



SEPTEMBER 2009

September 24 Meeting at Florissant Nature Lodge

Upcoming League Meetings

- Thursday, September 24, Membership Meeting, 7:30 pm, Florissant Nature Lodge in Sunset Park
Thursday, October 22, Membership Meeting, Missouri American Water Treatment Plant, Maryland Heights
Thursday, November 19, Membership Meeting, Site TBD

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The first League meeting of the fall will be held at 7:30 pm on Thursday, September 24 at the new Florissant Nature Lodge in Sunset Park. (Directions: from 1 -270, exit at McDonnell Blvd and go north approximately 4 miles to Sunset Park Rd. (Walgreens on the corner). Turn left on Sunset Park Rd. and follow it to the park. Turn right at the main park entrance to reach the Lodge. Note that McDonnell Blvd changes names to Howdershell and then Shackelford.)

Program: Two major issues will be on the November ballot. The first is Proposition E-911, a 1/10 cent sales tax to fund an interoperable emergency communications system. The League has a committee, chaired by Webster Groves Mayor Gerry Welch, that has prepared educational materials that our members are encouraged to use to inform citizens about the proposal. Mayor Welch will attend the meeting to provide an update on the progress to-date.

Also on the ballot will be a proposal to ban smoking in most public places in St. Louis County. Cities are free to pass more restrictive ordinances.

County Councilmember Barbara Fraser, the bill's sponsor, will attend to discuss the legislation and potential impacts.

The membership will be asked to consider resolutions supporting each of the ballot issues.

Reception for Steve Ables 25 Years with League

In 1984, the League hired a young man to serve as the Assistant Director. Little did we know that Steve Ables would make a career out of that appointment and would still be working on your behalf at the League 25 years later.

We hope that you will be able to join us prior to the September League meeting to congratulate Steve on his anniversary.

Beginning at 6:30 pm on September 24, we will be hosting a reception at the Florissant Nature Lodge in Sunset Park (see directions above). The

regular monthly meeting will follow.



Assistant Director Steve Ables

Legislative Affairs Committee Named

The League's Legislative Affairs Committee will begin meeting this month to review previous legislative issues, consider suggestions from the membership for new policies, and make recommendations for legislative priorities for the 2010 session.

The entire legislative packet, including the committee's suggestions for the main priorities, will be submitted to the membership for approval.

League members who have suggestions for inclusion in the legislative package should contact the office at 314-726-4747 or by email at staff@stlmuni.org.

The Committee members appointed by President Rick Lahr are:

Mayor Tim Pogue, Ballwin
 Mayor Conrad Bowers, Bridgeton
 Mike Herring, City Administrator, Chesterfield
 Craig Owens, City Manager, Clayton
 Councilman Dave Kreuter, Creve Coeur
 Mayor Brian Fletcher, Ferguson
 Mayor Robert Lowery, Florissant
 Mayor Keith Krieg, Frontenac
 Mayor James White, Maplewood
 Mayor Pat Green, Normandy
 Mayor Mary Carter, Pagedale
 Mayor James Beck, Richmond Heights
 Mayor Mike Svoboda, Sunset Hills
 Councilmember Joan Esserman, Webster Groves

Certificate Program in Economic Development

The County Economic Council, along with St. Louis University and the Urban Land Institute, will be offering a Certificate Program in Economic Development over the next several months. The program is designed for both elected officials and staff and costs \$565 per person.

The eight-course program offers four classes this fall and an additional four in spring 2010. Each focuses on helping communities better prepare for and sustain economic growth opportunities, addressing topics such as finance, planning and zoning, infrastructure development, marketing, incentives, and negotiations.

The first four-course session begins Thursday, October 1, 2009 with classes held every other week until November 12. The second session begins Thursday, February 4, 2010 and ends Thursday, March 18. Classes will be held on the first floor training room of the World Trade Center, 121 S. Meramec Avenue in Clayton.

To register or learn more about the Certificate Program in Economic Development, visit www.slcec.com/certificate-program.html or call Program Coordinator, Dresden M. Farrand, at 314.260.9231 or email at dmcinto2@slu.edu

County Voters to Consider Smoking Ban in November

The County Council recently voted 4-3 to place on the November ballot a proposal to ban smoking in most indoor public places in the County. The main exceptions are bars which receive less than 25% of revenue from food sales, cigar bars, tobacco stores, up to 20% of hotel rooms and casino floors. If approved by voters the ban would go into effect on January 2, 2011.

The League has a policy endorsing a state, regional or countywide approach to a smoking ban. Councilwoman Barbara Fraser will outline the proposal on the evening of September 24.

At the meeting the membership will be asked to consider endorsing a resolution urging voters to approve the ban. It will be sent out prior to the meeting.

CD Funds Can Prevent Foreclosures

Federal Community Development funds can be used to assist families who, with a little help, can catch up on delinquent loans. This is far better than more vacancies in the community.

Contact your Community Development representative at the County for details

City Revenues Drop Locally and Nationally

A National League of Cities report, "City Fiscal Conditions in 2009," reveals that cities face significant budget gaps (-2.9 percent) this year due to the decline of income (-1.3 percent) and sales tax (-3.8 percent) collections. These taxes are typically the earliest source of city revenue to decline as job losses in a community increase and consumer purchases decrease. Property taxes, which make up the bulk of city revenue nationwide, are beginning to slow (1.6 percent growth) as real property assessments are adjusted to reflect declining housing values.

Michael A. Pagano, the report's co-author, cautions, "Cities face the burden of confronting the effects of the downturn for years after any recession ends. This means that cities will be navigating the implications of the downturn for awhile longer, even if the business climate turns around."

In the face of declining revenue and increasing expenses, city finance officers are pessimistic about cities' abilities to meet their financial needs. 88 percent say this year will be difficult in meeting fiscal needs, while 89 percent expect the same in 2010. This is the worst outlook the re-

port has detailed in 24 years.

Locally, St. Louis County reports that the sales tax was down 3.6% in 2008. It is much worse - down 8% through August of this year. In addition, the cool summer, while good for consumers, will lead to lower revenues from gross receipts taxes on electricity. And as noted above, the national trend of lower assessed values also holds true throughout much of St. Louis County, putting pressure on property taxes.

It will be a difficult juggling act for most cities to continue to fund needed services.

Prop E-911 Sales Tax on November Ballot

Proposition E911 will be on the November 3, 2009, ballot in St. Louis County. This proposition, if passed, will provide funding through a one-tenth of a cent sales tax for improvements in countywide communications efforts that address the following issues.

- Public health and safety responders in St. Louis County cannot communicate with each other with the current independent radio systems built on 1940s technology.
- In emergencies, fire, police, ambulances, and hospitals cannot coordinate their efforts in addressing intervention and care for victims.
- Every public safety entity must meet new FCC frequency requirements in 2012. This costly mandate can be met through public investment by each individual public

health and safety entity or through public investment in a compatible and efficient countywide system.

- There are deficiencies in the current cell phone 911 system that can prevent a delay identifying the location of the call and a slower response.
- The countywide siren system is old, does not function in all parts of the county, lacks the capacity to target areas to warn people about weather or crime alerts, and has no voice capabilities.

The issues that have led to the placement of E911 on the ballot are complex. Through the multi-year work of the countywide Emergency Communications Commission and East-West Gateway consultants, solutions have been proposed that will address these important public safety issues. We believe that it

is essential that public officials and residents of St. Louis County be informed about this proposition, the issues, and how it will affect them and their municipalities as they make their decisions about whether or not to support E911.

A committee chaired by Webster Groves Mayor Gerry Welch has been formed to provide educational information about Proposition E911. This material summarizes accurate and thoughtful information for yourself and your constituents. The committee is providing a Q&A fact sheet, copy for a newsletter article, a website, a speaker's bureau, and other information as needed. All materials are undergoing legal review to ensure that they comply with 115.646 RSMo and are educational and do not advocate or oppose this Proposition.

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

Please plan to attend the September 24 meeting at the Florissant Nature Lodge

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www.stlmuni.org*

Community Partnership Project Brown Bag Discussion at UMSL

The shift in population from the inner-core of our region to the suburban and rural fringes has left neighborhoods in the city and the inner-ring suburbs with a significant decline in population, an increase in abandoned or foreclosed properties, and housing units now considered obsolete. Learn how some of these communities are approaching renewal efforts at the Community Partnership Project's Brown Bag Series from noon to 1 PM on Wednesday, September 23, in Room 126, J.C. Penney Conference Center, One University Blvd., UM-St. Louis. Bring your lunch.

Drinks will be provided.

Dr. Todd Swanstrom, Des Lee Endowed Professor of Community Collaboration and Public Policy Administration at UM-St. Louis, will lead the discussions. The guest speaker on September 23 will be Thomas Pickel, executive director of DeSales Community Housing Corporation.

For more information on the CPP Brown Bag Series, visit <http://ce.umsi.edu/brownbag> or call (314) 516-6775. For information on other Continuing Education programs, visit <http://ce.umsi.edu>.

Gateway Outstanding Local Government Awards Nominations

The East-West Gateway Council of Governments is seeking nominations for the Annual Outstanding Local Government Achievement (OLGA) Awards which recognizes the extraordinary work of local officials in the region.

Nominations must be received by Friday, October 2. The five award categories are:

- Gateway lifetime public service award;

- Exemplary accomplishment by a local government jurisdiction, agency or individual;
- Successful intergovernmental collaboration;
- Successful public private venture; and
- Leadership in planning and design innovation.

Visit Gateway's website, www.ewgateway.org to see the nomination form.