



NEBRASKA MUNICIPAL REVIEW

■ Utilities/Public Works Section
2017 Annual Conference Highlights

■ Lexington to see new 4-megawatt
solar energy array this spring

■ The effort you make to reach out to your
Senator ensures municipal interests
are heard

Official Publication of the League of Nebraska Municipalities

JANUARY 2017

**Lawmakers sworn in
as 2017 session begins**

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CALENDAR

Midwinter Conference.....Feb. 27-28, 2017, Cornhusker Marriott Hotel, Lincoln
NLC Confessional City Conference.....March 11-16, 2017, Washington, D.C.
IIMC Annual ConferenceMay 21-24, 2017, Montreal, Quebec
Municipal Accounting and Finance ConferenceJune 14-16, 2017, Holiday Inn, Kearney
Annual Conference.....Sept. 20-22, 2017, Cornhusker Marriott Hotel, Lincoln

Municipal Legal Calendar

(All statute citations to Revised Statutes of Nebraska)

JANUARY 2017

CITIES OF THE FIRST CLASS

Each month.....Clerk publishes ordinances passed within 15 days after passage. (16-405)
Within 10 working days from meeting
or before next meeting (whichever is sooner).....Clerk to have minutes available for public inspection. (84-1413)
First Regular Meeting.....Mayor and Council appoint member of Park Board. (16-696)
Within 30 days from Council meeting.....Clerk publishes official proceedings of meeting. (19-1102)
Within 20 days after end of month.....Treasurer files monthly financial report. (16-318)
On or before January 31.....Provide county assessor each new lease or changed preexisting lease which
went into effect during the previous year and a listing of previously reported
leases that are still in effect. (77-202.11)
Each Quarter.....Report from depository banks due. (16-714)
Reminder.....Notice of automatic renewal of liquor and beer other than Class C licenses
must be published between January 10 and January 30 of each year. (53-135.01)
Reminder.....One and six year plans are due at the Nebraska Department of Roads, Board of
Public Roads, Classification and Standards, March 1, 2017.
Reminder.....Legal notice is required 10 days before the hearing. (39-2115 through 39-2119)
Reminder.....Annual report on each 401(a) retirement plan is to be filed as of Dec. 31 with the
Public Employees Retirement Board and the State Auditor's Office. For a defined benefit plan
which was open to new members on January 1, 2004, the governing body shall file a full actuarial
analysis. (19-3501)

CITIES OF THE SECOND CLASS

Each month.....Clerk publishes ordinances passed within 15 days after passage (17-613)
Within 10 working days from meeting
or before next meeting
(whichever is sooner).....Clerk to have minutes available for public inspection. (84-1413)
Within 30 days from
Council meeting.....Clerk publishes official proceedings of meeting. (19-1102)
Within 20 days after end of month.....Treasurer files monthly financial report. (17-606)
On or before January 31.....Provide county assessor each new lease or changed preexisting lease which went
into effect during the previous year and a listing of previously reported leases
that are still in effect. (77-202.11)
Reminder.....Notice of automatic renewal of liquor and beer other than Class C licenses must
be published between January 10 and January 30 of each year. (53-135.01)
Reminder.....One and six year plans are due at the Nebraska Department of Roads,
Board of Public Roads, Classification and Standards, March 1, 2017.
Reminder.....Legal notice is required 10 days before the hearing. (39-2115 through 39-2119)
Reminder.....Annual report on each 401(a) retirement plan is to be filed as of Dec. 31 with the Public
Employees Retirement Board and the State Auditor's Office. For a defined benefit plan which
was open to new members on January 1, 2004, the governing body shall file a full actuarial
analysis. (19-3501)

VILLAGES

Each month.....Clerk publishes ordinances passed within 15 days after passage (17-613)
Within 10 working days from meeting
or before next meeting
(whichever is sooner).....Clerk to have minutes available for public inspection. (84-1413)
Within 30 days from
Trustees' meeting.....Clerk publishes official proceedings of meeting. (19-1102)
Within 20 days after end of month.....Treasurer files monthly financial report. (17-606)
On or before January 31.....Provide county assessor each new lease or changed preexisting lease which went
into effect during the previous year and a listing of previously reported leases
that are still in effect. (77-202.11)
Reminder.....Notice of automatic renewal of liquor and beer other than Class C licenses must
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The effort you make to reach out to your Senator ensures municipal interests are heard

— BY ALAN MICHL, CHAIRPERSON OF EXETER VILLAGE BOARD AND LEAGUE PRESIDENT

On the cover of this edition of the *Nebraska Municipal Review* is a photo of newly elected and reelected Senators taking their oath of office as the Legislature began the 2017 session. In Washington, D.C., the peaceful transfer of power occurred as a new president was sworn into office. These familiar and reassuring rituals are convincing evidence that our form of government works. In other countries, bullets not ballots determine who is in power.

As local government officials and leaders in our communities, we know about the demands of public life and we are grateful for the sacrifices that citizen lawmakers who take time away from their personal lives and professions or businesses to serve our state. They work long, hard hours and are paid far too little for their service. They deserve our thanks.

As stated in the League of Nebraska Municipalities Bylaws, the League's highest priority has always been to work with our state lawmakers and others to effectively represent the interests of member cities and villages in the legislative process. While our focus at this time of year is on the Legislature, this work is a year-round process and it depends on your active involvement. Staying abreast of matters that affect you and your community is no

easy task, but it is important.

As a municipal official, you are a valuable resource to your state Senator to help him or her understand how bills affect our citizens, who are their constituents. We have the examples, the hard data and the information that lawmakers need to know to make decisions.

As this session progresses, League staff will ask you to make important contacts with your state Senator by sending emails, writing letters and making phone calls. We also will ask you to attend meetings even though we know that will involve a considerable sacrifice for many of you because of the distance across our state between your city or village and the Capitol. Many of you are experienced at testifying at public hearings, which take up the first half of the legislative session and are underway as this column is written. As you may know, in the Nebraska Legislature, every bill, except for a few technical bills, receives a public hearing before one of the Legislature's 14 standing committees. If you decide to testify at a public hearing, please contact the League office so that we can welcome you to Lincoln and coordinate testimony. Typically, committee hearings begin at 1:30 p.m. (Weekly hearing schedules are available in the League's *Legislative Bulletin* and on

the Legislature's website.) If you have written testimony, it is advisable to bring about a dozen copies, which should be enough to distribute to all committee members, the two committee staff members, the media and the legislative transcribers.

Those of you who have served or are serving on the League's Larger and Smaller Cities Legislative Committees know that working with the Legislature is an ongoing process. Besides the Larger and Smaller Cities Legislative Committees, the League's Executive Board Members work diligently on the League's legislative package and meet at important times on short notice throughout the year as issues arise.

The extra effort that you make to get the message across often means the difference in passing an important bill or stopping legislation that would harm local government. Getting your message across ensures that the interests of municipal government are heard and understood among our lawmakers.

In closing, please remember that you will have a chance to visit with your state Senator to address legislative issues at the Midwinter Conference Senators Appreciation luncheon in February. ■

Balancing the budget

BY GOV. PETE RICKETTS



Each year, Senators come together to address important priorities on behalf of our state's taxpayers. In this first week of January, Nebraska's citizen Legislature returned to Lincoln. The Legislature and I need to get to work balancing our budget, controlling spending and delivering much-needed tax relief for the citizens of Nebraska.

The budget will be the number one priority we deal with during this legislative session. Over the past several months, tax receipts have been lagging. In the last fiscal year, receipts came in \$95 million below forecast. In October, the forecast for the current fiscal year was revised downward by \$172 million, leaving a gap of \$267 million between forecasted receipts and current appropriations.

Over the past several months, I have been working with state agencies to manage their budgets in anticipation of working with the Legislature to address the gap between projected revenues and appropriations. In July, I provided guidance to my cabinet and all state agencies, urging fiscal restraint. In October, I placed a freeze on non-mission critical hires and a travel ban on non-essential, out-of-state travel. Additionally, my State Budget Office reduced allotments, or the amount of money made available

to an agency, as well as carryover appropriations for state agencies.

This year, we have two budgets on which to work. The first is the current year's budget, which we must adjust to close the gap between revenue and appropriations. The second is the next two-year budget, which will cover FY 2017-2019. The budgets I am delivering are balanced, will not raise taxes, and will reduce government spending.

To address the gap in the current year's budget, I delivered budget adjustment recommendations to the Legislature. This budget makes \$276 million in adjustments necessary to restore balance to the budget by reducing government spending and realigning existing revenues from other sources. The budget adjustments do not raise taxes. I am urging the Appropriations Committee to make this a priority and to get the FY 2016-2017 budget bills to the legislative floor by the first week in February.

In preparing these adjustments, I worked to protect investments in education. My adjustments delivered to the Legislature increase TEEOSA, state aid to K-12 schools, by \$316,161, which also is a slight increase over the historic high we set for state support for TEEOSA and Special Education this year. Additionally, my office collaborated with the University

of Nebraska as they worked to adjust its budget to help them protect their priorities and plan adjustments accordingly.

My budget adjustments also support continued reform in key agencies such as the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS) and Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Over the past two years, the Legislature and I have been working together to chart a new course for NDCS to protect public safety. To continue reform, my adjustments exempt the agency from across-the-board cuts. In DHHS, I protected priorities such as our veterans' homes and public health aid, and we were able to provide additional resources for critical programming in the areas of child welfare and developmental disabilities.

The budget adjustments for FY 2016-2017 are just the first step. On Jan. 12, I delivered my annual State of the State address. In the address, I unveiled my next two-year budget for FY 2017-2019, which will follow the same principles that guided my adjustments to the current budget. In this address, I also talked about several other legislative initiatives. ■



New employment eligibility form (Form I-9) for all municipalities – new hires, including elected officials

BY JERRY L. PIGSLEY, WOODS & AITKEN LLP,
LONM LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT LAW COUNSEL

On Jan. 22, 2017, municipalities are required by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to use the new Form I-9 with a revision date of “11/14/2016 N.” The Form I-9 is used to verify the identity and employment authorization of individuals hired for employment in the United States. Since 1986, all U.S. employers must insure proper completion of the Form I-9 for each individual they hire for employment in the United States including citizens and noncitizens. Both the employee and the authorized representative of the municipality must complete the form. The new form is designed to be easier to use, as well as to reduce common errors and easier to complete using a computer.

ONLINE FORM AVAILABLE

Municipalities have the choice of using the online fillable Form I-9 or the Form I-9 paper version. Municipalities who use the online fillable form must still print out the Form I-9 to sign and retain as required. Municipalities can still print out the Form I-9 and complete it manually if you choose.

As you would expect, the instructions for completing the form have increased from six-15 pages.

The new form is designed to be easier to use, as well as to reduce common errors and easier to complete using a computer.

“SMART” UPDATES

The “Smart” updates to the form are designed to make it easier to complete on a computer including: drop down lists, calendars for filling in dates, on-screen instructions for each field, access to the full instructions and an option to clear the form and start over. When the municipality prints the completed form, a quick response code is automatically generated, which can be read by most QR readers and the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement auditors.

IN-PERSON REVIEW REQUIREMENT

The new Form I-9 still requires the municipality’s representative to verify employment eligibility in the physical presence of the individual being verified and requires the municipality’s representative to review in person the documents being presented. The USCIS regulations specifically state that using FaceTime or Skype for the

new hire verification process is not permitted.

ELECTED OFFICIALS SHOULD COMPLETE

Municipalities are not required to complete the new Form I-9 for existing employees unless reverification of employment is necessary as a result of expiration of a worker’s employment authorization. In addition, even though elected officials are not “hired” as defined in the applicable Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 regulations, it has been reported that the USCIS has required municipalities to complete the Form I-9 if the elected official receives “wages or other remuneration” for his/her civic services for the municipality.

FINES

Errors on the Form I-9 can be expensive, including using an expired version of the form. For each Form I-9 paperwork violation, the fine range

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NEMA receives grant for countering violent extremism

A \$300,000 grant for countering violent extremism through training and engagement was awarded in January to the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) by the Department of Homeland Security.

"In 2016, Congress answered our call for federal grants, awarded and administered by the Department of Homeland Security, to support local efforts to counter violent extremism," said Secretary Jeh Johnson on announcing the first round of Countering Violent Extremism Grants.

A total of 31 proposals, from various organizations in multiple communities will receive some part of \$10 million appropriated by Congress last year. The funding will go for activities that include intervention, developing resilience, challenging the narrative and building capacity. **NEMA was the only emergency management agency to receive a grant.**

In Nebraska, the grant will identify barriers that keep peers or family members from reporting potential signs of radicalization using a public-health approach. **The countering violent extremism project will be**

used in rural or small to mid-sized city public health departments. In addition to identifying barriers to reporting, the program will develop strategies to address them. Other goals include increasing awareness of observable behaviors associated with the process of radicalization and enhancing the connection between state level threat assessment resources and local trusted resources receiving reports.

NEMA and University of Nebraska Public Policy Center will lead the project. Other participants include Nebraska State Patrol's Fusion Center, Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services and Nebraska Department of Education. Local public health efforts are led by Two Rivers Public Health Department, which serves seven counties in rural Nebraska.

"We feel very fortunate to receive this grant as there is currently not a public health led violent extremism prevention effort in place," said Bryan Tuma, NEMA Assistant Director. "Increased engagement in the community will promote increased knowledge of how to counter violent extremism and

hopefully result in increased reporting. Knowing what to look for and who to report it to are good first steps toward countering violent extremism." ■

Source – NEMA

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New employment eligibility form

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was almost doubled last summer from \$110-\$1,100 to \$216-\$2,156 and took effect Dec. 23, 2016.

SUMMARY

The Trump administration has stated its intent to focus on immigration enforcement and thus, it is imperative for municipalities to establish clear and compliant employment verification procedures which include the use of the new Form I-9 and to conduct

regular self-audits of their Form I-9 documents to identify and rectify non-compliant forms. ■

Editor's Note: This article is not intended to provide legal advice to our readers. Rather, this article is intended to alert our readers to new and developing issues and to provide some common sense answers to complex legal questions. Readers are urged to consult their own legal counsel or the author of this article if the reader wishes to obtain a specific legal opinion regarding how these legal standards may apply to their particular circumstances. The author of this article, Jerry L. Pigsley, can be contacted at (402) 437-8500, jpigsley@woodsaitken.com, or at Woods & Aitken LLP, 301 S. 13th Street, Suite 500, Lincoln, NE 68508-2578.

Lawmakers kick off 2017 session; elect Norfolk Sen. Scheer as Speaker

On a cold and cloudy day, lawmakers and their families and friends packed the George W. Norris Legislative Chamber Jan. 4 for the opening day of the first session of the 105th Legislature. Newly elected and reelected state Senators gathered in a group at the front of the legislative chamber where Nebraska Supreme Court Chief Justice Mike Heavican administered the oath of office. Owing mainly to the effects of term limits, 17 new faces were among the total of 49 Senators.

After the swearing-in ceremony, the Legislature began the process known as reorganization, which is when lawmakers choose the speaker and committee chairpersons who serve two-year terms. Twenty-five votes are required for election to leadership posts. These elections are – and were – conducted by secret ballot, despite discussions before the session began and during opening day about recording the votes in the open.

Norfolk **Sen. Jim Scheer**, who previously had served as the Banking, Commerce and Insurance Committee Chair, was elected speaker, defeating Sen. Matt Williams of Gothenburg on a 27-22 vote. Speaker Scheer also has served as a Mayor and owns an insurance business. The Speaker of the Legislature has the responsibility for setting the Legislature's daily agenda that lists the order in which bills and resolutions will be considered. The Speaker also may select 25 Speaker Priority Bills and up to five bills or resolutions each session as major proposals with scheduling priority. Major proposals must already be designated

as a Senator's priority bill and must be approved by two-thirds of the Executive Board.

Although the Legislature is not orga-

nized along political party lines and is officially nonpartisan, the committee chairmanship elections Jan. 4 indicate

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Nebraska Supreme Court Chief Justice Mike Heavican administers oath of office to newly elected and reelected state Senators. League photo.

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a legislative body that has a more conservative bent.

In unprecedented action, two newly sworn-in members of the body with no prior experience in the Legislature, **Sens. Joni Albrecht** of Thurston and **Justin Wayne** of Omaha, defeated incumbent chairpersons for standing committees – Omaha Sen. Burke Harr, who was chair of the Business and Labor Committee and Sen. Sue Crawford of Bellevue, who had served as chair of the Urban Affairs Committee.

Outcomes in other standing committee races, included:

Sen. Lydia Brasch of Bancroft ran without opposition and was elected chair of the **Agriculture Committee**.

Sen. John Stinner of Gering was elected chair of the **Appropriations Committee**. He was elected without opposition.

Sen. Brett Lindstrom of Omaha

was elected as chair of the **Banking, Commerce and Insurance Committee**. He succeeds Sen. Scheer, who was elected speaker earlier in the day.

Sen. Mike Groene of North Platte was elected chair of the **Education Committee**, defeating Sen. Roy Baker of Lincoln.

Sen. Tyson Larson of O'Neill defeated Omaha Sen. John McCollister to chair the **General Affairs Committee**. Sen. Larson was the incumbent chairperson. Sen. McCollister, however, was the only Senator who had declared his intention to run for the committee chairmanship ahead of reorganization. Sen. Larson nominated himself from the floor on opening day.

Sen. John Murante of Gretna, who was the incumbent, ran unopposed to chair the **Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee**.

Sen. Merv Riepe of Ralston defeated Sen. Sara Howard of Omaha to chair the **Health and Human Services**



*Sen. Jim Scheer
Speaker of the Legislature*

Committee. Sen. Riepe replaces Sen. Kathy Campbell of Lincoln, who was term-limited.

Sen. Laura Ebke of Crete was elected to the **Judiciary Committee** Chairmanship. She ran unopposed and replaces Hastings Sen. Les Seiler, who was defeated in November.

Sen. Dan Hughes of Venango defeated Sen. Rick Kolowski of Omaha for the chairmanship of the **Natural Resources Committee**. Sen. Hughes replaces Sen. Ken Schilz of Ogallala, who was term-limited.

Sen. Mark Kolterman of Seward was elected as chair of the **Nebraska Retirement Systems Committee**. He was the incumbent and ran unopposed.

Sen. Jim Smith of Papillion will chair the **Revenue Committee**. Sen. Smith was unopposed and replaces Grand Island Sen. Mike Gloor, who was term-limited.

Sen. Curt Friesen of Henderson ran

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Capitol Rotunda Jan. 4. League photo.

Lawmakers kick off 2017 session; elect Norfolk Sen. Scheer as Speaker

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unopposed to win chairmanship of the **Transportation and Telecommunications Committee**. He replaces Sen. Smith, who will chair the Revenue Committee.

Syracuse **Sen. Dan Watermeier** defeated incumbent chair of the **Legislature's Executive Board**, Sen. Bob Krist of Omaha. Sen. Watermeier said that he originally was going to run as vice chair of the Legislature's Executive Board, but decided to seek the chairmanship. Sen. John

Kuehn of Heartwell ran unopposed as Executive Board Vice Chair. (*The Legislature's Executive Board serves as the bill referencing committee and supervises all services and employees of the Legislature.*)

Newly sworn-in **Sen. Mike Hilgers** of Lincoln defeated Lincoln Sen. Matt Hansen to chair the **Rules Committee**, a select committee that had been chaired by Sen. Tommy Garrett of Bellevue, who was defeated in the November election.

Sen. Anna Wishart of Lincoln was

elected as **Enrollment and Review Committee** Chair, a position traditionally awarded to the youngest freshman Senator.

The League will monitor several hundred bills this year and keep you apprised of legislative action as the session progresses.

As legislative rules stipulate, bills can be introduced during the first 10 days of the session. Bill introduction ended Jan. 18. Committee hearings began Jan. 17, the day after the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. holiday. ■



Family and friends gather on Jan. 4, the first day of the 2017 legislative session to watch newly elected and reelected Senators sworn into office. League photo.

It's your deal: Understanding the roles and responsibilities when issuing municipal bonds

■ **BY LYNNETTE KELLY,**
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
MUNICIPAL SECURITIES
RULEMAKING BOARD ■

Financing a public project with municipal bonds is a team effort in which many professionals work together to achieve the goals of the municipality. But as government officials considering issuing municipal bonds in 2017, keep in mind that it's your deal.

You are the stewards of taxpayer dollars and you make the decision to borrow. You decide whether to hire a municipal advisor to act as your fiduciary and you select the underwriter through the process – competitive or negotiated – of your choice. Throughout the life of any municipal bond, you assume responsibility for providing investors with information that is timely, accurate and complete.

Important ally

And while the issuance of municipal bonds is your deal, municipalities have an important ally in the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board (MSRB), the national regulator responsible for promoting a fair and efficient municipal securities market. Protecting municipal bond issuers is a central aspect of the MSRB's mission. Importantly, the MSRB does not regulate state or local governments; its rules are designed to make sure you are treated fairly by the underwriters and with the utmost good faith by municipal advisors you hire.

The MSRB also operates a public platform called the Electronic Municipal Market Access, or EMMA®, website, which is your key to accessing important information about the mu-

nicipal market and communicating information to investors. Additionally, the MSRB provides free, objective educational materials for municipal issuers.

Since issuing bonds may be only an occasional event for certain communities, it's helpful to understand how the MSRB can support you when you decide to issue bonds.

The decision to borrow

The decision to access capital from the \$3.8 trillion municipal securities market is always handled at the state and local level. Government officials have a responsibility to their taxpayers to make informed decisions about how to finance a public project. Understanding conditions in the municipal securities market and evaluating your locality's existing bonds are important steps in the decision to borrow.

The MSRB's EMMA website provides free access to information and data about the municipal market and nearly all existing municipal bonds. Before deciding to issue bonds, visit EMMA's Tools and Resources page to see what issues are scheduled to come to market and how they are priced, monitor the trade activity of your locality's existing bonds and view upcoming federal economic reports or other events that can have an impact on the municipal bond market.

Working with financial professionals

Once a municipality has decided to issue bonds, an important step is assembling the deal team – which can include municipal advisors and underwriters. Check the MSRB's website, at www.msrb.org, to ensure that any



*Lynnette Kelly, Executive Director
Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board*

firm you are considering is properly registered with the MSRB and that individual professionals have passed the appropriate professional qualification examinations. Working with unregistered or unqualified financial professionals puts a municipality at risk.

MSRB rules and professional qualification requirements are designed to ensure the advice you receive from a municipal advisor is in the municipality's best interest. MSRB rules require underwriters working with a municipality to deal fairly, disclose potential conflicts of interest and honor your wishes about some of the ways bonds are marketed and distributed to investors. You can read more about protections for municipal bond issuers in the Education Center on the MSRB's website. If at any time you suspect a municipal finance professional of violating MSRB rules or acting unfairly, report it to the MSRB by

Continued on page 12

Tree removal is first step in Norfolk library construction and renovation



City of Norfolk staff removing trees. Photo courtesy of City of Norfolk.

Norfolk city street staff are removing trees around the Norfolk Public Library to prepare for the library construction and renovation that will start this spring. Fortunately, the trees being removed are ash trees that are threatened by the emerald ash

borer that has been found in other parts of Nebraska. The borer has been killing millions of ash trees across the nation. When construction is done in 2018, new trees will be planted. ■

Source – City of Norfolk

Village of Burchard receives USDA funds for water improvement project

USDA Rural Development announced that the Village of Burchard, Nebraska, received \$346,000 through a water loan and grant to make water improvements.

“The Village of Burchard is very appreciative of USDA Rural Development’s financial assistance that will help out our small town,” said Board Member Matthew McHenry, Village of Burchard.

“Currently, the village has abandoned service lines that are nearly 80 years old. When there is a water leak, the village has to shut off the water to the entire town, where more than 20 percent water loss occurs. Additionally, the water tower needs repairing and repainting and water meters need to be installed.” The \$87,000 loan is for 40 years at a 1.375 rate of interest.

For more information, contact Luann Brown at 402-437-5571 or luann.brown@ne.usda.gov. ■

Source – USDA Rural Development

It’s Your Deal: Understanding the roles and responsibilities when issuing municipal bonds

Continued from page 11

phone at 202-838-1330 or by email to complaints@msrb.org and the MSRB will forward your complaint to the appropriate enforcement authority.

Continuing disclosure

Once a municipality’s bonds have been issued, it is the municipality’s responsibility to provide investors with required ongoing material information in a timely and complete manner. Annual financial and operating information, notices of major events

that may affect bondholders and other information is essential to helping investors make fully informed decisions about buying, selling or holding a municipality’s bonds. The MSRB’s EMMA website serves as the official platform to disclose this information to investors.

Municipalities can schedule free email reminders from the MSRB to alert key individuals of upcoming filing deadlines. The MSRB also offers free phone support, how-to videos and

educational resources to support state and local governments with understanding and fulfilling their continuing disclosure obligations.

Whenever a municipality decides to issue bonds, remember – it’s your deal, and rules and resources of the MSRB are there to help ensure the process is fair. Take advantage of these tools and resources to help you make informed decisions about issuing municipal bonds and communicating with investors. ■

Lexington to see new 4-megawatt solar energy array this spring

Construction of the largest per-capita solar array in Nebraska is now underway. IGS Solar, LLC, a turnkey commercial and residential solar provider, has partnered with Sol Systems, a solar energy investment and development firm, to install a four MW array in Lexington, on previously undeveloped city-owned land northeast of Plum Creek Parkway and Commerce Road. The array is being installed by Sol Systems' local engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) partners, GenPro Energy Solutions and Russell Pacific. The project was originally conceived at the local level between GenPro Energy Solutions, Husker Solar and the City of Lexington and has used local workers and sourcing from nearby



Solar array under construction in Lexington. Photo courtesy of City of Lexington.

businesses to aid in construction.

Once installed, the system of nearly 12,600 panels will produce more than seven million kilowatt hours of electricity per year, enough to power about 600 homes annually.

City Manager Joe Peplitsch said: "Our partnership with IGS Solar and Sol Systems allows us to support the



development of diversified renewable energy in Nebraska, play a part in the reduction of environmental emissions and provide a long-term cost savings to benefit our electric customers."

Expect the array to be up and running in the spring of 2017. ■

Source – City of Lexington

League Executive Board changes made in January


The League Executive Board Jan. 13 confirmed the appointment of John F. Lohr, Columbus Council Member, to fill the vacancy created when former Mayor Sue Fuchtman of Norfolk did not seek reelection. The board also confirmed the appointment of North Platte Mayor Dwight Livingston as League Vice President to fill the vacancy in the office of Vice President created when Sidney Council Member Wendall Gaston advanced, under the League's Bylaws, to the position of President-Elect after Chuck Harris of York was defeated in the November election. ■



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2017 Utilities/Public Works Section Annual Conference Highlights

Municipal utility and public works officials from across the state attended the 2017 Utilities/Public Works Section Annual Conference, which was held Jan. 11-13 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Lincoln. Those attending the conference participated in sessions covering a wide array of topics, including:

- Cyber Attacks on Nebraska Local Governments are Real Now
- Flow Meter Magic
- Drainage Law 101
- Legal Issues Surrounding Summer Employment of Minors
- Day-to-Day Labor Management.

Tony Jelinek, Kearney Director of Utilities, became president taking the reins from Dennis Smith, Norfolk Public Works Director. Smith will continue to serve as Past President on the Utilities Section Executive Board.



Tony Jelinek, Kearney Director of Utilities and president of the Utilities/Public Works Section 2017, gives a plaque of appreciation to Dennis Smith, Norfolk Public Works Director, outgoing president.

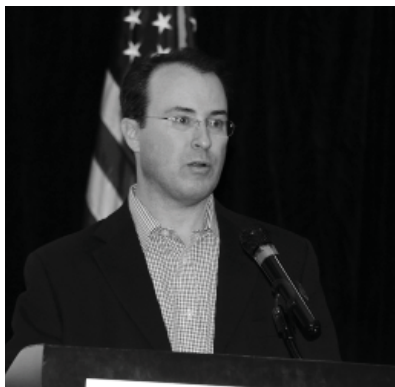
Other officers elected are:

- 1st Vice President, Paul Markowski, Ord
- 2nd Vice President Bob Lockmon, Stuart

- Board Members – Larry Brittenham, Superior; Eric Melcher, Aurora, and Dallas Nichols, Cozad. Tobias Templemeyer of Beatrice is an ex officio member of the board. ■



Sandra Foote, Council Member, Superior.



Chris Anderson, City Administrator, Central City.



*Mark Harrell, Ph.D.
Forest Health Program Leader
Nebraska Forest Service
University of Nebraska*



Top from left: Jack Cordes, Utility Superintendent, Scribner; Vince Kruger, Maintenance, Uehling. Middle left: Kelly Ekeler, Attorney, Woods & Aitken. Middle Right: Bob Lockmon, Utilities Superintendent, Stuart. Bottom from left: Denise Peterson, Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer, Ponca; Stacy Janssen, Water/Wastewater Supervisor, Dakota City.



2017 Utilities/Public Works Section Annual Conference Highlights



Top left: Randy Woldt, Utilities Superintendent, Wisner.

Top right: Jerry Pigsley, Attorney, Woods & Aitken.

Bottom left: Jim Hawks, City Administrator, North Platte.

Bottom right: Tobias Tempelmeyer, City Administrator and General Manager, Beatrice.





Top left from left: Chad Podolak, Account Manager, NPPD; Jim McGowen, Utility Manager, Schuyler.
Top right from left: Paul Markowski, Utilities Superintendent, Ord; Mike Ferguson, Superintendent, Ansley
Middle left: Dennis Smith, Public Works Director, Norfolk.
Middle right from left: Linda Carroll, Clerk/Treasurer, Fairmont; Deanna Perry, Clerk/Treasurer, Shelby.
Bottom: Alan Romine, Utility Superintendent, Falls City.

Elwood's resident recruitment efforts gain national attention, Nebraska recognition

For the second time in six years, the Department of Economic Development (DED) has recognized the Elwood (pop. 707) community for earning certification as an Economic Development Certified Community (EDCC). DED Business Development Consultant Ashley Rice-Gerlach honored village leaders during Elwood's Chamber of Commerce Annual Banquet Jan. 20.

Elwood is one of 38 communities to earn EDCC certification in the program, which is sponsored by the Nebraska Diplomats and administered by DED. The community earned original certification in 2010 and was recertified in November 2016.

Over the past six years, Elwood earned national recognition for its "Free Lot Program," designed to recruit new residents to the community through homesteading efforts.

"The leadership and innovation that made this program possible embody

the collaborative spirit a community needs to be part of Nebraska's EDCC program," said Nebraska Diplomats President Dean Hart. ■

Source – Nebraska Dept. of Economic Development



From left: Tom Martin, Village Board Chairman; Ashley Rice-Gerlach, Nebraska Department of Economic Development; Ed Houlden, Redevelopment Authority. Photo courtesy of the Dept. of Economic Development.



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Tree care workshops focus on the future

The 2017 Tree Care Workshops, held statewide Feb. 28-March 22, focus on the many benefits urban trees provide and ways to both care for and use them.

Recent inventories reveal decline, so tree selection and care is increasingly important for resilient community landscapes. For towns facing ash tree removal, there are sessions on producing biochar and using it and other types of wood waste. Other sessions focus on protecting tree roots during construction, environmental challenges of trees and tree selection.

The workshops will be offered Feb. 28 in Alliance; March 1 in North Platte; March 2 in Ord; March 3 in Kearney; March 7 in Ithaca; March 21 in Norfolk; and, March 22 in Omaha.

The Nebraska Forest Service, in coordination with the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum, offers these annual training workshops for public works employees, landscape managers, tree board volunteers, arborists, nursery and green industry professionals and landscape enthusiasts. Cost of the full-day workshops is \$45; for descriptions, discounts, locations and registration, go to: <http://nfs.unl.edu/tree-care-workshops>.

For additional information, contact Amy Seiler at aseiler2@unl.edu or 308-633-1173, or Graham Herbst at g Herbst2@unl.edu or 402-444-7875. ■

Source – Nebraska Forest Service

Cities to Congress: Repeal of ACA must include simultaneous replacement

NLC expresses concern about impact of uncompensated care on local economies

Following action in Congress to repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA), National League of Cities (NLC) President Matt Zone, Council Member, Cleveland, released the following statement Jan. 12:

“The National League of Cities calls on Congress to ensure that any proposal to amend or repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA) sustains and builds upon the nation's progress toward the goal of health insurance coverage for all Americans. Attempts to repeal without replacing ACA threaten to disrupt health insurance markets and increase the number of uninsured individuals in our communities. NLC is particularly concerned about the resulting shift in health care

costs to already strained local budgets and the resulting economic impact on local economies, including the costs of uncompensated care provided through city-run hospitals and the likely harm to national and local initiatives that are currently shifting the focus on the health care system from costly treatment to quality care and cost-effective prevention.” ■

Source – NLC

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Mead receives USDA funds for water improvement project

The Village of Mead will receive more than \$3.3 million through a water loan and grant from the USDA Rural Development leveraged with \$165,000 from the village to make water improvements.

“The board is excited to get the water project moving forward. The current water tower is over 100 years old and adding the water treatment plant will help bring a better quality of water to the community,” said Board Member Shawn Havelka, Village of Mead.

“Rural Development funds will help the Village of Mead to improve its water system,” said USDA Rural Development Community Programs Specialist Janice Stopak. The Village of Mead contains arsenic in its water source that will be removed by the construction of a treatment plant. The village needs a larger water tower, which will allow the village to meet its daily demands. ■

Source – USDA Dept. of Agriculture

This column is provided, free of charge, for use and reference by Nebraska municipal officials and employees. All others pay 55 cents per word to place ads. Closing date is the first of the month of publication. Ads are subject to editing and will appear once unless otherwise requested. Classified ads also can appear on the League's website at www.lonm.org.

Positions

Clerk/Treasurer. The Village of Arlington has an opening for a full-time Village Clerk/Treasurer. Applicant must have at least a High School Diploma or equivalent with an associate degree in accounting/bookkeeping or minimum of 2 years of experience in accounting/bookkeeping is required. The successful candidate will need to have efficient computer knowledge, strong verbal, written, interpersonal, and organizational skills. Experience with Sage50/Peachtree Accounting Software, knowledge of General Accounting Practices, experience working with budgets and payroll, and project management skills would be beneficial. Salary is negotiable based on qualifications and experience. Contact Village Hall at 402-478-4212, stop in the office at 410 W. Elm Street, or visit our website at arlingtonne.org for a job application. Application and/or resume must include three (3) references and they will be accepted until the position is filled. Send applications or resumes to the Village of Arlington, P.O. Box 370, Arlington, NE 68002 or email: arlington@futuretk.com. The Village of Arlington is an EOE.

Police Chief. City of Randolph is currently accepting applications for the position of Chief of Police. Successful applicant must be a U.S. citizen, at least 21 years of age, possess a high school degree or equivalent and possess or be able to obtain a valid Nebraska operator's license. Applicant must have good moral character.

Positions

Applicant should have a thorough knowledge of law enforcement procedures, techniques and equipment and have the ability to train and supervise subordinate personnel. Salary is based upon experience. The City of Randolph is an equal opportunity employer.

Contact City Administrator Kelsey Backer at 212 E Broadway, P.O. Box 457, Randolph, NE 68771, (402) 337-0567 or citrاند@cablone.net for application information. Position is open until filled.

Electric Journey. Line Worker. Alliance, NE (8,500) The City of Alliance, Nebraska is accepting applications for the position of full-time Electric Journey Line Worker with a pay range of \$22.42 - \$28.97 per hour DOQ. This individual will perform skilled line work in the operation, construction, maintenance and repair of overhead and underground electric distribution and transmission systems. Applications with resumes will be accepted until the position is filled. A complete job description and application is available at www.cityofalliance.net. The City is also taking applications for Electric Line Apprentice. This position includes an excellent benefit package including health insurance, retirement, vacation, sick leave and paid holidays.

**See page 22 for
Professional Directory**

Mark your calendar for these League conferences

Midwinter Conference
Feb. 27-28, 2017

Cornhusker Marriott Hotel,
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**Municipal Accounting
and Finance Conference**

June 14-16, 2017

Holiday Inn, Kearney

Annual Conference

Sept. 20-22, 2017

Cornhusker Marriott Hotel,
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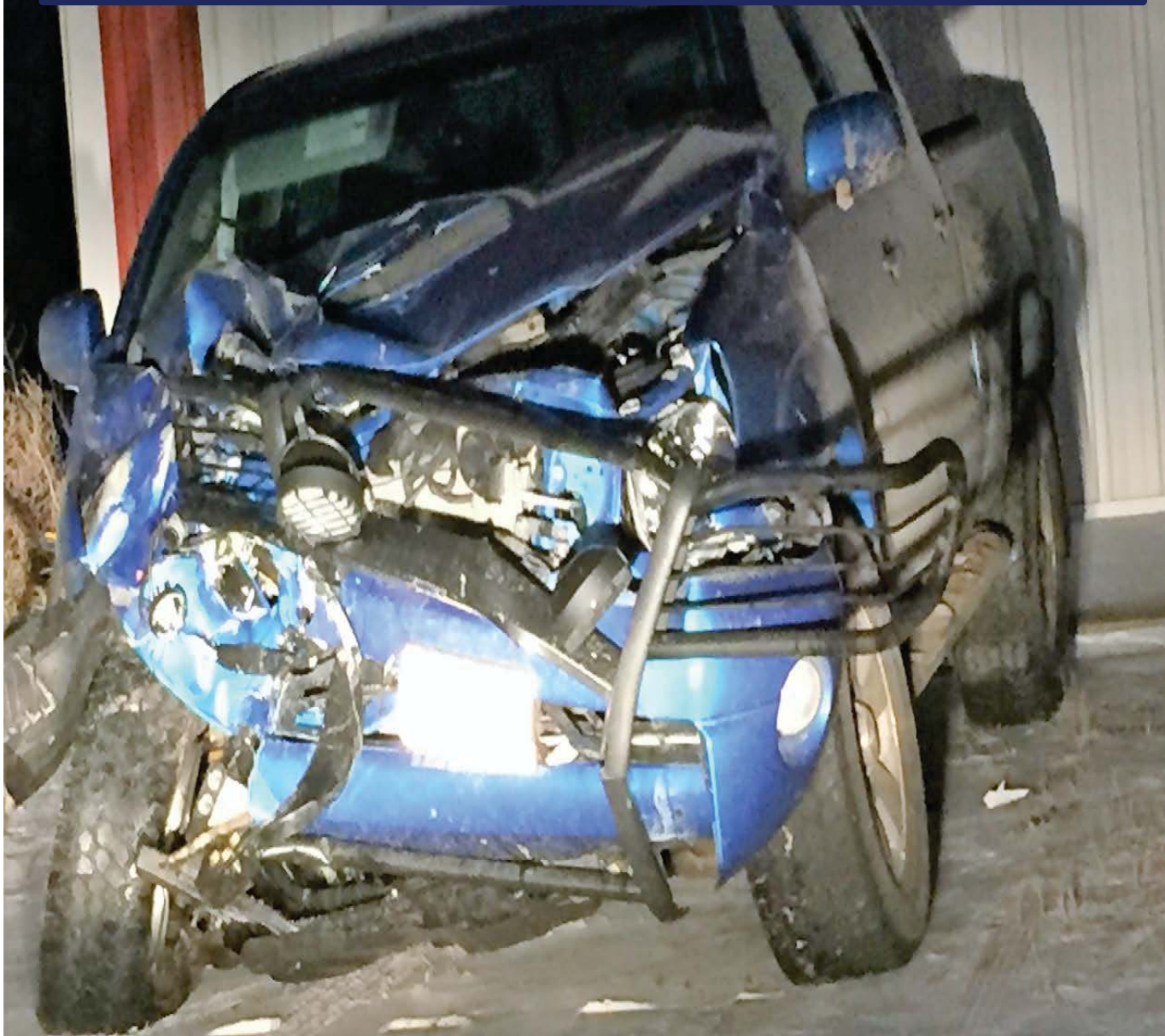
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