AUGUST 2013

MASC Municipal Association of South Carolina

UPTOWN

a publication of the municipal association of south carolina

2013 legislative session ends late June

The 2013 legislative session ended in June with members of the General Assembly returning to Columbia twice after the June 6 adjournment date to finalize the budget and deal with conference reports and the governor's vetoes.

Over the course of the session, legislators addressed all three of the Municipal Association's legislative priorities for cities and towns: removal and rehabilitation of dilapidated structures; dependable revenue sources for cities and towns; and long-term and stable funding sources for roads, bridges and infrastructure maintenance, improvements and expansion.

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Legislative Session, ***from page 1 >***

Dilapidated Structures

Bills were introduced in the House and Senate this session to address dilapidated and unsafe structures (S375, H3948). These bills give municipal officials another tool to deal with blight in their hometowns by allowing more flexibility in rehabilitating or removing dilapidated structures though partnerships with the private sector and nonprofits. Both bills are ready for subcommittee hearings at the start of the 2014 legislative session.

The Municipal Association also strongly supported and worked for two years to help pass the Abandoned Buildings Revitalization Act (H3093, R91, A57). The Act adds an economic development tool for cities and towns to attract investors and provide incentives to revitalize abandoned buildings that are eyesores in the community.

This bill, sponsored by Rep. James Smith from Columbia, allows a taxpayer to receive income tax credits or property tax credits when investing in the rehabilitation of an abandoned building. The legislation outlines required investment thresholds based on the municipality's population for the investor to receive the tax credits. In addition, approval by the governing board of the taxing entity is required. For details on the bill, visit www.masc.sc (keyword: Abandoned Buildings Revitalization Act).

Quality transportation and infrastructure maintenance

A conference committee of House and Senate members worked out a compromise to overhaul transportation and infrastructure funding in the final days of the session. H3360 (R119, A98) requires that all highways within the state highway system be constructed to the SC Department of Transportation standards. This bill also allows the state to accept roads from cities and towns without giving the cities and towns a road in exchange. The bill was amended to add $50 million to the State Infrastructure Bank, redirects $41 million of vehicle sales tax revenue from the General Fund to the SCDOT's state nonfederal aid highway fund for secondary road repair, and adds $50 million for bridge repair to leverage $250 million in federal money.

> The Association tracked more than 380 bills during the 2013 legislative session. More than 20 of those bills passed the House and Senate, but many remain in play for 2014. For a complete list of passed bills and those still in play for 2014, visit www.masc.sc (keyword: legislative tracking).

Dependable Revenue Sources

Several items to note in the fiscal year 2013-2014 budget (H3710, R120):

Local Government Fund – Funding the Local Government Fund at 100 percent of the amount required by law continued to be a major priority for cities and towns this session. In the FY2013 budget, legislators funded the LGF at only 84 percent of the state-mandated level. During the FY2014 budget debate, the General Assembly approved the same dollar amount of $212.6 million as approved for FY2013. Because the LGF funding formula is calculated as 4.5 percent of the state general fund and the state general fund grew in FY2012, the state budget funding level amounted to only 81 percent of full funding.

H3501, the bill allowing the legislature to cut the LGF below the level required by law, did not pass.

In an effort to ensure the Local Government Fund as a dependable revenue source for cities and towns, the House Ways and Means committee established a study committee to evaluate a new formula to calculate the Local Government Fund going forward. The committee met several times without putting forth any recommendations, but will continue to meet during the off-season.

Cybersecurity budget proviso – This new proviso mandates that local governments notify any potentially impacted resident within 72 hours of a breach in the security of the local government computer system.

Highlights of passed bills

Police officers disability retirement (S484, R82, A69)
Makes a change to last session's state retirement reform bill related to police officer retirement. The language deletes the requirement that certain members of the Police Officers Retirement System must be approved for social security benefits to continue to receive a disability benefit. It also reinstates the medical review board approval.

Eligibility for criminal record expungement (H3184, R93, A75)
Changes current expungement law to allow a person to be eligible for expungement of a first offense crime which carries a fine of $1,000 rather than $500.

Penalties for tampering with utility meters (H3568, R34, A23)
Increases and restructures the penalties for altering, tampering with or bypassing electric, gas or water meters.

Highlights of bills still active for 2014

Business Freedom to Choose Act (flow control) (H3290)
Prohibits a county from passing an ordinance that restricts solid waste disposal at a permitted facility or impedes the development or implementation of a recycling program. The bill would preempt cities and towns from being able to determine who collects residential and commercial waste.

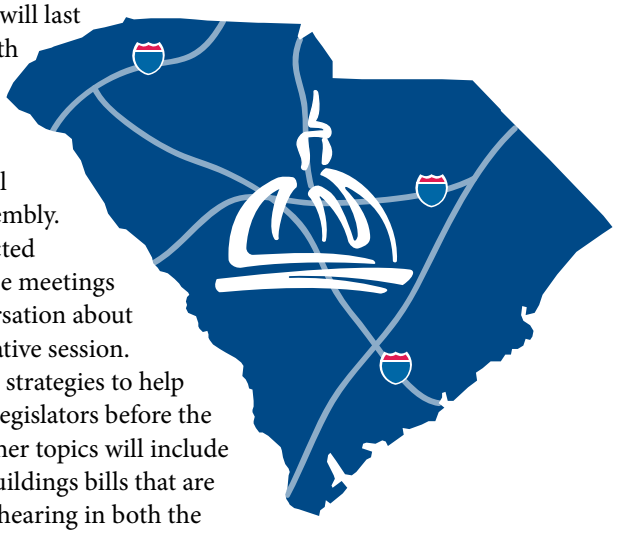
Requirements of an employee seeking workers' compensation (H3147)
Modifies the requirements of an employee seeking workers' compensation for personal injury caused by stress, mental injury or mental illness. The bill was amended in committee to only apply if mental injury arises from a law enforcement officer's direct involvement in or subjection to the use of deadly force in the line of duty.

Statewide program for e-waste recycling (H3847)
Creates a statewide stewardship program for recycling electronic equipment.

Regional Advocacy Meetings begin August 14

Every year, Municipal Association staff travels to different regions of the state to hear from local elected leaders and staff about important legislative issues and share information. This year is no different.

Join Association staff at one of the 10 Regional Advocacy Meetings to discuss bills that passed during the 2013 legislative session and get ready for legislation still in play for 2014. The meetings will last from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. with lunch included.



In the middle of a two-year session, bills both positive and negative are still pending in the General Assembly. It is critical that all local elected officials and staff attend these meetings and contribute to the conversation about priorities for the 2014 legislative session.

Officials will also discuss strategies to help cultivate relationships with legislators before the session starts in January. Other topics will include the important dilapidated buildings bills that are waiting for a subcommittee hearing in both the House and Senate and other critical information Association staff need from local leaders to prepare for the 2014 session.

August 14 – The Manor at Doko Meadows, Town of Blythewood
August 15 – The Arts Center, City of Greenwood
August 19 – Conway Recreation Center, City of Conway
August 21 – City Center, City of Sumter
September 4 – Activity and Senior Center, City of Simpsonville
September 5 – National Bean Market Museum, City of Lake City
September 11 – Veterans Building, City of Union
September 12 – Holly Hill Depot, Town of Holly Hill
September 18 – Colleton County Library, City of Walterboro
September 19 – North Charleston Coliseum Club Room North, City of North Charleston

The locations are organized by council of government region, but officials may attend any session that is convenient. Association staff needs you at these meetings to keep moving the legislative priorities for cities and towns forward in 2014.

These meetings are free, but the Association needs an accurate head count for lunch and handouts.

For more information and to register online, visit www.masc.sc (keyword: regional advocacy meeting). Contact Michelle Willm at 803.933.1259 (mwillm@masc.sc) with questions. Look for additional information each Monday in the Uptown Update *e-newsletter.*

When lightning strikes

Lightning strikes between 40 and 50 times each second around the world. That adds up to almost 1.4 billion strikes per year.

Technically, lightning is a massive electrostatic discharge between electrically charged regions within clouds, or between a cloud and the Earth's surface. A lightning bolt can travel at speeds of 60,000 meters per second and can reach temperatures approaching 54,000 degrees Fahrenheit. That is hot enough to fuse soil or sand into glass channels.

Lightning strikes can result in significant property damage, injury or even death. Since 2011, the South Carolina Municipal Insurance and Risk Financing Fund has received more than 100 hail, wind and lightning property claims with net incurred costs of more than $1.6 million. SCMIRF is the Municipal Association's property and casualty, self-funded insurance program.

Protecting property from lightning can sometimes be very complicated and expensive. Not only does a lightning bolt pose a danger of a direct strike, it also has a field of static electricity surrounding it that can damage circuitry and memory devices if the strike is close enough.

"Be sure that all property is properly grounded and that no grounding has been disconnected during repair work," advised Holland Folsom, senior adjuster the SC Municipal Insurance and Risk Financing Fund.

Computer systems, phone systems, security systems and water towers are all susceptible to lightning damage. Water towers may have phone, telemetry and communication equipment connected to various systems. This makes it critical to have multiple layers of protection in place. Lightning can strike the tower or run into the tower from another source. Also, the tower is connected to buildings and equipment on the ground. "It is important to know what equipment you have and what backups are available in case of a strike," said Folsom.

If the lightning strike caused fire or water damage within buildings, there are disaster recovery companies that specialize in fire and water restoration. They typically are able to respond within a few hours and immediately begin their work of stopping further damage and making repairs. Often they are able to restore workable conditions even if total restoration is not possible for some time. "Identify these vendors in advance, so that in an emergency you can get an immediate response," continued Folsom.

Should the damage be too severe for people to resume work or occupancy, there are emergency response services available to help provide temporary electrical power to operations and temporary replacement equipment, such as a phone system and computers. They may also provide temporary mobile work units.

SCMIRF members have access to such services through the Agility Recovery ReadySuite. "In an emergency situation you need to mitigate the damages immediately," advised Folsom. "Do so and notify your insurance provider as soon as possible."

Being prepared for a lightning strike before it happens can help mitigate your losses. Know what systems are susceptible to lightning damage, determine what types of protections are available, and identify mitigation and restoration vendors in advance, concluded Folsom.

For more information about the South Carolina Municipal Insurance and Risk Financing Fund, visit www.masc.sc (keyword: SCMIRF).

Letter from the Executive Director

Shared Voices

Shared Knowledge

Shared Solutions

Each year, I look forward to the opportunity this Annual Report gives me to share the accomplishments of South Carolina's cities and towns working together through the Municipal Association.

Our mission is as relevant today as it was more than 80 years ago when the Municipal Association was founded. The Association exists so that municipal officials from across South Carolina can work together to meet the challenges their cities and towns face.

As we know, with challenges come opportunities.

The Association has a long history of embracing the opportunities technology gives us to increase efficiencies and offer meaningful programs and services. I'm proud of the state and national reputation the Association has earned as being a leader in leveraging technology to complement the work we do in all areas - from training and risk management services to collection programs and advocacy.

That mindset of embracing technology is a common thread throughout many of our initiatives this year.

We rolled out on-demand courses for elected officials and risk management training. "The Five Basics of Effective Governing" provides newly elected municipal officials with basic information about municipal governance that will be helpful during their first few months in office. Later this year, elected officials will be able to take the "Forms of Municipal Government" and "Municipal Economic Development" classes online for Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government credit. Also, Risk Management Services began a partnership with LocalGovU to offer on-demand courses to supplement the regional and onsite training RMS offers members of its self-funded insurance pools.

The mobile app for this year's Annual Meeting is our first step into the world of mobile-friendly access to information. With mobile devices becoming so integral to how we receive information, conduct business and communicate with one another, we felt the time was right to launch our app. In the coming year, we will look at using the app for other training sessions we offer.

Building on the success of the Municipal Information Dashboard, which allows municipal clerks to update key information about their city through the Association's website, we are giving all municipal officials a way to view then update their contact information online and to manage subscriptions to the Association's e-newsletters. Closely related to this initiative, we launched a significantly enhanced online directory this spring. As names of elected officials and department heads are updated or contact information for cities and towns is changed in the Association's database, the online directory reflects these changes in real time.

Along the same lines of increasing efficiency, but maybe not as visible as the other projects, were two technology enhancements for our collection programs.

Due to a change in federal law, the 2012 General Assembly changed the state's surplus lines insurance law by replacing the 4 percent state tax and 2 percent municipal business license tax with a single 6 percent tax rate. The law requires the South Carolina Department of Insurance to collect the new brokers' premium tax and authorized the Municipal Association to distribute the funds to municipalities. We reprogrammed our computer systems to analyze the information received from SCDOI in order to distribute the taxes to the appropriate municipality. We also rolled out an online payment tool for insurance companies to pay their municipal tax. Almost all of the 1092 insurance companies used the tool to either submit information or pay online. This increased efficiency for the insurance companies and the Association.

As I mentioned earlier, technology gives us the opportunity to increase efficiencies and to deliver programs and services in the manner you want to receive them. While we have added things like on-demand training, e-newsletters and online directories, "high tech" will never replace our personal approach to helping members, especially in the areas of technical assistance and advocating on behalf of our cities and towns.

This year, our field services staff of former city managers drove more than 65,000 miles and made more than 900 city visits while the risk management staff met one-on-one with city officials to share best practices for lowering risks and their insurance premiums. Also, the Main Street staff worked directly with local officials on revitalizing their downtowns, and the advocacy staff worked directly with municipal officials to speak with one voice on legislative issues important to cities and towns.

I invite you to read more about these initiatives and other accomplishments in the pages that follow.

Miriam Hair

Miriam Hair
Executive Director

Shared Voices

For the 2013-2014 General Assembly session, the Association identified three legislative priorities to address major challenges cities and towns of all sizes face – removal and rehabilitation of dilapidated structures, dependable revenue sources for cities and towns, and long-term and stable funding sources for roads, bridges and infrastructure maintenance, improvements and expansion.

Working with a bipartisan group of legislators, companion bills were introduced in the House and Senate to address dilapidated and unsafe structures. These bills, which encourage partnerships with the private sector and nonprofits, would provide municipal officials another tool to deal with blight in their hometowns. The bills are ready for subcommittee hearings at the start of the 2014 session. Also this year, the Association strongly supported and worked to help pass the Abandoned Buildings Revitalization Act which adds an economic development tool for cities and towns to attract investors and provide incentives to revitalize abandoned buildings.

While the state FY2014 budget funds the Local Government Fund at the same level as FY2013, $212.6 million, this amounts to only 81 percent of full funding required by law. We will continue to discuss with legislators the need for the LGF to be a dependable source of revenue for cities and towns.

Members of the House and Senate agreed on a compromise to overhaul transportation and infrastructure funding, adding $141 million for highway projects and leveraging $250 million in federal funds.

Local officials also made their voices heard on Capitol Hill this year regarding passage of the Marketplace Fairness Act that would grant states the authority to require out-of-state online and catalog retailers to collect sales taxes at the time of a transaction. At press time, Marketplace Fairness had passed the Senate and was awaiting House action. Local officials also worked with the state delegation to support maintaining the interest exemption on municipal bonds.

Recognizing the long-range nature of promoting positive legislation to help cities and towns better serve residents and businesses, this year we refocused a legislative staff position on researching and developing strategies beyond just a single legislative year or session. Staff has been meeting with municipal leaders across the state to start prioritizing long-range legislative strategies beyond 2014.

Regional Advocacy Meetings

Staff hit the road in the fall for a series of regional advocacy meetings. More than 300 municipal officials met at 10 different locations across the state to talk about the upcoming legislative session and discuss issues important to cities and towns. These conversations were an important part of the process to build the Association's legislative agenda.
Staff Contact: Casey Fields

Lobbying the State Legislature and Congress

Each year, the board of directors, with recommendations from the Association's legislative committee, sets the Association's legislative priorities. The priorities included removal and rehabilitation of dilapidated structures, dependable revenue sources for cities and towns, and long-term and stable funding sources for roads, bridges and infrastructure maintenance, improvements and expansion.

The Association sought out partnerships and coalitions to support legislation that reflected these priorities. Staff monitored more than 300 bills and discussed with legislators the impact of those bills on South Carolina's hometowns. The Association also monitored federal legislation through the National League of Cities. *Staff Contacts: Reba Campbell, Melissa Carter, Casey Fields, Scott Slatton*

Legislative Tracking and Reports

The Municipal Association staff tracks state legislation related to issues affecting cities and towns through an online monitoring system. Updated daily during the session, the tracking system helps municipal leaders monitor the progress of bills throughout the legislative process. Each Friday during the legislative session, municipal officials received *From the Dome to Your Home* encouraging them to communicate with legislators the impact of proposed legislation on their city or town. This e-newsletter recapped the week's major events and previewed the upcoming week's activities.
Staff Contact: Casey Fields

Hometown Legislative Action Day

The Association's Hometown Legislative Action Day is held each February in Columbia. The focus of this meeting is the current legislative issues affecting municipalities. The meeting gives municipal officials an opportunity to meet in Columbia and visit their legislators at the State House. This year, 497 municipal officials from 152 cities attended the event and heard presentations from notable speakers like CNN correspondent and author John Avlon. There were also presentations by state agency directors as well as House and Senate members.
Staff Contact: Ken Ivey

Grassroots Legislative Outreach

The Municipal Association's grassroots outreach efforts involve local officials directly engaging with legislators and other policy makers to communicate the value of strong cities to the state's economic competitiveness. This grassroots outreach includes strategic involvement of local elected officials, media outreach, social media and the "Cities Mean Business" campaign. The SC Society of Association Executives recognized the outreach initiatives with a Best in the Business award.
Staff Contact: Casey Fields and Reba Campbell

Cities Mean Business campaign

The "Cities Mean Business" campaign encourages new and stronger collaboration between local elected leaders and their hometown business leaders to communicate with one voice to policy makers about the value of strong cities.

The campaign includes an online toolkit of resources and templates officials can use to integrate the campaign into their own hometown efforts. This year, city leaders used the campaign ads and visuals on their websites, at business appreciation events and in print materials to communicate the value of city services.

The Association continued its partnership with *SC Biz* magazine to publish the bi-annual *Cities Mean Business* magazine that spotlights how strong cities are important to the state's economic success. Targeted to business leaders and policy makers, the *Cities Mean Business* magazine has a circulation of 15,000 readers.

This year, the magazine received awards of excellence from the SC Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America, the SC Press Association and the SC Society of Association Executives.
Staff Contact: Reba Campbell

Shared Knowledge

When the Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government was established in 1986, all classes were held in a classroom-style setting. In 1996, satellite technology available through SCETV allowed several of the classes to be broadcast live to the ten regional councils of governments. This year, we offered our first on-demand course, "The Five Basics of Effective Governing." The noncredited course, created specifically for newly elected officials, is available 24/7 from the Association's website.

We will launch "Forms of Government" and "Municipal Economic Development," our first on-demand, credited courses for the Institute, later this year. We plan to offer at least two additional on-demand classes for the Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government next year.

In-person meetings remain an important part of our education and training efforts. Our 11 affiliate groups sponsored more than 30 training sessions this year. In January, the Municipal Finance Officers, Clerks and Treasurers Association hosted clerks from North Carolina, Georgia, Florida and Alabama for the International Institute of Municipal Clerks' Region III Annual Conference. Also, the Association hosted a communications training program focused on social media and media relations.

Affiliate Associations

The Municipal Association supported 11 affiliate organizations, which provide training and networking for a variety of local government positions. In addition to traditional face-to-face learning and networking opportunities, many of the affiliate association members used a listserve to share best practices, experiences and specific questions related to their position.

Association of SC Mayors

Formed in 2011, the Association of South Carolina Mayors provided opportunities for its 133 members to more fully engage in advocating for issues that affect cities and towns, to network, and to share ideas and best practices.
Staff Contact: Casey Fields

Municipal Court Administration Association of SC

The Municipal Court Administration Association of South Carolina offered training to court administrators, clerks of court, municipal judges and other municipal employees involved in court administration. The SC Court Administration, SC Commission on CLE and Specialization, and the Office of Victims Services recognized these training sessions for continuing education credits.

Training topics included best practices of courtesy summons, overview of processes and procedures for working with the SC Department of Motor Vehicles, NCIC compliance, and current trends involving counterfeit money. MCAA, which has 217 members, also offered opportunities for members to share ideas to make the business of court administration more efficient.
Staff Contact: Lesley Stone

Municipal Technology Association of SC

With 92 members, the Municipal Technology Association of South Carolina promoted the effective use of technology by local governments. MTASC offered training on how to provide better services and gain efficiencies using the latest technological innovations. Government Management Information Sciences and the Center for Public Technology at the University of North Carolina's School of Government recognize this training for continuing education credits. Training topics this year included information about ethical hacking, IPV6 conversion, Citrix applications and security for mobile devices.
Staff Contact: Lesley Stone

SC Association of Municipal Power Systems

All of the state's 21 municipal electric utilities are members of the SC Association of Municipal Power Systems. Originally, the Association existed solely for the utilities to help one another during times of disaster. Today, the affiliate also focuses on legislative initiatives and provides training for elected officials, management staff and operational personnel. Training sessions centered on the effective, efficient, reliable and safe operation of municipal electric systems.
Staff Contact: Eric Budds

SC Association of Stormwater Managers

The South Carolina Association of Stormwater Managers offered its 193 members quarterly training on stormwater management policies, changes in state and federal laws, and best practices. Training included updates on proposed changes to stormwater regulations and case studies featuring innovative programs and practices deployed by SCASM members. The South Carolina Board of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors recognize this training for continuing education credits.
Staff Contact: Lesley Stone

SC Business Licensing Officials Association

The South Carolina Business Licensing Officials Association with its 260 members promoted best practices for administering and enforcing the local business and professional license tax through training sessions and the professional designations of Accreditation in Business Licensing and Masters in Business Licensing. This year, nine business licensing professionals received their ABL designation, and four received the MBL designation.
Staff Contact: Scott Slatton

SC Community Development Association

The South Carolina Community Development Association provided educational forums for its 136 members to address economic and community development needs and enhance members' professional performance. This year, members representing local, state and private entities learned about how parks and recreation can drive community and economic development, building effective public-private partnerships, and strategies to fund downtown development.
Staff Contact: Lesley Stone

SC Municipal Attorneys Association

The South Carolina Municipal Attorneys Association's annual training session addressed the specialized needs of municipal attorneys. Session topics included parliamentary procedure, Internet sweepstakes and updates on currently municipal case law. The Supreme Court of South Carolina Commission on CLE and Specialization approved this training session for continuing education credits.
Staff Contacts: Lesley Stone

Municipal Finance Officers, Clerks and Treasurers Association

The SC Municipal Finance Officers, Clerks and Treasurers Association offered its 188 members training programs covering the wide range of responsibilities of finance officers, clerks and treasurers. Many of these training sessions qualified for continuing education credits for certified municipal clerks and certified public accountants. MFOCTA sponsored the Municipal Clerks and Treasurers Institute with the Municipal Association and the University of South Carolina's Institute for Public Service and Policy Research.
Staff Contact: Jeff Shacker

Municipal Human Resources Association

The South Carolina Municipal Human Resources Association promoted sound human resources administration and encouraged innovative programs. Through its training programs, MHRA provided information and the opportunity to exchange ideas among its 208 members. Participants learned about updates made to the Association's *Model Employee Handbook*, how to properly classify exempt and nonexempt employees and employee performance management. The national Human Resources Certification Institute recognized this training for continuing education credits.
Staff Contact: Lesley Stone

SC Utility Billing Association

The South Carolina Utility Billing Association continued offering customer service training to its 150 members. Additionally, the Association provided training that included disaster recovery, the latest technology for billing software and e-Government solutions.
Staff *Contact: Ken Ivey*

Training Institutes

Additional educational opportunities were available through four training institutes.

Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government

The Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government offered specialized training for elected officials to increase their understanding of local government operations. The Institute's credited courses consisted of three classes held via web streaming to the ten councils of governments' locations and in-person sessions held in Columbia prior to the February Hometown Legislative Action Day. The Association recognized 71 new graduates this year. The February graduating class of 62 was the largest class in recent history.

The Association sponsored the Institute in partnership with the University of South Carolina's Institute for Public Service and Policy Research and Clemson University's Strom Thurmond Institute.
Staff Contact: Urica Floyd

Municipal Clerks and Treasurers Institute

The Municipal Association sponsored the Municipal Clerks and Treasurers Institute with the SC Municipal Finance Officers, Clerks and Treasurers Association of SC and the University of South Carolina's Institute for Public Service and Policy Research. Topics included financial management, records management, election administration, conducting public meetings, human resources management, municipal law and management skills. Eleven individuals graduated this year, with 129 registrants attending the semi-annual sessions.

Staff Contact: Jeff Shacker

Orientation Training for Local Government Planning and Zoning Officials

The SC Comprehensive Planning Act requires new local government planning and zoning officials to complete six hours of orientation training. Facilitators used training materials prepared by the Municipal Association and approved by the State Advisory Committee on Educational Requirements. These materials allow facilitators the flexibility to incorporate local examples for discussion. This year, 123 individuals completed the training.

Staff Contacts: Lea Ann Mitchell

SC Local Government Management Training

The SC Local Government Management Training program was designed for city and county managers/administrators and assistants that were new to the profession or new to the state. The training was also beneficial for employees on the career path to becoming a manager/administrator.

The program is a collaborative effort of the Municipal Association, the SC City and County Management Association, the University of South Carolina's Institute for Public Service and Policy Research, the SC Association of Counties, and the SC Association of County Managers, Administrators and Supervisors.

This program provided training in areas essential to be an effective manager/administrator. Topics included public budgeting, overview of South Carolina local government, financial management, working effectively with council, employment law and human resource management.

Staff Contact: Eric Budds

Main Street South Carolina

Main Street SC worked to revitalize downtowns into vibrant centers of commerce and community following the National Main Street's Four Point Approach – Organization, Promotion, Design and Economic Restructuring. It honored exceptional member accomplishments through its annual Inspiration Awards. Main Street South Carolina training sessions this year covered a variety of topics including the Abandoned Building and Rehabilitation Act; USDA Rural Grant Program, measuring the impact of revitalization, and place-making.

Staff Contact: Beppie LeGrand

Annual Meeting

In 2012, 620 municipal officials from 122 cities attended the Annual Meeting. The meeting provided networking opportunities for the attendees and training on topics that included ethics, communicating with the media, financial audits, emergency preparation, economic development and downtown redevelopment.
Staff Contact: Ken Ivey

Achievement Awards

In 2013, 33 cities and towns entered the annual awards program. Since its creation in 1987, 719 municipal projects have vied for the annual awards that recognize successful and innovative projects that improve the quality of life for residents and add value to the community. The program also encourages the sharing of ideas among municipal officials. The Achievement Award program was recognized for excellence this year by the SC Chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators.
Staff Contact: Meredith Waldrop

Publications

The Association has a variety of manuals and handbooks on topics of municipal interest. Seven were updated this year (*).

- *Annexation Handbook**
- *Comprehensive Planning Guide for Local Governments**
- *Conducting Public Meetings**
- *Election Handbook*
- *Forms and Powers of Municipal Government**
- *Handbook for Municipal Officials in SC**
- *Incorporation Handbook*
- *Model Employee Handbook for SC Municipalities**
- *Municipal Officials and Legislative Directory**
- *Raising Hometown Voices to a New Level of Influence, an advocacy handbook*
- *SC Business Licensing Handbook*
- *Tips for Hometown Media Success*

Staff Contact: Mary Brantner

Uptown

The monthly newsletter, *Uptown*, provided in-depth articles on issues of municipal interest. The feature section in each issue examined a topic of municipal interest from a variety of viewpoints. This year's feature sections included public safety, planning, human resources, risk management, community development, and the role of the elected official. Also this year, *Uptown* received an Award of Merit from the SC Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America and an Award of Excellence from the SC Chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators.

The weekly e-newsletter, *Uptown Update,* provided information about upcoming training opportunities and other timely topics.
Staff Contact: Mary Brantner

Field Services

Assigned a specific region in the state, the field service managers help municipal officials address issues of local concern and receive feedback from members. Identifying and resolving minor challenges and concerns often prevented them from growing into major problems. Field service managers were available, at the request of the municipality when significant concerns or challenges were identified, to provide hands-on technical support. This year, the field service managers travelled more than 65,000 miles making more than 900 visits to South Carolina cities and towns.

Staff Contacts: Bill Taylor and Jeff Shacker

Website

The Municipal Association website, www.masc.sc, offered more than 800 pages of information and provided access to more than 1500 documents, presentations and external resources. This year, the site had more than 350,000 visits.

In February, the Association significantly enhanced its online directory. The directory displays elected officials and department heads for each municipality along with each city's state senator and representative. Another feature added to the online directory was the ability to view a listing of all 270 South Carolina municipalities categorized by name, population, county or council of governments' district.

This year, the South Carolina Press Association presented the Association with its "Best Website" award.

Staff Contact: Mary Brantner

Daily News

Daily News is a quick, "at a glance" email summary of news stories of municipal interest from around the state.

Staff Contact: Amy Gillian

Social Media Outreach

The Association uses Twitter (@MuniAssnSC) and Facebook (CitiesMeanBusiness) to provide up-to-the-minute information on State House activity during the session and to share good news stories about cities and towns.

Staff Contact: Reba Campbell

Shared Solutions

Membership in Risk Management Services' two self-funded insurance programs grew by five percent this year. The South Carolina Municipal Insurance Trust (workers' compensation) and the South Carolina Municipal Insurance and Risk Financing Fund (property/liability) added a total of 10 new members.

RMS also increased training opportunities for its members. Members have an on-demand option for a variety of risk management, human resources, safety and law enforcement courses tailored specifically to public entities. The South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy approved the law enforcement and corrections courses for continuing education credit, and the South Carolina Planning Education Advisory Committee approved the general governance courses for continuing education credit. So far, more than 700 employees of SCMIT and SCMIRF members have taken these on-demand courses. RMS also launched the Risk Management Institute, designed to provide participants with a better understanding of their roles as risk managers and safety coordinators. Sixty-five employees enrolled in the inaugural class.

As they have for the last several years, SCMIT and SCMIRF members received participation credits, $3 million for SCMIT and $2 million for SCMIRF. Not provided every year, these credits were possible because of the programs' success in helping members control their losses. The participation credits will directly offset the cost of insurance for member cities and towns.

Collection Programs

Municipalities contract with the Association to collect delinquent debts and certain business license taxes on their behalf. These programs provide centralized and efficient collections for participating municipalities and streamlines the tax payment process. The Association collected more than $148 million in 2012 on behalf of cities and towns.

Brokers Tax Collection Program

The Association collected $9.2 million in business license taxes from surplus lines insurance brokers. The Association distributed taxes collected during the 2012 license year to 266 participating municipalities.
Staff Contact: Melissa Brown

Insurance Tax Collection Program

The Association collected $126.1 million in business license taxes from insurance companies. The Association distributed taxes collected to 266 participating municipalities.
Staff Contacts: Gail Hampton and Brenda Kyzer

Setoff Debt Collection Program

In cooperation with the South Carolina Department of Revenue, the Association collected $2.6 million in delinquent debts (utility bills, taxes, court fines, etc.) owed to 159 participating entities.
Staff Contact: Melissa Brown

Telecommunications Tax Collection Program

The Association collected $10.2 million in business license taxes from telecommunications companies owed to 265 participating municipalities.
Staff Contacts: Susan Gainey and Brenda Kyzer

Insurance

The self-funded insurance programs administered by the Risk Management Services staff are prime examples of strength and efficiency through joint efforts of member cities. Each operates under the direction of a board of trustees composed of representatives from the programs' members. With the primary mission of reducing claims to lower insurance costs, staff helped program members build effective safety programs and assisted members through written programs/standards, audits and inspections, technical assistance, training sessions, newsletter and other resources.

SC Municipal Insurance and Risk Financing Fund

The SC Municipal Insurance and Risk Financing Fund, formed in 1990, provides all lines of property and casualty coverage including tort liability, law enforcement liability, public officials' liability, and property and automobile coverage. In addition to insurance coverage tailored specifically for municipalities' needs, SCMIRF's 99 members received targeted loss prevention services. These services included a model law enforcement policy and procedure manual, risk management manual, multiple loss prevention consultation visits from staff, and online training resources. Members also had access to the Agility Recovery ReadySuite for disaster recovery assistance and had access through SCMIRF's Labor Hotline to 10 hours of free legal advice on labor issues.

This year, SCMIRF's Law Enforcement Liability Reduction Grant Program provided approximately $21,000 in financial assistance to member law enforcement agencies to purchase products, services or equipment designed to help reduce litigation.
Staff Contact: Heather Ricard

SC Municipal Insurance Trust

The SC Municipal Insurance Trust, formed in 1984, provides workers' compensation coverage to its 112 members. The program awarded approximately $188,000 to member law enforcement, fire and public works departments to cover the cost of purchasing soft body armor, other protective gear and work-zone safety equipment. SCMIT provided numerous services to manage risks and reduce the number and size of claims, to manage insurance costs long term. SCMIT also provided its members a model fire services policy and procedures manual. *Staff Contact: Heather Ricard*

Cable Franchise Assistance Program

The Association continued working with Local Government Services, LLC to provide members technical assistance for cable franchise management. The technical assistance helped ensure local governments had access to the expertise required to negotiate benefits and services under reasonable terms and conditions.
Staff Contact: Miriam Hair

South Carolina Other Retirement Benefits Employer Trust

The South Carolina Other Retirement Benefits Employer Trust is a GASB 45 compliant trust to pre-fund retirement benefits, other than pensions. The Trust allows its participating local governments to pool their funds, thus reducing costs by sharing the administrative and investment-related expenses. Forty-two local governments were members of SCORBET this year.

Staff Contact: Heather Ricard

Technology Services

The Association continued its long-standing partnership with VC3 to provide affordable technology services to cities and towns. VC3, an information technology company headquartered in Columbia, designs and hosts municipal websites; designs and implements computer networks; and provides disaster recovery services, security assessments, strategic technology planning services and voice communication services. Also, through VC3's private cloud, cities and towns may limit their investment in hardware and software while providing employees full access to applications and data from any computer linked to the Internet. The cloud also gives cities and towns access to disaster recovery and online backup services.

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Update information 24/7

Building on the success of the Municipal Information Dashboard, which allows clerk/treasurers to update key information about their city online, the Association is offering an additional option for elected officials and city staff to view and update their contact and personal information online.

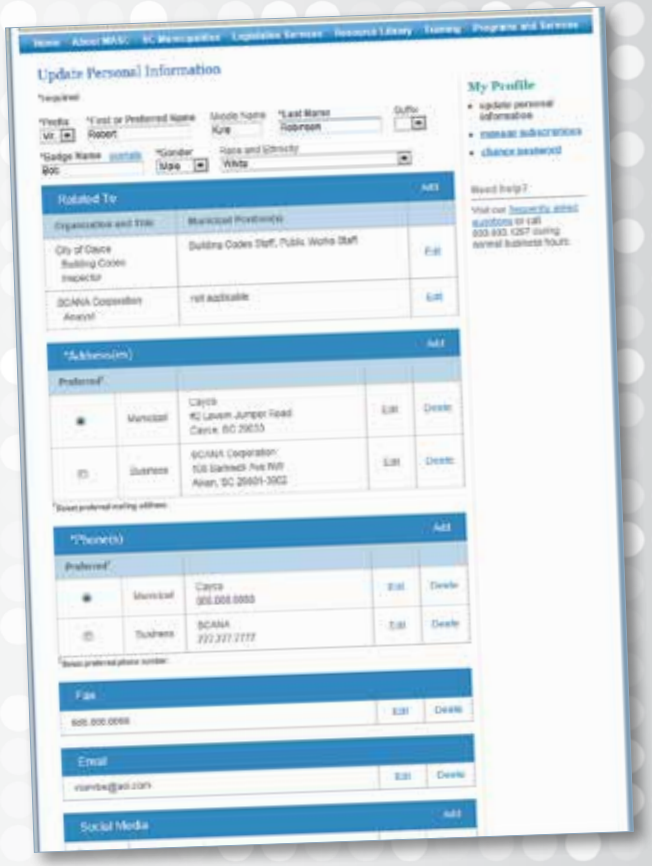
"Maintaining the most up-to-date and accurate information for municipal officials is critical so they can get the most benefit possible from the Association's programs and services," explained Executive Director Miriam Hair.

Elected officials and city staff can access their information in the Association's database from the Association's website *(www.masc.sc)* by using the Member Login link in the upper right-hand corner. Individuals who do not already have a profile will see directions on the login screen to gain access. Once on their profile, individuals can update their title and contact information, indicate their preferred mailing address and phone number, and provide their email address and social media account names.

"The Association does not share personal information like email addresses and social media account names with other organizations or businesses," explained Hair.

"Because of the information's importance to delivering our programs and services, we needed to develop a secure online process to maintain the accuracy of the data," said Hair. If an individual requests to be added or removed from an elected official or department head position, the municipal clerk will have to certify the change before it will take effect in the database.

From the My Profile section, individuals can also manage their subscriptions to the Association's e-newsletters and mobile alerts. "While we do not currently send mobile alerts, we plan to use that method of communication on a limited basis in the future," continued Hair.



E-newsletters:

- ***Daily News*** - Headlines and links to news stories of municipal interest from around the state
- ***Uptown Update*** - Weekly newsletter emailed to municipal officials on Monday afternoons that provides information about upcoming training opportunities, resources and other timely topics
- ***Riskletter*** - Quarterly publication addressing a wide range of risk management topics
- ***From the Dome to Your Home*** - For municipal officials, recaps the week's legislative activity for bills affecting SC municipalities, suggests action steps for local officials and previews the upcoming week in the General Assembly

The My Profile feature is the latest offering of the Association's self-service options to make programs and services available online. For several years, individuals have been able to register online for Association-sponsored training and manage their membership in the Association's affiliate associations. Recently, the Association greatly enhanced its online directory and debuted its first on-demand course for newly elected officials, "The Five Basics of Effective Governing." In January, Risk Management Services also launched on-demand training provided in conjunction with LocalGovU. The Association plans to offer two on-demand courses for Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government credit before the end of the year.

For assistance, contact Amy Gillian at agillian@masc.sc or 803.933.1288.

Ethics

Reporting economic interests

The following article is the third and final in a series about properly filing the required annual Statement of Economic Interests with the State Ethics Commission. The first two articles appeared in the June and July issues and dealt with reporting income, benefits and gifts.

The public has a right to know if a public official receives any personal benefit because of his position with a governmental entity. Because of this, officials must report any economic interest in real, personal or business property when filing their mandatory Statement of Economic Interests with the State Ethics Commission.

For the purposes of the SEI, "economic interest" means an interest distinct from that of the general public in a purchase, sale, lease, contract, option, or other transaction or arrangement involving property or services in which a public official, public member, or public employee may gain an economic benefit…"

Public officials must disclose any real estate interest they or their immediate family have if it can be reasonably expected to be a conflict of interest with their municipal position or if there has been $200 or more of public improvements made on the property or adjoining properties. A public improvement is defined as an expenditure of funds by a public entity (state, county, municipality, school district, special purpose district, public service district) that changes or adds to the property. Examples are streets; roads; sidewalks; streetscape; lighting; water, sewer or storm drainage systems; and other public infrastructure.

Public officials must also report any real or personal property sold, leased or rented by a public official or immediate family member to the state or any other public agency. This includes listing the property's physical address, compensation received and the public agency involved in the transaction.

Finally, the public official must report the name and relationship of every business (or entity) in which the public official or immediate family member has a 5 percent or greater interest in the business' (or entity's) value, if the value of the interest exceeds $100,000. If the municipality contracts with a business where the public official works, has an ownership interest or investment in, or has any other association, the official must disclose the relationship and compensation received from the business.

By reporting economic interest in real, personal and business property, the official allows the public to gauge the level of private benefit, if any, the public officials receives from public improvements, determine the income from the sale/rental of property to governmental agencies, and identify significant interests in private businesses and/or governmental contracts.

Proper reporting on the Statement of Economic Interests requires understanding what must be reported. When in doubt about the need to disclose an item, the safest course of action is to make the disclosure.

NEWS BRIEFS

Members of the ***SC Association of Municipal Power Systems*** elected their 2013-2014 officers and board of directors. **President** Joe Nichols of Union; **Vice President** Alan Loveless of Georgetown and **Members at Large:** Jeff Meredith of Greenwood CPW, Mike Reddeck of Clinton, Scott Motsinger of Rock Hill and Tom Couch of Camden.

Mayor Ann Taylor of Heath Springs received the Hettie Rickett Leadership Award from the ***South Carolina Community Development Association.***

Mayor Randy Halfacre of Lexington graduated from the Urban Land Institute South Carolina's Sustainable Leadership Institute Program. The Institute connects leaders from across the public, private and nonprofit sectors, allowing them to establish a shared vision of creating and sustaining thriving communities in South Carolina.

Phillip Mishoe, administrator for the Town of Central, received the Good Government Award from the Clemson Area Chamber of Commerce.

Holland Folsom, senior adjuster with the SC Municipal Insurance and Risk Financing Fund, the Association's property and liability insurance program, was elected as president of the South Carolina Claims Association.

Four generations

offer unique challenges and opportunities

Unlike any time in the past, municipal officials are being faced with a new and unique diversity issue - up to four generations working and serving on council side by side. Having people ages 18 to 70 working or serving together can be challenging, as each group has its own set of skills, communication style and work-life balance needs. Yet, the mix of generations also can be rewarding as they each bring their own set of skills and personal experience.

The four generations are the Traditionalist, Baby Boomer, Generation X and Millennial. Another generation, sometimes called Generation 2020, is up and coming.

Traditionalists typically were born between 1927 and 1945. These folks are in their 60s, 70s and 80s. They are loyal and hard-working, and many have spent their careers at one company. Many are still working because they are seeking additional financial resources or intellectual stimulation, according to Alysia Kehoe, a certified business coach and human resource consultant with Kehoe Consultants, LLC., who spoke on the topic of multiple generations in the workforce at the spring meeting of the SC Municipal Human Resources Association.

Baby Boomers, born between 1946 and 1964, are in their 40s, 50s and 60s. This ambitious and large generation is staying in the workforce longer, or re-entering it after retirement, after seeing their savings pummeled by the recession.

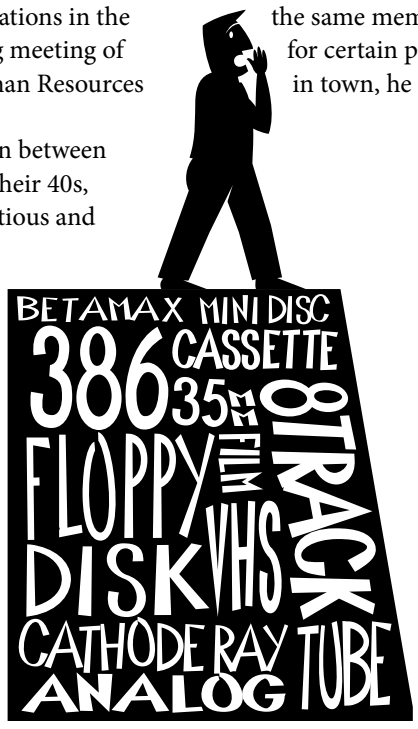
Generation X includes people born between 1965 and 1980. This generation, made up of members largely in their 30s and early 40s, is much smaller than the previous and succeeding generations. An independent and self-sufficient group, Gen Xers often are looking to upgrade their positions.

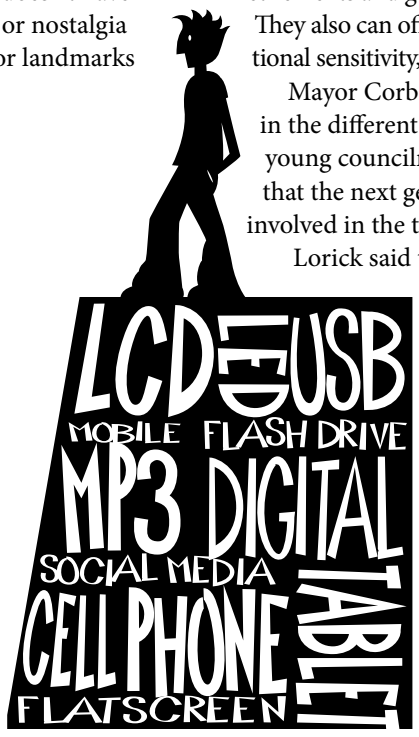
Millennials, the multitasking, open-minded, tech-savvy group of 20-somethings, are entering the workforce for the first time. These people were born in 1980 or later.

Many municipal workplaces and councils are dealing with the challenges and opportunities of multiple generations working together. The small town of Neeses, in Orangeburg County, has one of the youngest town councilmembers in the state – Brandon Lorick, who was elected when he was only 19. The ages on the Neeses' council span from 20 years to early 70s, said Mayor Joseph Corbett, who is 60.

The biggest challenge working with a Millennial councilmember has been his busy schedule, Corbett said. Lorick is a full-time student at Charleston Southern University.

Lorick said he views things "with a completely different spectrum" from his colleagues. Often he doesn't have the same memories or nostalgia for certain places or landmarks in town, he said.





When multiple generations work together, they need to ask themselves what they can do to build more effective relationships with each other, Kehoe said. They should understand that they all have different concerns and expectations, she said.

Gen Xers, for example, often are seeking a work-life balance for young families with flexible schedules and the ability to work from home. Millennials are technologically proficient and prefer communicating via text and email, while Traditionalists and Boomers often would rather have face-to-face meetings.

All of these skills have value and can go hand-in-hand in the workplace or on a council, Kehoe said. Focusing on the workplace, she encourages people to spend some time each week with a person of a different generation.

Millennials and Gen Xers can offer computer coaching to older workers. Traditionalists and Boomers can share their institutional knowledge and leadership skills by serving as mentors to the younger generations. Municipalities can establish succession plans to deal with impending retirements and groom young professionals. They also can offer training on generational sensitivity, she said.

Mayor Corbett said he sees the value in the different ideas offered by his young councilman, and he's encouraged that the next generation is getting involved in the town's future.

Lorick said this experience has shown him the importance of being respectful of others and not rushing to stereotypes. "I've learned a lot of things, from the way you conduct meetings to having respect for people who don't necessarily hold the same perspective," he said. "It's pretty cool."

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Calendar

For a complete listing of training opportunities, visit www.masc.sc to view the calendar.

AUGUST

14- September 19 Regional Advocacy Meetings. See story on page 3 for locations and more information.

27 Setoff Debt Collection Program Annual Meeting – Mandatory New Participant Training. 1411 Gervais St., Columbia.

29 Setoff Debt Collection Program Annual Meeting – Mandatory Training Session for Employees of Current Participants who have not attended training but work with the Setoff Debt Program. 1411 Gervais St., Columbia.

SEPTEMBER

11-13 Municipal Clerks and Treasurers Institute - Session II. Clarion Hotel Downtown, Columbia. Topics include levels and forms of government, business license administration, and the role of the municipal clerk.

12 SC Association of Stormwater Managers Third Quarter Meeting/Exhibitor Showcase. Columbia Conference Center.

18-20 Municipal Technology Association of SC Annual Meeting. Westin Poinsett, Greenville. Topics include the Criminal Justice Information Services, IP cameras and mobile device management.

19 Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government: Municipal Economic Development and Forms of Municipal Government. Via Web stream. Councils of Governments' offices.

OCTOBER

9 SC Utility Billing Association Fall Meeting. DoubleTree Hotel Columbia.

10 SC Community Development Association Fall Meeting. SC State Museum, Columbia. Topics include HUD's nationwide database on CDBG programs, community museums, branding and wayfinding.

11 Forum for SC city/town managers and administrators. Clarion Hotel Downtown, Columbia.

22-24 SC Municipal Finance Officers, Clerks and Treasurers Association Annual Meeting. Columbia Marriott. Topics include performance management, meeting minutes, state Department of Revenue services and reporting requirements for the state Ethics Commission.

23-25 SC Business Licensing Officials Association Annual Academy. Columbia Marriott. Topics include business license auditing, methods for identifying businesses that need a license and the state's economic forecast.