing: Waccamaw Planning & Development Council

Term expires: July 2009

Mayor Minnie Blackwell of Hanahan
Representing: Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments

Term expires: July 2010

Mayor John Rhoden of Hampton
Representing: Low Country Council of Governments

Term expires: July 2010

Mayor Sam Murray of Port Royal
Representing: At-large

Term expires: July 2008

Councilmember Tameika Isaac-Devine of Columbia
Representing: At-large

Term expires: July 2010

City Administrator Mark Williams of Forest Acres
Representing: At-large

Term expires: July 2009

Municipal leaders capture three Main Street SC Inspiration Awards

Main Street South Carolina presented its 2006 Inspiration Awards during the Municipal Association of South Carolina's July Annual Meeting.

The City of Orangeburg took home two awards: Outstanding New Construction Project and Public Service. The City of Bennettsville won the Gaines Jontz Rehabilitation Award for its Visitors Center.

Outstanding New Construction Project *The award recognizes excellence in new construction in downtown. The project must demonstrate sensitivity to its setting; quality and appropriateness of design, materials and construction; and a positive impact on the commercial district.*

For many years, Orangeburg's public safety department, municipal court and sheriff's department shared a joint law enforcement complex outside the city limits. The space was cramped and inadequate. Juggling the court facilities between the two entities created a backlog of cases.

The mayor and council recognized the need for change and devoted more than \$4 million to create a new, state-of-the-art facility. Located in the heart of downtown Orangeburg, the new public safety building houses fire, police and the municipal court under one roof.

Beppie LeGrand, Main Street SC manager said, "The building blends architecturally with the surrounding downtown community. It's a great addition to that area." "This is just one example of the mayor and council's ongoing efforts to revitalize downtown," according to City Administrator John Yow.

Public Service Award *The award recognizes an elected or public official who has contributed leadership and support for*



Outstanding New Construction Project - Orangeburg

downtown beyond the normal call of duty and best represents commitment to the goal of revitalization.

This year's Public Service Award was given not to an individual but to a group of public officials who have shown dedication and commitment to revitalizing their downtown. The Orangeburg City Council decided almost a decade ago to make restoring and improving the downtown its mission.

In addition to the new public safety building, the Council dedicated funds for ongoing streetscaping, façade improvements and construction of new landscaped parking areas. Also, Council

provided the funds for several restoration and construction projects for downtown city-owned facilities.

The city renovated an abandoned jail for the public works building and transformed an old fire station for the state-of-the-art council chambers. "City Council accepted revitalization is a process, not a project. They are committed to sustained success," Yow said.

"The downtown area is the heart of Orangeburg. The revitalization efforts have made the three or four blocks in the center of the city a hub of traffic and activity," said Mayor Paul Miller when asked about the importance of down-

town revitalization. "Now citizens are becoming involved. There were naysayers at first, but their opinions have been changed by the improved look and feel of the area."

Other Main Street SC Winners:

- **Outstanding Public/Private Partnership**
Piedmont Rural Telephone Cooperative and Main Street Laurens, USA
- **Outstanding New Sign**
Capitol Theatre and Café, Laurens
- **Master Merchant Award**
Kim Crews, Stitches, Laurens
- **Hometown Hero**
Nancy B. Howell, Main Street Lancaster
- **Outstanding Promotional Event**
100th anniversary celebration for Ferse's 5&10, Orangeburg
- **Outstanding Promotional Program**
First Saturday Art Walk, Conway

Gaines Jontz Rehabilitation

Award *The award recognizes excellence in façade rehabilitation or total building rehabilitation. The project must demonstrate quality and appropriateness in design, materials and construction and a positive impact on the commercial district. Where appropriate, a strong preservation ethic must be evident in this project.*

On June 23, 2006, the Bennettsville Visitors Center (also known as McColl House) opened its doors. Since that time, more than 2,000 visitors have taken in the beauty of the 1882 Queen Anne style home.

The McColl House was initially constructed using Marlboro County yellow brick, stained cherry red, with the mortar joints painted white. The window sills and headers were painted gray to resemble granite. The city restored these

features. The house also includes a corner turret, an expansive wrap-around one-story porch with Victorian trim and a freestanding Delco house. Original marble mantels are found in each room and stained glass transoms are situated above the front and rear hallway doors.

The City of Bennettsville received a SC Department of Commerce Opportunity Grant, which provided a majority of the funds for rehabilitation and conversion of the McColl House from a bank to the current Bennettsville Visitors Center and Chamber of Commerce.

According to the center staff, visitor's comments range from "Wow!" to many words of appreciation for the preservation and use of such a beautiful and historic structure.



Gaines Jontz Rehabilitation Award - Bennettsville Visitors Center

Three is the magic number

The SC Supreme Court eliminated a gray area pertaining to disclosing information about finalists for a public job. A recent ruling clarifies when public disclosure of the finalists must take place.

According to the court, Spartanburg School District No. 7 violated the state's Freedom of Information Act by only releasing information on two finalists for its superintendent job but not the five semifinalists selected from a group of about 30 applicants.

In 2003, the Spartanburg Herald-Journal sued Spartanburg School District No. 7 (*New York Times Co. v. Spartanburg Cty. School Dist. No. 7*) after the district released information on just two finalists instead of the five semifinalists.

The Supreme Court's decision focuses on the wording of SC Code Section 30-4-40(a)(13), which exempts from

mandatory disclosure certain material gathered in the search to fill a public employment position. It provides that "all materials, regardless of form, gathered by a public body during a search to fill an employment position, except that materials relating to not fewer than the final three applicants under consideration for a position must be made available for public inspection and copying."

The Spartanburg School District argued this section limits the term "applicants" by the words "final" and "three." The real issue boiled down to which of those two words is more important from a legal standpoint. The district further argued it provided material relating to just two because the final pool only included two people.

The Court ruled the term "final" refers to the last group of applicants,

with at least three members, from which the employment selection is made." The district asserted the requirement of three would have the absurd effect of forcing public employers to name three finalists even though there may only be two qualified candidates. The Court declared "the statute simply requires a public employer to disclose material relating to a larger group of applicants if it chooses to name one or two 'finalists.'"

If a pool of applicants is narrowed to a group larger than three, but not ultimately three, material related to the larger group must be disclosed. The district, for example, could have gone from 30 to three and disclosed the three. They could have gone from 30 to one but would have to disclose 30.

Public officials must remember "three is the magic number."

Sixteen graduate from Elected Officials Institute

Sixteen municipal officials graduated from the SC Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government during MASC's Annual Meeting in July.

The Institute is sponsored by the Municipal Association in cooperation with USC's Institute of Public Service and Policy Research and Clemson University's Strom Thurmond Institute. Institute topics address the varied concerns of local government, such as powers and duties of elected officials, finance and planning/zoning. The next session, "Forms of Municipal Government" and "Benefits and Pitfalls of Economic Development" will be broadcast via satellite to the 10 regional councils of government on September 20.

For more information, visit www.masc.sc or contact Miriam Hair at 803.933.1204 or mhair@masc.sc.



The summer 2007 graduates of the Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government are, in alphabetical order, Councilmember Randy Alford of Conway, Mayor Paul Bell of Woodruff, Councilmember Robert Braddock of Hartsville, Councilmember David Dennis of Moncks Corner, Councilmember Bob Flowers of Summerville, Councilmember Bruce Henderson of Clover, Councilmember Charles Hornack of Duncan, Councilmember Bruce Kalley of Pendleton, Councilmember Hardison King of Irmo, Councilmember William McKown of Surfside Beach, Mayor Louis Newton of Furman, Councilmember Margaret Thompson of Clemson, Councilmember Shirley Upton of Santee, Councilmember Richard Waring of Summerville, Councilmember Dave Watson of Easley and Councilmember Pat Welborn of Pickens. (Not all graduates appear in photo.)

SC legal standards: "One of the worst" on police pursuits

SCMIRF addresses problem with model policy

Noted law enforcement expert Jack Ryan, speaking at the Municipal Association of SC Annual Meeting, called South Carolina's legal standards on police pursuits "one of the worst in the country."

Ryan, an attorney and former law enforcement officer, is a nationally renowned trainer with the Legal and Liability Risk Management Institute (a division of the Public Agency Training Council). The institute assists risk management and law enforcement in providing a proactive approach to reduce liability exposure.

After a recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Scott v. Harris*, other states are becoming less protective on pursuits and allowing law enforcement to exercise more discretion as to the appropriateness of a pursuit. While *Scott v. Harris* answered many of the federal constitutional questions that arise when pursuits end in property damage or bodily injury, the decision did nothing to address the tort liability implications brought in state courts.

Ryan explained South Carolina has one of the lowest bars in establishing liability for police. Plaintiffs need only show police failed to exercise a "slight degree of care" in establishing liability based on negligence, as opposed to most states that still maintain a "gross negligence" standard. Ryan recommended SC local governments implement strict, limited scope pursuit policies.

Law enforcement agencies, he said, need to make themselves a "more difficult target for suits," as the costs of even defending a law enforcement lawsuit can be outrageously large. The best defense to these types of suits, according to Ryan, is sound law enforcement

policy and training. In addition to pursuits, he addressed the legal issues surrounding

- **use of force**
- **property/evidence collection**
- **care, custody, control and restraint of prisoners**
- **domestic violence**
- **off-duty conduct**
- **sexual harassment**
- **discrimination**
- **selection and hiring**
- **internal affairs**
- **special operations, and**
- **the mentally ill.**

Law enforcement agencies are notorious for borrowing policies from other jurisdictions and adopting them as their own. Ryan warned this was particularly dangerous to do across state lines. Virginia implemented a very good model policy and procedure manual a number of years ago that several jurisdictions in other states used as a model. "You can't go and get a policy manual from Virginia and expect it work in South Carolina. Agencies must look at policies to ensure they address both federal and their specific state law," Ryan said.

The South Carolina Municipal Insurance and Risk Financing Fund (the property and liability insurance program of MASC) contracted with Ryan to develop South Carolina-specific model law enforcement policies and procedures. The South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy Legal Division has reviewed and approved them. These policies are available free as a membership benefit to SCMIRF members.

Said Phil Cromer, MASC risk and safety services manager, "The model policies have been developed in accordance with the legal standards of South Carolina and will be a tremendous benefit for SCMIRF members who are interested in controlling their liability costs. The 'pursuit policy' alone is worth the amount we paid to develop the entire model."

SCMIRF will be distributing the model policy and procedure manual in mid-September during regional train-the-trainer sessions for SCMIRF-member law enforcement agencies. See box for dates and locations.

For more information, contact Phil Cromer at 803.933.1210, pcromer@masc.sc or visit www.masc.sc/rms.

SCMIRF-member training sessions

September 17 - Anderson

September 18 - Columbia

September 19 - North Myrtle Beach

September 20 - Isle of Palms

SCMIRF members can contact Barbara Little at blittle@masc.sc or 803.933.1237 to register for these SCMIRF member-only sessions.

Written any gobbledygook lately?

By Dr. Henry T. Price

So far, it's been a good year for states and their revenues. It's a good thing, too, because a lot of states are finding out that the declining writing skills of many of their employees are costing them money.

The National Commission on Writing for America's Families, Schools, and Colleges released a report, "Writing: A Powerful Message from State Government," based on data provided by human resources offices in 49 of the 50 states.

Even though writing is a hugely important and costly job requirement for private sector employees studied in an earlier survey, the report revealed that it is even more so for the nearly 2.7 million people who work for state governments. Training programs in writing skills for these state employees are estimated to cost taxpayers more than \$220 million a year.

Almost two years ago, the State of Washington, according to an Associated Press report, became concerned with the bureaucratic gobbledygook it saw in its agency communications.

To help address the problem, the governor ordered all state agencies to use "plain talk," and more than 2,000 state employees attended classes to receive instruction on how to write in everyday language.

Has it paid off? According to the AP, just one letter from the state's Department of Revenue that used plain talk resulted in the collection of an extra \$800,000 over two years in "use tax," the generally ignored equivalent of sales tax on items bought out of state. That one letter caused the number of businesses complying with use tax regulations to triple.

Thom Haller, executive director of the Center for Plain Language in Washington, DC, has said plain-language initiatives are spreading to other states.

"We're seeing them embrace it because they're recognizing that clarity in structure and language is important," he said. "It enables people to get their jobs done more efficiently."

Here are a couple of examples the AP used to illustrate simplifications Washington state is using in its official documents:

- **The Department of Labor and Industries:**

Before: We have been notified that you did not receive the State of Washington warrant listed on the attached Affidavit of Lost or Destroyed Warrant Request for Replacement, form F242.

After: Have you cashed your L&I check yet? The state Treasurer's Office has informed us that a check we sent you has not been cashed.

- **The Department of Ecology:**

Before: Specific to the CO2 mitigation program, Ecology recommends that the reviewing authority assure compliance with the approved mitigation plan on an annual basis, unless project circumstances indicate that a more or less frequent compliance review is appropriate.

After: Reviewing authorities conduct annual reviews to assure compliance with the mitigation plan.

The same kinds of gobbledygook problems can infect communications that businesses depend on to sell their products. One of the points I stress with students in my "Good Writing Is Good Business" seminars is that, in many cases, you have never met the person you are trying to persuade, to impress, or to sell when you send them a written communication — and that includes e-mail.

The only means those people have of forming an image of you and your business is through the words they see in front of them. It's up to writers to see that the image they create is the best it can possibly be.

Bob Kerry, the former U.S. senator and governor from Nebraska who is chairman of the National Commission on Writing, has said he shudders to think how the Declaration of Independence would read if it had been written in today's bureaucratic gobbledygook.

We all know the adage that "time is money." Apparently, words are money, too.

Dr. Price, a consultant with Sam McCuen and Associates, taught copy editing and writing for more than 30 years at the University of South Carolina.

Article reprinted with permission from South Carolina Business, SC Chamber of Commerce, July 2007.



Educational Opportunities

Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government

■ **September 20**, will offer the course "Benefits and Pitfalls of Economic Development/Forms of Government" from 6 - 9 p.m. via satellite to the 10 regional councils of governments.

SC Association of Stormwater Managers

■ **September 21**, will hold its third quarterly meeting at the SC Hospital Association in Columbia. Topics include "MS4 Implementation," "Changing Land Use and the Environment" and "Underground Retention and Water Quality."

Road Show

■ **September 25**, the Municipal Association will hold a *Hometown, SC* Road Show at 11:30 a.m. at its office in Columbia.

Road Show

■ **September 27**, the Municipal Association will hold a *Hometown, SC* Road Show at 11:30 a.m. at the Municipal Conference Center in Aiken.

SC Community Development Association

■ **October 1**, will partner with the SC Department of Commerce's Grants Administration for its fall meeting. Topics include sustainable communities, smart growth, housing financing techniques, small business development, predatory lending and historic preservation tax credits. A SC Community Development Block Grant workshop will be held October 2-3. Both events will be held at the Clarion Townhouse Hotel in Columbia.

Road Show

■ **October 3**, the Municipal Association will hold a *Hometown, SC* Road Show at 11:30 a.m. at the Marriott Charleston in Charleston.

Road Show

■ **October 11**, the Municipal Association will hold a *Hometown, SC* Road Show at 11:30 a.m. at the Simpsonville Activity Center in Simpsonville.

Road Show

■ **October 17**, the Municipal Association will hold a *Hometown, SC* Road Show at 11:30 a.m. at the Technical College of the Lowcountry in Beaufort.

Road Show

■ **October 25**, the Municipal Association will hold a *Hometown, SC* Road Show at 5:30 p.m. at the Hilton Garden Inn in Florence.

Road Show

■ **October 26**, the Municipal Association will hold a *Hometown, SC* Road Show at 11:30 a.m. at the Marriott Resort at Grande Dunes in Myrtle Beach.

For more information about these meetings or other MASC meetings not listed, please call 803.799.9574, or visit our Web site at www.masc.sc.



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