



FEBRUARY 2010

February 25 League Meeting at MSD Headquarters

Upcoming League Meetings

- Wednesday, February 17, Legislative Luncheon, Noon, Capitol Plaza Hotel
Thursday, February 25, Membership Meeting, 7:30 pm, MSD Office
Thursday, March 25, Membership Meeting, 7:30 pm, Crestwood
Thursday, April 22, Membership Meeting, 7:30 pm, Des Peres

The next League meeting will be held at 7:30 pm on Thursday, February 25 at the MSD Headquarters, 2350 Market St. in Downtown St. Louis, which is at the corner of Market and Jefferson. (Directions: from eastbound I-64/Highway 40, exit at Jefferson Ave. and go left (north) two blocks to Market St. Turn right on Market and MSD is the 1st building on the right.)

Program: Jeff Theerman, Executive Director of MSD, and members of

his staff will provide an update on major projects the District is undertaking. The topics to be covered include:

1) MSD's efforts to reduce the number of sewer overflows throughout St. Louis City County. During heavy rainfalls, these overflows may activate and discharge a combination of sewage and rain water into local waterways. Since the early 1990s, MSD has spent almost \$2 billion addressing this issue and

recently unveiled plans to spend approximately \$6 billion over the next several decades; and 2) The status of MSD's stormwater fee based on impervious area, including an update on litigation and a discussion on possible stormwater services that may be offered in the future.

Please make plans to join us for this informative program.

Inside this issue:

January Meeting Synopsis 2
Joe Adams to Chair Nominating Committee 2
League Staff Changes 2
League Coordinates Energy Grant Application 3
Legislation of Municipal Interest 4
Sales Tax Continues Downward Slide 4
E-911 Update 4

Local Officials Can Help Ensure Accurate Census

The decennial census in coming in April 2010 and it is imperative that city officials make every effort to ensure that all citizens are counted. While the census numbers are used to allocated federal funds to state and communities and for determining the district lines for federal and state officials and even local wards, there is an even more important use of these numbers in St. Louis County. Revenues from the local sales

tax, state motor vehicle taxes, and cigarette taxes are tied to your population.

The League is participating in the County's Complete County Committee, which notes several ways local officials can help promote the census. You can:

- Issue a proclamation or other public endorsement of the census;
Conduct town hall meetings or other events to encourage

- participation;
Help recruit census workers in your community;
Provide space for "Be Counted" and "Questionnaire Assistance Centers"; and
Create your own complete count committee.

For more info, contact Lori Fiegel at the County Planning Department, 615-5413.

## January Meeting Synopsis

At the January meeting the membership heard two presentations. The first was from Representative Don Calloway (D) of the 71st District in the Normandy area. He addressed some of the main issues the legislature will be addressing in 2010. These include education funding, ethics reform and campaign finance, stacked sales taxes and fire district governance. Rep. Calloway urged the members to work with the County League and MML staff when important legislative issues arise as these organizations provide a greater voice for cities.

Also at the meeting, Paul

Wojciehowski of CH2MHill, and Julie Padberg-White, with Vantage LLC, discussed the work they are doing with Great Rivers Greenway to develop a regional bike master plan with specific footprints in each city. The plan will help identify areas where additional bike facilities might best be utilized and how to make the paths safe. They asked that city officials take part in the planning process and offer suggestions on how best to implement the plan.

Lastly, Chesterfield Mayor John Nations, who is leading the campaign to pass a 1/2 cent sales tax for Metro, addressed the members. He noted that the

County and the region would benefit if Metro has additional funds to resume cancelled service and expand the bus and light rail systems. He urged the members to inform voters about the importance of public transit. Mayor Nations noted that the League had endorsed the tax proposal at the November meeting and he thanked everyone for their past efforts.

We would like to thank Mayor Kyra Watson and the officials and employees of the City of Berkeley, who hosted the meeting at the new Sheraton Garden Inn hotel.

## Nominating Committee to Consider Board Candidates in April

The League's Nominating 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 for the 2010-2011 year. Due to term limits there will be at least one vacancy to be filled.

The Board meets about ten times per year and is open to

any elected official from a member municipality. If you would like to be considered by the Committee, please send a letter to the League office by April 3 indicating your interest.

The staff will compile all of the letters received for the Committee for their review and recommendations.

The Committee will be chaired by Mayor Joe Adams of University

City, Immediate Past President. Additional committee members will be announced at the March membership meeting.

The recommended slate will be presented to the membership at the April meeting.

We are printing this earlier than normal to give ample time for anyone interested in serving on the Board to send a letter of interest.

## Staffing Changes

Jay Voss has joined the League staff, replacing Clare Gates who left to take a position in the private sector.

Jay will be working with our members on solid waste grants and also on the Park Grant program.

## Members Apply for Energy Efficiency Grant

When the Missouri Department of Natural Resources announced that Federal stimulus funds would be available to help local governments become more energy efficient, the League staff contacted our members to determine if there would be interest in submitting a joint application to secure a share of these dollars. A total of 15 communities responded and the League staff helped coordinate the application and submit it to DNR. A lighting contractor or city staff performed lighting assessments of each building to help determine the level of energy savings that could be realized. Successful applicants should be notified by mid-February.

## 2010 Bills of Municipal Interest

In previous years we have provided a legislative update in every newsletter to try to keep our members apprised of significant actions in Jefferson City. However, because the Newsletter only comes out once per month and some do not receive it for up to two weeks after it is completed, we feel it best to provide you with a list of important bills each month but focus on our weekly email update to give you the latest actions by the legislature.

If any of our municipal officials would like to receive this email update, along with meeting notices and newsletters, please contact our office at 314-726-4747 or by email at [staff@stlmuni.org](mailto:staff@stlmuni.org).

An (S) = support; and (O) = oppose. Bills we are tracking this year include:

SB 580 (Griesheimer) - This Senate Substitute would require cities that do not have an adopted bid procedure to use a statewide model. It also would enact a 4-day notice period for any meeting where tax proposal, TIFs, TDDs or similar items are decided. (O)

SB 593 (Days) – Prohibits renewals of payday loans and limits interest rates to 36%. (S)

SB 637 (Lembke) – Prohibits the use of red light cameras. (O)

SB 638 (Lembke) – Committee substitute would sunset E-911 sales tax after 25 years and exempts food from the tax. (O)

SB 756 (Bray) – Allows political subdivisions to post financial reports and election notices on website or in newsletters. (S)

SB 826 (Griesheimer) - Would allow sales tax authority for fire districts in St. Louis County. (O)

SJR 29 (Purgason) and SJR 37 (Ridgeway) – Replaces state income tax with sales tax on goods and services. If approved by voters this could impact municipal taxes. (O)

HB 1229 (Kraus) – Fines from red light cameras would go to schools. (O)

HB 1299 (Lampe) – Increases maximum fines for Sunshine Law violations from \$1000 to \$10,000. (O)

HB 1361 (Komo) – Allows political subdivisions to replace personal property tax with sales tax.

HB 1444 (Jones, 89) – Requires 4 day notice when any tax increase, zoning matter, TIF, TDD or CID is discussed. Also mandates public comment periods. (O)

HB 1445 (Jones, 89) – Sets a minimum fine of \$1000 for Sunshine Law violations (instead of up to \$1000), requires a 5 day notice for meetings listed above. (O)

HB 1458 (Thomson), HB 1469 (Wallace) and HB 1529 (Munzlinger) – Exempts school buses from gas tax, reducing revenue to cities. (O)

HB 1578 (Calloway) – Increases fire district board to 5 members and reduces term to 3 years. (S)

HB 1621 (McNeil) – Increases income level for property tax circuit breaker program. (S)

HB 1626 (Nance) – Half of fines for red light cameras would go to MODOT if the camera is on a state road. (O)

HB 1694 (Hoskins, 80) – Requires apartment buildings in St. Louis County to set up security cameras

HB 1766 (Bivins) – Enacts a statewide indoor smoking ban. (S)

HB 1769 (Bivins) – Requires

closed meetings to be recorded and maintained for 18 months

HB 1781 (Riddle) – Allows members of governing bodies who have conceal and carry permits for weapons to bring those weapons to meetings of the body - interferes with local control. (O)

HB 1788 (Parson) – Allows citizen to petition the governing body for an election to lower property tax rates. Requires 66% approval of voters. (O)

HB 1813 (Englund) – Requires an economic impact study of proposed large scale retail developments (over 75,000 sq. ft.) to determine the effect on the municipality and surrounding municipalities. Project applicant pays fee to Dept. of Economic Development for the study and DED provides list of impartial companies to prepare the study. Project can only be approved if there is “no undue adverse impact”.

HB 1829 (Walsh) – Would allow public employee collective bargaining with binding arbitration. (O)

HB 1976 (Bivins)- would sunset E-911 sales tax after 20 years and exempts food from the tax. (O)

HJR 52 (Harris) – Prohibits the use of eminent domain to redevelop blighted areas. (O)

HJR 56 (Emery) and HJR 71 (Koenig) – Replace state income tax with sales tax (similar to SJR 29 and 37). (O)

HJR 81 (Diehl) – If voters approve, the merchants and manufacturers tax would be phased out by 2015. It would result in a loss of about \$100 million to various jurisdictions in St. Louis County.

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

Please join us at the next membership meeting on February 25 at MSD Headquarters in Downtown St. Louis.

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## Sales Tax Fall Hits Cities Hard

In 2007, before the recession hit, the St. Louis County one cent tax collection reached an all time high of \$167million. The tax typically increased a small amount each year. This fund is distributed to municipalities and St. Louis County. Other local sales taxes were hit equally hard.

When the recession became entrenched in 2008, the total collection in the County fell to \$160 million and local governments began to make cuts.

In 2009, the fall was even more

dramatic as total collections declined to \$148 million, a nearly \$20 million decrease from 2007.

When other local sales taxes, such as those for capital improvements, or parks and stormwater are included, millions more are lost each year due to the recession. These losses are translated into layoffs, frozen or decreased wages, delays in street improvements and service cutbacks.

With these dramatic decreases, it is imperative that municipal officials let our state leaders know that

additional exemptions from the sales tax would further erode local revenues in a time of financial crisis. Similarly, state mandates negatively impact our budgets.

Just as legislators are facing a severe budget shortfall in Jefferson City, the pain is just as acute back at home - but we have little or no federal stimulus funds to help plug the gap.

## Emergency Communications Update

Since voters approved a 1/10 cent sales tax for emergency communications in November, the Emergency Communications Commission has prepared a budget, hired a consultant, developed a bond plan and adopted bylaws. Ideally, requests-for-proposals for the new system will be ready later this year as scheduled. The Commission remains committed to bringing all emergency radio systems into compliance with FCC regulations, eliminate radio barriers among police and fire departments, locate calls from cell phones to 911, and improve the emergency alert (siren) system.