



February 24 League Meeting in Chesterfield

The next membership meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 24 at the Chesterfield City Hall, 690 Chesterfield Parkway West. (Directions: from Highway 40/64, exit at Chesterfield Parkway West, which is just past the Olive/Clarkson exit. At the top of the exit ramp, go right onto the Parkway. City Hall is at the first stoplight on the left side of the road.)

Program: State Representative Neal St. Onge, who is Chairman of the House Transportation Committee, will discuss some of the important transportation issues facing the State. These include such topics as: emission testing program; vehicle child restraints and motorcycle helmets; toll roads, gas tax increases tied to inflation; utility relocation for construction projects and composition of the high-

way commission.

All agenda items will be mailed to mayors, board chairmen and chief administrative officer prior to the meeting.



Rep. Neal St. Onge

Upcoming League Meetings

- Thursday, March 24, Membership Meeting, Chesterfield City Hall
- Thursday, April 7, League Conference, Sheraton Westport
- Wednesday, April 27, Annual Newly Elected Officials Conference, Sheraton Westport
- Thursday, April 28, Membership Meeting Glendale City Hall
- Friday, May 20, Annual Installation Dinner, Junior League

League to Host 1st Annual Conference April 7

The League will hold its first ever Conference, on Thursday, April 7 at the Sheraton Hotel at Westport.

This program will feature three tracks of concurrent sessions beginning at 1:00 p.m. and running until 5:00 p.m. The first of these tracks will focus on municipal finance, including an overview of local government finances, and separate sessions for large and small cities.

The second track will be devoted to economic and community development, and will have speakers address such

issues as new and infill housing, and job attraction and retention.

The third track will feature several programs on best practices that your city can use to become more efficient and provide better services to your citizens.

Following the concurrent sessions will be roundtable discussions, which are designed to help local officials ask specific questions of experts on a variety of subjects.

To cap off the evening, there will be a complimentary cocktail reception and dinner. The

invited after dinner speaker is Governor Matt Blunt.

The cost of the conference is \$65 per person. Several League associate members and friends of local governments have generously agreed to contribute to the cost of the conference to help keep the price reasonable.

Registration materials were mailed to mayors, city managers / administrators, and city clerks in late February. It is also available on our website under the "Current Events" link.

Please plan to attend.

Inside this issue:

<i>Economic and Community Development Committee</i>	2
<i>February Meeting Synopsis</i>	2
<i>Nominating Committee to Review Board Candidates</i>	2
<i>Legislative Update</i>	3
<i>League Award for Local Government Excellence</i>	3
<i>Field Surveying Course Offered</i>	3
<i>State & County Economic Development Plans</i>	4

Economic and Community Development Committee Named

The League has established a new Economic and Community Development Committee to examine regional issues. It will review factors that affect the economic base of the County in both at risk areas and growth areas.

In addition to economic development, the committee will examine other issues that affect the fabric of a community, such as schools, housing, crime, race, mobility, land use, and tools related to these topics.

Committee members are:

- Mayor Bert Gates, Shrewsbury, Chairman
- Mark Tranel, Collector, Bellefontaine Neighbors
- Mayor Kyra Watson, Berkeley
- Mayor Pat Kelly, Brentwood
- Mike Herring, City Administrator, Chesterfield
- Alderman Judy Goodman, Clayton
- Mayor Dennis Hancock, Fenton
- Mark Etling, Economic Development Coordinator, Ferguson
- Bob Russell, Economic Development Director, Florissant
- Rosalind Williams, Community Development Director, Kirkwood
- Marty Corcoran, City Manager, Maplewood
- Board Chairman Dan Timmons, Marlborough
- George Liyeos, City Administrator, Normandy
- Mayor Mary Carter, Pagedale
- Matt Conley, Assistant to the Mayor, St. Ann
- Councilman Robert Wagner, University City
- Mayor Virginia Bira, Vinita Park
- Steve Anderson, County Economic Council
- Carol Waggoner, PGAV
- Mark Morley, Homebuilder
- Mike Duncan, County Planning Department

The Committee's first charge is to review a draft economic development study proposed for the County and submit comments and recommendations for consideration in the final version of the report. (See article on Page 4 for details of the Committee's recommendations.)

February Meeting Synopsis

The speaker at the February membership meeting was Frank Viverito, President of the St. Louis Sports Commission, a non-profit agency. Mr. Viverito played a short video which highlighted some of the recent events hosted by St. Louis. These included the NCAA wrestling championships, the women's Olympic marathon trials and the NCAA women's final four.

The commission has had a major role in attracting many large-scale

events to St. Louis. Several more are scheduled in the coming years. In March 2005, St. Louis will again host the NCAA wrestling championships. In early April the men's basketball final four will be played at the Edward Jones Dome, with anticipated attendance of 48,000 and a projected economic impact of \$50 million. The Commission hopes that St. Louis can secure a regular position in the rotation to host this event.

Events confirmed for the future include the 2006 figure skating championships, the 2007 NCAA hockey finals, the 2009 women's final four and, possibly, the 2009 baseball all star game.

In addition to its work on these events, the commission also has a local foundation for children, which was established to help build happier, healthier lives.

Thanks to the City of St. John for hosting the meeting.

Nominating Committee to Meet in April

The League's Nominating Committee is seeking officials interested in serving on the Board of Directors. The Committee will meet in early April, after the municipal elections, to make recommendations to the full membership on a slate of candidates for officers and board members.

There will be at least one va-

cancy on the Board due to term limits.

The Board is open to any elected official. If you would like to be considered by the Committee please send a letter to the League office indicating your interest. Board meetings are generally held once per month, in the late afternoon.

The staff will compile all of the

letters received for the Committee for their review and recommendations.

The Committee will be chaired by Mayor Bill Bergfeld of Warson Woods, Immediate Past President. Additional members will be announced at the March membership meeting.

Legislative Update

As the legislature enters its third month, a few priority bills have passed their respective chambers and a number of consent (non-controversial) bills have come out of committee as well. As most of the League's priorities are defensive, the longer bills are held in committee, the better the chances of defeat. The League sends weekly e-mails or faxes to our members with legislative updates. For additional information on any legislation or to be added to the update list, please contact our office by phone at 314-726-4747 or by e-mail at staff@stlmuni.org.

Some of the major issues the League is tracking include:

Sales Tax Holiday - Several bills would renew the holiday or make it permanent. The only one to have had a hearing to-date is HB 64 (Sutherland). It would make the holiday permanent, and would not allow cities to opt out. However, the state would be required to make up lost revenue through appropriations, which is **highly unlikely**. HB 64 was heard in the Ways & Means Committee on March 2. The League OPPOSES all bills that do

not allow an opt out. We believe that revenues approved by voters are lost due to the holiday.

Telecom Taxes - HCS HB 209 (Cooper) would repeal all local gross receipts taxes on telephone service and allow cities to adopt a simplified tax ordinance that would force the rate to 3% by 2008. The industry assumes cell phone usage will continue its tremendous growth. The bill would also dismiss all suits by cities seeking unpaid back taxes, thereby rewarding companies which have not paid taxes we believe are due.

Telecom companies continue to distort the situation in a number of ways. They claim cities are not interested in a fair settlement of back taxes, yet they refuse to respond to the offers of cities involved in the litigation with their own offers.

They are also seeking to use 2005 revenue as a base year by which to limit future revenue, yet 2005 is one of the lowest revenue years. The bill would also take away voters' rights to increase telecom taxes, forcing the tax burden onto others.

Telecom and other utility companies typically pay higher business license taxes in exchange for free use of the right-of-way. Since they do not own the property they use for their lines, they also avoid property taxes paid by other businesses. Now they are seeking even more tax breaks, in addition to forgiveness of unpaid back taxes sought by cities.

An MML committee is meeting with industry representatives. The bill passed the Ways & Means Committee on March 7.

TIF - HB 91 (Johnson) would require a public vote for a TIF project if 5% of voters sign a petition. SB 80 (Bartle) would authorize 10% of incremental TIF revenue to go to the school district. SB 282 (Green) would enact the most limitations on TIF by setting caps for retail use and restricting usage to lower income areas. Each bill has been heard but is still in committee.

School District Sales Tax - HB 54 (Dixon) would allow school districts to levy a sales tax with voter approval. It was heard in the Ways & Means Committee on February 16.

Excellence in Local Government Award

The League's Executive Board would like to commemorate the life of former County Executive Buzz Westfall and recommended the establishment of a Buzz Westfall Award for Excellence in Local Government. Those eligible for the award include individuals, cities or programs from a member municipality.

The criteria for the award define the attributes Mr. Westfall embodied during his many years of public service. The award will be presented each year at the League's Annual Installation Din-

ner. The winner will also receive 2 tickets to the Dinner which will be held on May 20..

Nominations must be 350 words or less, on a single sheet of paper. They should be mailed, faxed or e-mailed to the League office by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, April 15, 2005.

The nomination forms will be mailed to each city and they are also available on the League's website under the Current Events link.

We know there are many deserving local officials and programs among our members. We hope to have several quality nominations.

Field Surveying Course

Bhasin Associates is offering an entry level field surveying course for municipal public works officials. It will run from 7:30 am to 3:30 pm on Thursday, August 25 at the Maryland Heights Community Center, 2344 McKelvey Rd. The cost is \$125 per person.

The League office has copies of the registration form or you can contact Mr. Vijay Bhasin by e-mail at bhasinassociates@hotmail.com

The deadline for registration is July 15 and enrollment is limited to 50 students.

St. Louis County Municipal League
121 S. Meramec Ave.
Clayton, MO 63105

March 24 Meeting in Chesterfield. We hope you can join us.

Serving Municipalities in St. Louis County since 1918.

*See our website at
stlmuni.org*

Local and State Economic Development Studies

St. Louis County and the State of Missouri have recently used consultants to review some economic development tools and strategies.

The State study, entitled "[Moving Missouri to the Vanguard: An Analysis of Incentives and Statewide Development Programs in Missouri](#)", was completed by Tamerica Management Company and can be downloaded from its website: www.tamerica.com/missouri/reports.html.

The study examined hundreds of incentive programs in numerous states. This helped define what works and does not work in Missouri. After surveying many businesses, the report notes that Missouri's program:

- Is not competitive with surrounding states and it too com-

plicated;

- Lacks strong consensus or strategy;
- Lacks clear measures of performance and fails to communicate benefit with stakeholders;
- Lacks integration with private sector and regional leaders; and
- Lacks targeting of industries, especially those that could expand.

Recommendations include:

1. Rebate a portion of new salaries when jobs are created. Incentives will be withheld if promised jobs do not materialize.
2. Create more expansion incentives.
3. Establish some tax free zones.
4. Allow cities and counties to vote on a local sales tax to spur economic development.

The County study was reviewed by the League's Economic and Community Development Committee and the following suggestions were offered:

- Integrate more city and county plans together into a strategy;
- Include quality of design to ensure that a variety of work places are available;
- Evaluate development tools, including TIF, in a comprehensive, not isolated manner;
- Modernize the sales tax base, possibly to include services and out-of-state purchases; and
- Consider a timetable for resubmitting the countywide use tax, pending the outcome of a recently filed court case.