



MAY 2010

Installation Dinner - Friday, May 21

Upcoming League Meetings

- Friday, May 21, Installation Dinner, Holiday Inn Viking, Social Hour 6:30 pm, Dinner 7:30 pm
Tuesday, June 29, Golf Tournament, Golf Club of Florissant, Lunch 11:30 am, Tee-off Noon

The League will hold its Annual Installation of Officers Dinner on Friday, May 21 at the Holiday Inn Viking. The hotel is located at the corner of Lindbergh Blvd. and Watson Rd. in Sunset Hills.

The evening begins with a social hour (hors d'oeuvres and cash bar) at 6:30 pm, followed by dinner at 7:30 pm.

The after dinner speaker will be Kevin Demoff, Vice President of Football Operations for the St. Louis Rams, who will highlight how the team is working to make improvements on the field and also efforts to provide greater assistance to the St. Louis community.

The cost of the dinner is \$30 per person. We greatly appreciate the generous contributions from our associate members and supporters who help underwrite the event.

Registration materials have been sent to municipal clerks. Please make reservations through your clerk. Seating will be assigned in the order that reservations are received.

All City and County legislators have been invited as guests of the League. City officials may wish to extend invitations to legislators as well.

At the dinner the

League will install the new officers and Board members elected by the membership in April. They are:

President: Mayor Rich Magee, Glendale

Vice President: Mayor Paul Marti, Oakland

Finance Chairman: Mayor Pat Kelly, Brentwood

New Board Members: Mayor Pat Green, Normandy and Councilmember Debi Salberg, Webster Groves

We hope that a large contingent from your city will be able to join us on May 21 to welcome the League's new leadership team and enjoy the company of your fellow officials.

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League Golf Tournament Set for June 29

The City of Florissant is once again generously hosting our the League's Annual Golf Tournament.

It will be on Tuesday, June 29 at the Golf Club of Florissant, which is located off of Old Halls Ferry Rd, south of Lindbergh Blvd. The address is 50 Country Club Ln., Florissant, MO 63033.

The format will be a 4 person scramble with a 12:00 pm shotgun start. The \$55 fee includes a box lunch at 11:30 am, a barbecue dinner and prizes.

Registration information will be e-mailed to members. It is also on our website, www.stlmuni.org under

the Current Events link. Send reservations and payment to the League.

We would like to thank Florissant Mayor Robert Lowery, Councilman Tom Schneider, along with the entire City Council and staff for hosting this enjoyable annual event.

April Meeting Synopsis

At the April 22 meeting, the membership heard a legislative update from State Representative Rick Stream (R-Kirkwood). He noted that while the state budget shortfall is very serious, Missouri remains 1 of 7 states to maintain a AAA bond rating.

Rep. Stream indicated that general revenue funds are down 20% since 2008, leading to cuts in Medicaid and some categorical education programs, such as Parents as Teachers. There is unlikely to be additional stimulus funding in the next fiscal year so a \$600

million deficit is predicted.

He added that in some ways the split between urban and rural legislators is more pronounced than that between Republicans and Democrats.

Following Rep. Stream's presentation, Pat Dillon, ADA Coordinator for St. Louis County, noted that 2010 is the 20th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. It has provided numerous benefits for both disabled and able-bodied persons. She urged League members to consider passing a resolution to support the anniversary as a part of the 2010

in 2010 effort to collect 2010 resolutions from cities across the country.

The business items at the meeting included the election of officers and new board members (see article on Page 1) and the approval of a 3% dues increase. This will help the League from cutting too deeply into reserve funds in the future.

We appreciate the hospitality of League President Rick Lahr, Mayor of Des Peres, and the officials and employees of the Des Peres who hosted the meeting.

Newly Elected Officials Seminar Held

Nearly 60 newly elected officials, along with a few experienced officials, attended a League seminar designed to offer insights to new officials.

League President-elect Rich Magee, Mayor of Glendale, opened the program with his Top 10 Things a Newly Elected Official Needs to Know and Do.

Some of the highlights of the program included roles and responsibilities of elected officials, the Sunshine Law, the role of boards and commissions and municipal revenue sources. These were presented by municipal attorneys Ken Heinz and Kevin O'Keefe of the firm Curtis, Heinz, Garrett & O'Keefe.

A lively discussion followed as officials tried to "stump the presenters" with questions about municipal government.

We appreciate the time and expertise of Mayor Magee, Mr Heinz and Mr. O'Keefe for making this annual program a continued success.

League Seminar to Focus on Foreclosure Prevention

As the recession continues, unemployment and past lending practices are still leading to foreclosures on homes. For the last several years, the League has worked with federal agencies and local groups to try to provide information to local officials and homeowners to combat the growing problem.

To expand on this effort, the League is hosting a panel discussion on foreclosure issues from 4:00-6:00 pm on Wednesday, June 9 in Room 72 of the JC Penney Building at UM - St.

Louis. There is no charge.

The panelists will include:

- Doug Neff, from the local HUD office;
- Jim Holtzman, St. Louis County Community Development Director;
- Mike Duncan, from the County Planning Department;
- Linda Ingram, from Beyond Housing; and
- Dr. Todd Swanstrom from UM - St. Louis as moderator.

The panelists will discuss current foreclosure trends, intervention services such as outreach,

counseling and legal assistance, and policy responses to the foreclosure crisis, including rehabbing homes.

Local elected officials and staff are invited to attend the session, with registration through the League office. Additional registration materials will be provided in mid-May.

Nina Kobakhidze, a Washington University graduate student in the George Washington Brown School of Social Work, is a League intern who is coordinating the effort.

Properties Vary in Need for Incentives

Bob Lewis of Development Strategies presented an overview of the recession at the March League meeting. He also recently summarized a panel discussion in an article titled: "Determining the Fiscal Need for Public Intervention in Redevelopment."

Essentially, he explains that the need for incentives to redevelop property are related to demand by tenants, not simply to the condition of the property. There could be valuable buildings, but in a poor location, which makes it difficult to

charge reasonable rents. Theoretically, this leads to less maintenance by the owner - and to blight.

A once-valuable site becomes less desirable when other sites are created, for example, when more interstate highways are built or when lower income shoppers replace middle income buyers near a site.

The less attractive the location, the greater the demand for incentives to keep the property marketable. The key for local officials is to use statistics to guide decision-making when the public sector considers marshalling resources. Un-

der this approach, some sites would seem to need more incentives than others. More distressed areas may need greater public intervention, while less distressed locations may need some incentives, but not as much. This leads to viewing sites on a continuum from low to high need, not as simply qualified or unqualified.

Contact the League office (staff@stlmuni.org or 314-726-4747) for a copy of the entire article.

Legislature Enters Final Week

Prior to adjournment on May 14, the Legislature may consider several bills of municipal interest.

One of the issues that is appearing in numerous bills relates to bidding requirements. These provisions would allow unsuccessful bidders to sue cities for various reasons. The mandate provision would require cities to bid all construction projects over

\$8000 and place the bid in a newspaper for two days, which is very expensive in a metropolitan area.

The League has been working to clarify the statutes relating to the setting of property tax rates and eliminating the need to provide estimated tax rates in non-reassessment years. Senator Joan Bray and Representative Jean Kirkton have been instrumental in these efforts.

Legislation to ban red light cam-

eras has been approved by the Senate and will go to a conference committee for final consideration. Sponsors will likely seek other bills to amend as well.

Amendments to exempt food from the E-911 sales tax are also in the works and we are hopeful of passage prior to the end of the session. Representative John Diehl has lent his support.

Ferguson an All-American City Finalist

Congratulations are in order for the City of Ferguson, which has been selected as one of 27 communities in the U.S. that have been named finalists for the prestigious "All-America City" award. This program recognizes communities across the country for innovative solutions to addressing their problems.

To become a finalist, each

participant completed an application that addresses their most pressing challenges as well as projects that involve community youth. Ferguson chose to highlight their:

- Community Gardens, which turned abandoned lots into productive use;
- Plaza Heights Initiative where police and residents have worked to reduce crime; and
- The Challenger (Space Shuttle)

Learning Center, which provides space education programs for schools, community groups and the public.

The ten All-American Cities will be announced on June 18.

Information in this article comes from the Ferguson Times newspaper.

St. Louis County Municipal League
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Plan to join us at the May 21 Installation
Dinner and our Annual Golf Tournament
on June 29.

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www.stlmuni.org*

Innovation and Westfall Award Winners Announced

The main focus of the League's Annual Dinner over the years has been the installation of our new officers and board members. However, we also take this time to recognize the efforts of individuals who have made a difference for the League and their community.

Three years ago, the League established the Buzz Westfall Award for Excellence

in Local Government to be presented annually to a League member who represents the attributes and dedication to good government held by former County Executive Buzz Westfall. This year the winner is retired Mayor Bert Gates of Shrewsbury.

Also last year the League instituted a new award program to highlight some of innovative programs and projects being under-

taken by our members municipalities.

This year's winner is the City of Kirkwood which recently completed a six year effort to incorporate the historic Quinette Cemetery into the City's park System. It was truly a community-wide effort to update the site, which is believed to be the oldest African American cemetery west of the Mississippi River.

Federal Government Announces More TIGER Funds Available

The U.S. Department of Transportation has announced a new round of grants for the second round of the "TIGER" program for transportation projects. Due to the high level of interest in the program, Congress provided an additional

\$600 million as part of the fiscal year 2010 transportation department funding. Pre-applications are due to DOT on July 16 and final applications are due on August 23. Eligible projects include highway or bridge work, public transit, passenger and rail freight

and port infrastructure. Applications must be for at least \$10 million. For the full notice, see <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/2010-9591.htm>. Cooperative projects seem to garner more funding from this federal program.