



Legislative Breakfast—November 16

The League will hold its Annual Legislative Breakfast for Senators and Representatives from St. Louis City and County at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, November 16 at the Junior League of St. Louis, 10435 Clayton Rd., between Lindbergh Blvd. and Spoede Rd. The cost is \$13.

Members of the Legislative Affairs Committee will present the League's Legislative Priorities for the 2003 session. In addition, the Breakfast serves as an excellent opportunity for municipal officials to meet informally with their legislators to discuss issues of concern to local governments. This will be particularly timely this year, as there will be a number of new legislators due to the impact of term limits.

Registration materials were mailed to municipal clerks. Please contact your clerk to make reservations.

November Meeting in Normandy

The next membership meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 21 at the Normandy City Hall, 7700 Natural Bridge Rd. (Directions: from I-170, go east on Natural Bridge approximately 2 miles, to the City Hall, which is on the right (south) side of the street. It is just past UM-St. Louis.)

Program: The meeting will highlight innovative cooperative efforts among cities and other entities to provide services or develop facilities for the benefit of residents. The topics and speakers are:

- Clayton City Manger Scott Randall on the city/school district partnership formed to fund, construct and operate Clayton's new joint recreation center;
- Kirkwood Parks Director Dave White, Glendale City Administrator Mike Pounds, and Oakland Mayor Paul Marti will describe the 3 cities' partnership to build the water park in Kirkwood;
- Mayors Pat Kelly of Brentwood, Bill Bergfeld of Warson Woods and Robert Salamone of Rock Hill will outline the effort of 6 cities to jointly improve the Manchester Road corridor;
- 21 cities in 3 groups of 7 each jointly support 3 inclusion coordinators to assure that their recreation programs and facilities are open to citizens with disabilities. Chris Ramsey, from North County, and Mary Furfaro from Mid-County, will describe the benefits of these partnerships.

The membership will be asked to review vision statements, goals and core principles for the League. These were developed by the Board and committees during the past several months. We hope you can join us!

October Meeting Synopsis

At the October membership meeting, County Councilman and League Board Member Skip Mange presented a thorough overview of County services and how they relate to municipal services provided by cities. Staff members from nearly all County departments attended the meeting to meet with the membership and answer questions about their departments.

The County Economic Council was represented by Director Denny Coleman, who highlighted many of the economic development projects they are working on across the County. The projects result in more jobs, may help areas at-risk, and build the tax base for all levels of government. Many of these projects are in municipalities and the Economic Council is always willing to work with city officials for the benefit of the region.

Denny Coleman of the County Economic Council, discusses his agency's role at the October League meeting. President Gerry Welch and Executive Director Tim Fischesser are in the background.

Lastly, Rick Wolf, Executive Assistant for the Health Department, told how the County worked to prevent the spread of West Nile Virus over the summer months by larviciding breeding areas and spraying targeted areas. He noted that it is important for cities to use newsletters next summer to inform residents about the need to eliminate standing water in birdbaths, gutters, etc. to reduce the breeding grounds for mosquitoes. He offered the assistance of the Health Department to help spread the word or to contract for services with cities.

Meeting Synopsis (continued)

Following the presentation, the membership voted to adopt the report of the Legislative Affairs Committee, as presented by its Chairman, Councilmember Dotty DeLassus of Webster Groves. The seven priorities identified for the 2003 session are:

- Telecommunication Act, Franchise Authority and Taxation
- Preservation of Local Sales Tax and Utility Tax Authority
- Property Tax Rate Revisions
- Municipal Personnel Rules and Retention of Current Public Employee Labor Law
- Retention of Municipal Land Use Authority, Including Billboard and Streetscapes
- Notice of Suits Against Charter Cities and Villages
- Elected Officials Terms in 3rd and 4th Class Cities

As evidenced by the large turnout, the League members appreciated the opportunity to meet with County elected and appointed officials. We would also like to thank Councilman Mange for handling all of the details for the meeting and for the informative presentation.

Kirkwood Mayor Mike Swoboda, Crestwood Alderman Richard LaBore and County Councilman Skip Mange (l-r) discuss timely issues at the October meeting.

League Expresses Concern over MoDOT Road Funding Allocation Proposals

Following the defeat of the transportation funding proposal on the August ballot, the Missouri Highway and Transportation Commission and MoDOT staff have considered different methods of funding road project in the urban and rural areas of the State. Most of the proposals developed by MoDOT staff would have further short-changed the St. Louis region, which has been already slighted in previous years.

League President Gerry Welch joined other regional leaders protesting funding cuts aimed at the St. Louis area. The region produces about 40% of the revenue and had been promised 33%, but rarely received anything over 30%. President Welch argued for more equity, given the lousy condition of roads in the St. Louis area. The Commission did not take vote on the staff proposals and will continue to study the funding issue.

Transportation Committee to Meet

The League's Transportation Committee will again be meeting during the upcoming months with a new charge as adopted by the Executive Board. The Committee charge states that "*the region's long-term viability is based, in part, on a sustainable, safe, clean, well-maintained transportation system with limited congestion throughout the County. The system includes roads, light rail, bus and other modes. The committee shall review current and proposed system elements and financing to promote the interest of League members and their citizens, businesses, and institutions. The committee shall regularly interact with agencies and others that are involved in transportation planning and service delivery.*"

Members of the Committee are:

Alderman Richard LaBore, Crestwood, Chairman
Mayor Joe Adams, University City
Tom Curran, Office of the County Executive
Mayor Bert Gates, Shrewsbury
Mayor Betty Humphrey, Richmond Heights
Councilman Keith Kallstrom, Ferguson
Councilman Skip Mange, St. Louis County
Mayor John Nations, Chesterfield
Mark Perkins, City Administrator, Creve Coeur
Mike Pounds, City Administrator, Glendale
Councilwoman Jeannette Rizzello, Hazelwood
Councilman Rick Steigerwald, Black Jack
Mayor Mike Swoboda, Kirkwood

Meetings are planned with officials from East-West Gateway, MoDOT, Bi-State and other transportation planning agencies.

Transportation Enhancement Funds Available

The East-West Gateway Coordinating Council and MoDOT are currently soliciting transportation improvement projects for the Missouri Transportation Enhancement Program. Projects eligible through this program include pedestrian and bike facilities, safety and education programs, landscaping, rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, and abandoned railroad corridor preservation.

There is \$5.5 million in federal Enhancement funding in the Missouri portion of the region for fiscal year 2003 in this bonus funding cycle. Four copies of the application must be submitted to Gateway by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, November 26, 2002.

It is important to note that these funds are available in the current fiscal year and they must be obligated by March 31, 2004.

The Enhancement Program application booklet and Evaluation Criteria and Funding Guidelines can be accessed at <http://ewgateway.org>.

Local Officials Host Chinese Delegation

A delegation of 16 officials from Nanjing, China visited St. Louis recently. Brent Hobgood, City Administrator of Town & Country and President of the City Managers' Association, along with Matt Conley, Assistant City Administrator of Crestwood, provided a morning program at UM-St. Louis on the city administrator's role.

In the afternoon, League Executive Director Tim Fischesser helped them understand how St. Louis City and County merged many small sewerage treatment entities into the Metropolitan Sewer District over the past 50 years. The group toured the Lemay treatment plant and had a chance to ask many questions.

The delegation then proceeded to Webster Groves where League President Gerry Welch welcomed them. Parks and Recreation Director Mike Oppermann provided a tour of their recreation facility, including the ice rink and pool complex.

Webster Groves Parks Director Mike Oppermann (with hat) and Mayor Welch (at left) tour the pool area with Chinese officials.

The highlight of the day had to be the tour of the renovated fire house at City Hall. The contingent learned how the "jaws of life" cuts through a car, marveled at all the features on a modern fire truck, and some suited up in full fire gear.

Chinese officials model fire gear with a Webster Groves firefighter.

The group noted that they had heard of the many firemen killed in the terrorist attack and they hold Chinese firemen in high regard, just as is the case in America.

Mayor Welch presented City pins to each member and answered questions about the role of a mayor in a typical American suburban city.

Officials Near Finish Line on Stormwater Regulations

Phase II stormwater regulations adopted by the EPA require cities and counties to further protect streams from pollution. In St. Louis City and most of the County, voters created the Metropolitan Sewer District about 50 years ago, so MSD also has a role to play. The District described the new requirements at a League meeting last year.

Volunteers from 10 municipalities, St. Louis County, the League, various State and local agencies and MSD have been busy writing a joint plan. It focuses on best practices—everything from educational efforts to cracking down on litter and better erosion control to promote cleaner streams.

In the next few months, municipal officials will be offered the opportunity to adopt the joint plan, which has many benefits, or writing their own plan.

The task force undertaking the work has tried to keep the actual practices simple, effective and logical. For example, educational pieces can be included with MSD bills to keep costs down and still reach all households.

Municipal officials volunteering time include:
Ed Blattner, Public Works Director, Manchester
Mayor Mary Carter, Pagedale
Mayor Scott Douglass, Clarkson Valley
Rebecca Edwards, Project Manger, Fenton
Mike Geisel, Public Works Director, Chesterfield
Rodney Jarrett, Public Works Director, Normandy
James Phillips, Public Works Director, St. John
Mayor Marty Rudloff, Bellefontaine Neighbors
Scott Smith, City Engineer, Florissant
Dennis Wells, Public Works Director, Webster Groves

Construction Inspection Course Offered

The St. Louis Metro Branch Missouri Chapter of the American Public Works Association (APWA) will be offering a course on Construction Inspection to help local public works staff and other interested attendees in this increasingly complicated field. The course is designed as an introduction and orientation to the broad scope of public works construction inspection issues for entry level employees.

The course will be held on Wednesdays from February 19 to March 26, 2003 at the Maryland Heights Community Center, 2344 McKelvey Road. Sessions will run from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The cost is \$95 per person. The deadline for registration is November 30, 2002. For a copy of the registration brochure, contact the League office at 314-726-4747. For additional information about the course, contact Vijay K. Bhasin, P.E., Director of Public Works City of Creve Coeur at 314-872-2533.

St. Louis Fares Well in Finance Study

As reported in East-West Gateway's "Where We Stand" (4th Installment), the St. Louis region compares very favorably against urban regions across the country on measures of local government revenue, reliance on property tax and local government spending. "Where We Stand" is an analysis of the St. Louis area against the 34 largest metropolitan areas in the US on a variety of economic and social factors.

Many have argued in the past that the number of municipalities in the region, particularly in St. Louis County, leads to inefficient and costly provision of governmental services. The charts in Gateway's report show otherwise. For example, local government revenue as a percent of total personal income shows St. Louis and Boston tied at 5.8%, the lowest of all competing areas. The highest was New York at 14.4%

Local government spending, defined as total direct spending per capita, showed the St. Louis area to be 33rd out of 35 cities at only \$2356 per capita. Again, New York was highest at \$6451 per capita.

In one other category, local government debt, St. Louis was again lowest with a ratio of debt to revenue of .9%, as compared to #1 Salt Lake City's 2.83%. These numbers speak well of the job being done by municipal leaders to provide cost effective services without imposing a heavy local tax burden.

Park Grant Applications Submitted

27 municipalities submitted applications for municipal park grants. The cities are seeking over \$3 million in various park and recreation improvements and programs. Decisions on requests for the \$1.3 million available should come in January.

Clayton Alderman Linda Goldstein Joins League Board

Clayton Alderman Linda Goldstein has been appointed by the League Board to complete the term of Creve Coeur Mayor Annette Mandel, who recently resigned. Linda is very pleased to join the Board and looks forward to working with our members from throughout the City and County.

Commerce Department Favors Contractor Over Cities

Ignoring pleas from the National League of Cities and others, the US Commerce Department has authorized its contractor, NeuStar, to give cities only until January 33, 2003 to reserve website (domain) names that end in .us. If cities do not pay either \$152 to reserve the site (without use) or up to \$395 to register and activate the site, then private companies or individuals can buy the site. These sites usually appear as www.cityof____.us. Many insiders feel that the sites should automatically be reserved for cities and that the current policy borders on extortion—either pay up or risk that the site will be snatched up by someone else.

Cities may also now reserve www.cityof____.gov by logging on to the GSA website: www.nic.gov/index.html. Unlike the .us domain, the .gov domain will not allow private participants, The .gov site will be activated for local government use in a few months.

For more information, go to www.neustar.us/reserved or contact Mark Shapiro at the National League of Cities, 1-202-626-3019 or shapiro@nlc.org.

