NEBRASKA MUNICIPAL REVIEW

- 2017 Annual Conference highlights
 - Grand Island boasts thriving, beautiful downtown
- Central City's Widman Theater opens ——
 after multi-year community effort

OCTOBER 2017



Take the things you learn and give back to your community...

Sidney City Council
 Member Wendall Gaston,
 League President



Wendall Gaston League President, 2017-2018 Sidney City Council Member

League of Nebraska Municipalities 2017 Annual Conference

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October 2017

No. 1,110 ISSN 0028-1906

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CALENDAR

– Municipal Legal Calendar 🛭

(All statute citations to Revised Statutes of Nebraska)

OCTOBER 2017

CITIES OF THE FIRST CLASS

CITIES OF THE SECOND CLASS

Within 10 days following meeting	
or before next meeting (whichever is sooner)	Clerk to have minutes available for public inspections. (84-1413)
Within 15 days of Passage	Clerk publishes ordinances passed. (17-613)
Within 30 days of Council meeting	Clerk publishes official proceedings of meeting including claims. (19-1102)
First day	Foreman and Secretary of every volunteer Fire Department must file rolls their
	companies with Clerk of District Court. (35-102)
First Day	Fiscal year begins. (17-701)
Oct. 9	A vote to exceed levy limits must be approved by this date (77-3444)
Oct. 13	Final Property Tax Request Certified and forwarded to County Clerk. (77-1601.02)
Within 20 days after end of month	Treasurer files monthly financial report. (17-606)
Within 60 days after close of Fiscal Year	Treasurer publishes Statement of Receipts and Disbursements. (17-606) (19-1101)
**	Clerk must prepare agenda prior to next Council meeting. (84-1411)
Within six months after close of fiscal year	Audit of city's accounts completed. (19-2903)

VILLAGES

Within 10 days following meeting	
or before next meeting (whichever is sooner)	
Within 15 days of Passage	
Within 30 days of Board of Trustees' meeting	
First day	
	companies with Clerk of District Court. (35-102)
First day	Fiscal year commences. (17-701)
Oct. 9	
	this date (77-3444)
Oct. 13	Final Property Tax Request Certified and forwarded to County Clerk. (77-1601.02)
Within 20 days after end of month	Treasurer files monthly financial report. (17-606)
Within 60 days after close of Fiscal Year	Treasurer publishes Statement of Receipts and Disbursements. (17-606) (19-1101)
**	
Within six months after close of fiscal year	

ALL MUNICIPALITIES On or before November IEach municipality which offers a defined benefit plan pursuant to section
On or before November I
January I, 2004, shall submit written notification to the Nebraska Retirement
Systems Committee of the Legislature that it offers such a plan. (13-2402)
October 15
with the committee a copy of the most recent annual actuarial valuation of the
retirement plan. The valuation report shall be filed electronically, (13-2402)
October 15 Each municipality that offers such a defined benefit retirement plan shall file a
report with the committee if either of the following conditions exists as of the
latest annual actuarial valuation of the retirement plan; (i) The contributions do
not equal the actuarial requirement for funding or (ii) the funded ratio is less
1 0 ()
than eighty percent. (13-2402)
October 15 Each municipality which offers such a defined benefit plan shall conduct an
experience study at least once every four years to review the actuarial assumptions
used to determine funding needs for its defined benefit plan. Each such political
subdivision shall electronically file a copy of the most recent actuarial experience
study with the committee by October 15, 2016, and shall electronically file a copy
of each study completed pursuant to this subsection by the next October 15 after
completion of the study (13-2402)

Nebraska Municipal Review Editor and Advertising Sales: Lynn Marienau, 402-476-2829 or lynnm@lonm.org

The **NEBRASKA MUNICIPAL REVIEW** is the official publication of the League of Nebraska Municipalities, an association of the cities and villages of Nebraska, published at 1335 L St., Lincoln, Nebraska 68508 — Telephone 402-476-2829; FAX 402-476-7052; Website: www.lonm.org. Periodicals postage paid at Lincoln, Nebraska. Views of contributors, solicited or unsolicited, are their own and not to be construed as having the endorsement of the League unless specifically and explicitly stated by the publisher.

The NEBRASKA MUNICIPAL REVIEW is a nonprofit publication administered and supervised by the League of Nebraska Municipalities. All revenue derived from the publication is used by the association to defray publication costs.

The NEBRASKA MUNICIPAL REVIEW is published monthly. Subscription rates are \$5 per single copy — \$50 plus tax for 12 issues.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to NEBRASKA MUNICIPAL REVIEW, 1335 L Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68508.



League President Wendall Gaston Sidney City Council Member

New League President: Take the things you learn and give back to your community

BY LYNN MARIENAU, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR, LNM

he morning after Wendall Gaston was appointed to the Sidney City Council in 2001, he received a call telling him that the city had no water. In the short term, city officials imposed restrictions and took other measures to deal with the crisis, but the city council sought a permanent solution to a problem that Sidney's water engineers 20 years earlier had said they might face. The engineers advised the council again that the city needed to lay pipe 18 miles out to the aquifer and place a well there so that residents would not run out of water again.

"This time, we bit the bullet and went out there," Gaston said. "It's not very often that you get to make a decision that can actually affect the next four or five generations of people in a positive way. You don't get to do that as an elected official very often."

Gaston, Sidney City Council Member, was elected President of the League of Nebraska Municipalities at the annual business meeting, which was held Sept. 22, in Lincoln during the Annual Conference. Gaston has served on the League's Executive Board since 2015. He also served on the board from 2011-2014.

Academic degrees

He just finished delivering a general session presentation during the conference on understanding and managing generational differences in the workforce when we sat down to visit. Besides serving on the city council for almost 17 years, Gaston is a pharmacist who holds a bachelor's degree and a doctorate in pharmacy and a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree.

In the late 1980s, Gaston was involved in the Jaycees, which sponsored speech competitions. He won the competition with a five-minute speech at the state level and did well at the national competition.



From left: Alan Michl, Exeter Chairperson, outgoing League President, receives plaque of appreciation from incoming League President Wendall Gaston, Sidney City Council Member.

When he returned home, a man from Colorado who had attended the national competition, called Gaston and wanted to hire him to speak at a chamber of commerce banquet in southern Colorado.

In 1991, Gaston met people who belonged to the National Speakers Association, a professional speakers' organization in the United States. They encouraged him to join the association and soon after, he formed a business called the Phunny Pharmer Company.

Gaston said he gave entertainment speeches most of the time until he earned his MBA and then he began giving presentations such as the one he gave to League delegates

Continued on page 5

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on generational differences in the workforce. While studying for his MBA, one of his papers focused on differences between groups in the workforce and his current presentation stems from the concepts originally presented in that paper. He updates his presentation regularly by following news and magazine articles on evolving trends, such as ready-to-go meals, which are gaining popularity. He said he spends 40 hours on average preparing for each speech. Gaston has two agents who make bookings for him across the country and he was headed to Memphis, Tenn. after the League conference for a speaking engagement there.

Determined schedule

When he began the Phunny Pharmer Company, he still owned a drugstore that he bought in 1976 and could determine his own schedule. Gaston owned the drugstore for more than 20 years and then sold it to Safeway. He said he has worked for Safeway for many years and earned enough vacation time to accommodate his speaking engagements. During this trip, he and his wife, Deanna, will see two of their daughters, Jennie, who lives in North Carolina, and Tamlyn, who lives in New Jersey. A third daughter, Cora, lives in Sidney. All are married and Gaston and his wife, who have been married since 1981, have two grandsons, one step-grandson and one granddaughter.

A native Nebraskan, Gaston was born in Potter, which he described as a "suburb of Sidney." His father was a World War II veteran and told Gaston and his brother that if they didn't serve in the military, they needed to serve in the community.

"We were brought up with that idea in mind," he said. "The community is good to you and you need to take the things you learn and give back." All total, Gaston has served three two-year terms as mayor. He has been either mayor or vice mayor for all but one term.

Father served on Potter Village Board

His father served on the Potter Village Board for 17 years and Gaston, who is not seeking reelection, will have served the same number of years when his term ends.

"Isn't that bizarre?" he asked, especially considering that Gaston said he had not intended to serve that long. "I wish more people would take up public service."

After graduating high school, Gaston went to Northeastern Junior College in Sterling, Colo. on a track scholarship, running 440-yard and 880-yard races.

"In high school, they called them distances and in col-



League President Wendall Gaston, Sidney City Council Member, and wife, Deanna.

lege, they called them sprints," he said, adding that he also ran relays.

Gaston continued running after college well into adulthood. He ran for 30 years. The running and the standing he does as a pharmacist began to take its toll. He has had two knee replacements and a hip replacement.

"I light up before I get to the airport," he quipped. Now, his ankles bother him.

Liked pharmacy work

After Northeastern Junior College, Gaston went to the University of Wyoming where he earned his pharmacy degree. His major was pre-med, but he enjoyed chemistry, liked pharmacy work and stayed with it.

"It's one of the best things I've ever done," he said. "I like the people. You deal with a lot of people. Our job is even more important because of how complex medicine has become. If your pharmacist isn't talking to you one-onone, you need to change pharmacies. It's that important."

Besides creating a new water source for the community, Gaston gained the most satisfaction from being part of an effort to build a new aquatic center, which took six-seven years to accomplish. The cost made it controversial with some residents, he said, who believed the existing pool was adequate even though the pool was deteriorating and there were chunks of pipe in the bottom of it.

Since the new aquatic center was built, attendance has tripled, he said, adding that although the city loses money on the aquatic center, a swimming facility is an amenity that residents expect. They also expect to enjoy a golf course

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New League President: Take the things you learn and give back to your community

Continued from page 5

and a community center, he said.

"There are certain things that are just demanded, not only by the baby boomers, but also by the millennials," Gaston said. "The community center is used for all kinds of functions."

Street maintenance

Street maintenance and staying abreast of the ever-changing area of power generation and its cost have been among the greatest challenges Gaston said he has faced in municipal government.

The unpredictability of power, including the newer sources such as wind and solar power, makes residents concerned about keeping the lights on, he said.

"It's a constant moving target that does nothing but continue to cost

more," he said.

Street construction and maintenance are challenging because many of the streets were built 50 years ago and they were only supposed to last 30 years, he said.

"Now, they all come due at once," he said. "It used to cost \$10,000 to fix a block of streets. Now it's \$150,000 to fix a block of streets. The general cost of everything worries me."

Boomers leaving

Gaston said that as baby boomers, who were born between 1946-1965, leave elective office and retire from the workforce, they take with them vast experience, which means that the Generation X and Millennials who follow them will need to rely on organizations such as the League for information.

"They are going to have to rely more on associations for education to give them that institutional knowledge," he said, adding that the League has done a good job of offering a variety of topics and comprehensive information at conferences and training sessions.

Doesn't miss sessions

Gaston said he hasn't missed the Midwinter Conference in 17 years.

"I don't miss the sessions either," he said. "If you are going to spend the taxpayer's money, you better get something out of it."

And what does Gaston do for fun? He said he loves to golf and garden. ■

Lincoln's fire protection rating upgraded for first time in more than 40 years

Insurance Services Office (ISO) has notified the City of Lincoln that its fire protection rating will be upgraded from Class 3 to Class 2, effective Jan. 1, 2018. For some consumers, this may reduce home insur-



ance rates. The city has had a Class 3 rating since 1974.

"The improved rating represents the city's continued commitment to provide the most effective and efficient services to our citizens," said Fire Chief Michael Despain. ISO is the leading supplier of statistical, underwriting and actuarial information to the property/casualty insurance industry and is used by most insurers to calculate premiums for residential, commercial and industrial subscribers.

ISO objectively reviews the fire protection capabilities of communities and assigns a Public Protection Classification (PPC) number from 1 (exemplary) to 10 (does not meet minimum recognition criteria). ISO

evaluates a community about once every 10 years or when major department changes occur.

The ISO Fire Suppression Rating Schedule gives credit to three major features of an area's fire protection system: the communities' communications, fire protection and water systems. The City of Lincoln received excellent ratings for its communications and water systems and moderate ratings for its fire department capabilities.

Out of over 48,000 fire protection areas in the nation, about 1,393 or less than 3 percent have a Class 2 or better rating, and 12 of those are in Nebraska.

Source - City of Lincoln

Bellevue Public Works Department receives MAPA Regional Service Award

BY PHIL DAVIDSON
COMMUNITY RELATIONS
BELLEVUE

he City of Bellevue's Public Works Department was honored in October to receive the Omaha-Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency's (MAPA) Regional Service Award for 2017 at MAPA's Annual Awards Dinner. This award is given to a jurisdiction, organization, department, agency or section thereof, either public or private, operating in Douglas, Sarpy, Washington, Mills or Pottawattamie County that has made a significant contribution to the region.

The Bellevue Public Works Department, under the direction of Public Works Director Jeff Roberts, was recognized for its efforts in the aftermath of the June 2017 tornadoes that hit the Bellevue area. Bellevue Public Works Department staff reacted quickly to stabilize the city's infrastructure and worked tirelessly in the weeks after to help residents with the massive cleanup effort needed after the storm.

The cleanup and response was a cooperative effort. Bellevue worked closely with representatives from Sarpy County, the Cities of Papillion and LaVista, Offutt AFB, OPPD and state and local emergency management agencies to ensure that residents affected by the storm had roads open, electricity restored and a cooperative cleanup plan.

The Public Works Department worked with other jurisdictions to open tree dumps for the public and coordinated with the local waste management provider on a plan to dispose of other storm-related debris.

Public Works Director Roberts was



From left to right are Bellevue city officials: Finance Director Rich Severson, Public Works Director Jeff Roberts, City Engineer Dean Dunn, Parks Superintendent Brian Madison, Recreation Director Jim Shada, Fleet Superintendent Todd Jarosz, Wastewater Operations Manager Epiphany Ramos, Assistant City Administrator Larry Burks, Mayor Rita Sanders, City Administrator Joe Mangiamelli, Planning Director Chris Shewchuk and Streets Superintendent Bobby Riggs. Photo by Phil Davidson, Bellevue.

joined by Bellevue Mayor Rita Sanders, City Councilman Pat Shannon, City Administrator Joe Mangiamelli, Assistant City Administrator Larry Burks and others to accept the award.



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Workplace Safety Committee: It's the law!

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

o you have a Safety Committee? All municipalities subject to the Nebraska Workers' Compensation Act are required to establish a safety committee. Neb. Rev. Stat. § 48443 (Reissue 2010). In 1993, Gov. Ben Nelson signed LB 757 establishing the Workplace Safety Consultation Law, Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 48443 to 48449. This law required, not later than Jan. 1, 1994, every public and private employer subject to the Nebraska Workers' Compensation Act to establish a safety committee, which is to "adopt and maintain an effective written injury prevention program."

SAFETY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

For municipalities who are not unionized, the safety committee is to be composed of an equal number of members representing employees and the municipality. The employee members are not to be selected by the municipality, but by procedures set forth by the Nebraska Commissioner of Labor. Those procedures require a municipality to seek volunteers through a written notice directed to all employees, to match the number of the municipality's representatives. Where none of the municipality's employees are represented by an

exclusive bargaining agent, the employee members shall be comprised of volunteers. In the event that the number of volunteers shall exceed the number of available slots, employee members shall be selected at random from the volunteers. If there are not enough volunteers, employee member(s) shall be selected at random from the remainder of employees by the municipality. In the event that some, but not all, of the municipality's employees are members of a collective bargaining unit or obligated to negotiate with a collective bargaining agent, establishment of the safety committee shall be accomplished through the collective bargaining process.

The names of such individuals shall be made available to all employees. Unless determined otherwise by collective bargaining, membership as an employee representative shall be made available to all employees at least once every two years. A municipality's representatives need not be rotated. If no new members are recruited, existing members may retain their committee membership. Terms may be staggered.

EMPLOYEE RIGHTS AND REMEDIES

It is an employee's right to seek to be an employee safety committee member and to otherwise participate

in the selection process without being subject to penalties, discipline, municipality interference, or reprisal of any kind. The municipality is required to compensate employee members of the safety committee at their regular hourly wage plus their regular benefits while the employees are attending committee meetings or otherwise engaged in committee activity. An employee cannot be discharged or discriminated against by the municipality because he or she makes any oral or written complaint to the safety committee or any governmental agency having regulatory responsibility for occupational safety and health, and any employee so discharged or discriminated against shall be reinstated and shall receive reimbursement for lost wages and work benefits caused by the municipality's action.

PENALTY FOR FAILURE TO ESTABLISH A SAFETY COMMITTEE

If the Commissioner of Labor finds, after notice and hearing, that a municipality has failed to establish a safety committee pursuant to § 48443 within 15 days after notification by the Commissioner of Labor of the obligation to do so, the Commissioner of Labor may order payment of a civil

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penalty of not more than \$1,000 for each violation. Each day of continued violation shall constitute a separate violation.

INJURY PREVENTION PROGRAM

It is the duty of the safety committee to adopt and maintain an effective injury prevention program. The committee may adopt the program presented to them by the municipality or may develop its own. Review of that program must be made available to all employees upon request.

The program shall include:

- 1. Initial safety orientation on rules, policies, and job-specific procedures for employees new to the work in a manner that is readily understood by each employee;
- 2. Job-specific training for employees before they perform potentially dangerous work; and
- 3. Periodic refresher training/dis-

semination of information on at least an annual basis for employees regarding the municipality's injury prevention program on safety rules, policies and procedures.

CONCLUSION

While Nebraska municipalities are not subject to the federal Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (OSHA), they are subject to the Nebraska Workplace Safety Consultation Law, which requires a safety committee. Municipalities will take good care of their employees without a mandate. This mandate encourages managing of safety, health and environmental risks that pay off in more productive employees, fewer accidents and fewer injuries and deaths in the workplace.

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.

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Bond Anticipation Notes

Anderson reappointed to APGA Board

Chris Anderson, Board Chair of the National Public Gas Agency and City Administrator of the City of Central City, was reappointed to serve on the board of directors of the American Public Gas Association (APGA) at the APGA Annual meeting held this summer in San Francisco. Anderson's term is three years.

 $Source-NMPP\ Energy$



Chris Anderson City Administrator Central City



Grand Island boasts thriving, beautiful downtown

BY CHRISTY ABRAHAM, LEGAL COUNSEL, LNM

Incorporated in 1872, Grand Island is Nebraska's fourth largest city with an estimated population of 52,000. It is known as a retail hub in Central Nebraska. Grand Island also hosts the State Fair and Husker Harvest Days, which brings thousands of people to the area each year.



Grand Island city library is named the Edith Abbott Memorial Library after an American economist, social worker, educator and author who was born in Grand Island. The Grand Island library implemented a rain garden that removes pollutants from entering the city's storm water infrastructure and watershed. It's not only lovely, but functional! Photo by Christy Abraham, Legal Counsel, LNM.



In the middle of the downtown stands the Grand Theater. The theater originally opened in the 1920s and was named the Grand in 1930. The theater has seen many changes and is run by a volunteer board showing affordable second-run movies. Photo by Christy Abraham, Legal Counsel, LNM.

Grand Island has a thriving and beautiful downtown with many unique shops, small commercial outlets and beautifully restored buildings. Many of the projects downtown have used tax-increment financing to help finance the renovation. Photos by Christy Abraham, Legal Counsel, LNM.





Central City's Widman Theater opens after multi-year community effort

BY CHRIS ANDERSON CITY ADMINISTRATOR CENTRAL CITY

The Widman Theater recently opened in Central City after a multi-year community effort. The two-screen, 200-person capacity complex was undertaken by the Merrick County Entertainment Corporation, a non-profit incorporated entity operated by three local residents. A theater committee of about 15 volunteers designed and constructed the brand new facility on land leased from the city.

Nearly \$1 million in donations and pledges were matched with a \$360,000 Rural Economic Development Loan Guarantee from the USDA to complete the project.

"We had an urgent need to provide a local theater to keep our families in town and to attract visitors to Central City. We now arguably have the best facility in central Nebraska and we can all be extremely proud of the end result," said committee chairman Dr. Brian Buhlke.

The facility was constructed by National Commercial Builders of Lenexa, Kan. Moving Image Technologies of Los Angeles, Calif. installed the screens, projectors, sound and interiors.

"We wanted the best companies installing the best technology we could find," Dr. Buhlke said.

As a community effort, the theater included dozens of donors and many volunteers both in construction and operation.

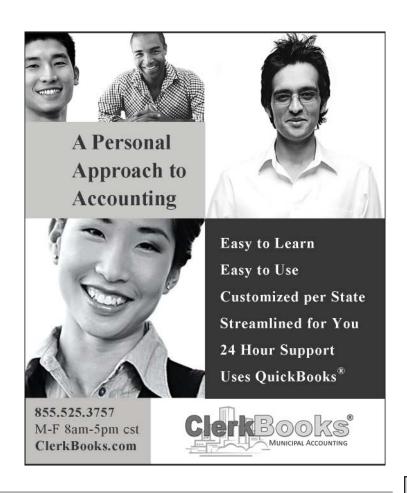
A single, full-time manager works with a volunteer pool for daily screenings of new release movies. The theater



Guests visiting Widman Theater grand opening. Photo courtesy of Chris Anderson, City Administrator, Central City.

sits on Highway 30 at the trailhead of will anchor a new recreation complex the 12-mile long Dark Island Trail and

to be built around this site.



2017 Annual Conference Highlights

unicipal officials from across Nebraska attended the 2017 Annual Conference at the Cornhusker Marriott Hotel in Lincoln Sept. 20-22. Delegates attended sessions on a variety of topics, including generational differences in the workforce; cyber security and disaster management; the 2020 census and tax increment financing.

As always, a highlight of the Annual Conference is the delegate luncheon honoring League Past Presidents.

Wendall Gaston, Sidney City Council Member, will serve as President of the 2017-18 Executive Board of the League of Nebraska Municipalities. The election was held at the League's Annual Business Meeting in Lincoln in conjunction with the Annual Conference.

Dwight Livingston, North Platte Mayor, will serve as President-Elect of the board; Paul Lambert, Plattsmouth Mayor, will serve as Vice President, and Alan Michl, Exeter Village Board Chairperson, will remain a member of the board as Past President.

Directors elected to the board include: Jean Stothert, Omaha Mayor; Chris Beutler, Lincoln Mayor; Tony Kaufman, Gering Mayor; Sandra Foote, Superior Council Member; John Lohr, Columbus Council Member; Deb VanMatre, Gibbon Mayor; and John Wyant, Newman Grove Mayor.

Representatives on the board include: Rod Storm, Blair City Administrator; Nancy Bryan, Stromsburg Clerk/ Treasurer; Tobias Tempelmeyer, Beatrice City Administrator/General Manager, Board of Public Works.



From left: Wendall Gaston, Sidney City Council Member and League President-Elect, accepts gavel from outgoing League President Alan Michl, Exeter Village Board Chairperson.



From left: Outgoing League President Alan Michl, Exeter Village Board Chairperson, accepts plaque of appreciation from incoming League President Wendall Gaston, Sidney City Council Member.



Congressman Jeff Fortenberry, special keynote speaker at delegate luncheon honoring League Past Presidents.



From left: Plattsmouth Mayor Paul Lambert and Papillion Mayor David Black.



Allison Bitz, Nathan Michl and Shari Michl, daughter, son and wife of Alan Michl, center, League President and Exeter Village Board Chairperson; Tim Wilbeck, Exeter Village Board Member; Kathy Erdkamp, Exeter Village Board Member; Becky Erdkamp, Clerk, Exeter.

2017 Annual Conference Highlights









Top left from left: Greg Peterson, Village Chairperson, Sterling; Dale Long, Village Chairperson, Holbrook.

Top right: West Point Mayor Marlene Johnson, League Past President.

Middle left: Elaine Fortik, Village Chairperson, Brainard.

Middle right: Jacob Sheridan, City Manager, Gordon.

Bottom: Joe Frei, City Administrator, York.





Jim Realph, Mayor, Blair.



Marlan Ferguson, City Administrator, Grand Island.



Past Presidents luncheon.

2017 Annual Conference Highlights













Top left from left: Kelly Oelke, Clerk/Finance Director/Assistant City Administrator; Peggy Krason, Council Member, Ord. Top right: Chuck Chase, Floodplain Outreach Coordinator, Nebraska Dept. of Natural Resources.

Middle left: Abby Littrell, City Attorney, Lincoln.

Middle right: Sheila Schukei, Human Resources Director, Norfolk.

Bottom left: Randy Dunster, Clerk/Treasurer, Nebraska City.

Bottom right: Amy Sapp, Special Projects Coordinator/Economic Development Director, Kimball.

TASTINGS Joy

Joe Patterson, City Administrator, Hastings.



Blanca Ramirez-Salazar, U.S. Census Bureau, Denver Regional Census Office.



From left: Dick Phillips, City Council Member, Aurora; Eric Melcher, City Administrator, Aurora.

Lash Chaffin receives recognition for 30 years of outstanding service to the League and Utilities Section



From left in back: Ann and Owen Chaffin, Lash's wife and son; Lash Chaffin. In front, Abe Chaffin, Lash's son.

Lash Chaffin, League Utilities Section Director, was honored Sept. 21 during the Past Presidents luncheon at the Annual Conference, for his leadership during 30 years of service to the League.

Tony Jelinek, Kearney Utilities Director and President of the League's Utilities/Public Works Section, said the Utilities Executive Board met last summer and decided to thank Chaffin for the "remarkable job" he has done.

"Under Lash's leadership, the Utilities Section has significantly enhanced the quality and quantity of training sessions across the state," Jelinek said. "Utilities Section members know we can rely on Lash to effectively represent our interests before federal and state agencies and the Legislature. He understands what we do and how we need to do it to protect the public."

Chaffin began working for the League as part of the research and recodification department before beginning his duties as the new Utilities Section Coordinating Manager Sept. 1, 1987.

NLC opposes eliminating deductions that support cities, families

In September, the "Big 6" coalition released a tax plan that broadly outlined goals for tax reform. The plan suggests that most itemized deductions would be eliminated to offset lower tax rates, which will likely include the state and local tax (SALT) deduction. In response to this announcement, National League of Cities (NLC) President Matt Zone, councilmember, Cleveland, released the following statement:

"America's cities agree that our tax code is overly-complicated and in need of reform. We are glad to see Congress and the administration willing to streamline the tax system and lower tax rates, but this reform effort cannot eliminate the

critical tools that enable cities to strengthen communities, make infrastructure investments and keep residents safe.

"We will strongly oppose and work to defeat any effort to eliminate the state and local tax deduction or the tax exemption on municipal bonds. This is not a red versus blue issue, and this is not a coastal-cities versus the heartland-cities issue. Eliminating these deductions would be an ill-advised attempt to change the basic intergovernmental relationship that has existed and served American cities and families well since the first tax code was introduced in 1913."

Source-NLC

City of Gordon workers recognized as part of National Safe Digging Day

Black Hills Energy joined hands with Nebraska 811 to celebrate safe digging by recognizing the City of Gordon's employees. According to news reports, Black Hills Energy Service Specialist Ken Costello said the company selects a contractor annually who works with them and that it "had to be the City of Gordon."

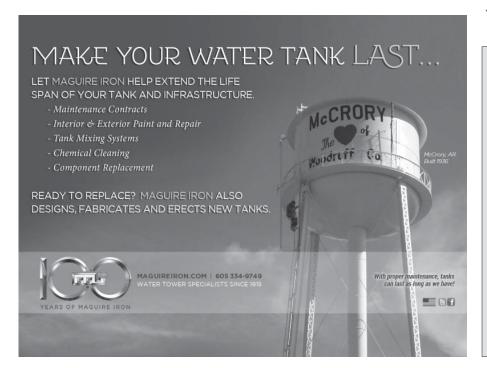
Gordon's city employees received Gatorade and water, a cooler and sweat bands.

Submitted by Jacob Sheridan, City Manager, City of Gordon

Fun fact from Grand Island

Grand Island has more than 5,000 ramps to make the city compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Source - City of Grand Island



Local sales tax changes

On Oct. 1, the Village of Lawrence began implementing a 1 percent city sales and use tax and the Village of Shelton ended its 1 percent city sales and use tax.

The current list of all the cities that impose a city sales and use tax as of Oct. 1, 2017 is available on the Department of Revenue's website at revenue.nebraska.gov. ■

Source - Nebraska Dept. of Revenue

Tourism impact in Omaha estimated at almost \$2 billion

maha has experienced seven straight years of tourism growth. New economic impact research completed by Tourism Economics – An Oxford Economics Company, shows the impact tourism has on the city has now reached close to the \$2 billion mark.

The study shows 12.3 million people visited Omaha in 2016. Those tourists spent a total of \$1.22 billion while visiting the city. That increase in visitor spending resulted in local businesses spending another \$700 million in the community, totaling \$1.9 billion in economic impact annually.

"We want people to understand that these numbers actually affect each and every one of us, from jobs to taxes. When visitors spend money in Omaha, they are supporting our way of life," said Keith Backsen, Executive Director for Visit Omaha, Omaha's Official Tourism Authority.

In fact, one out of every 17 jobs in Omaha is supported by visitor spending. The money visitors spend supports 17,280 jobs for our friends,

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Share your city's or village's news with fellow municipal officials across the state by sending information for the *Nebraska Municipal Review* to the League of Nebraska Municipalities, Attn: Lynn Marienau at 1335 L Street, Lincoln, NE 68508, 402-476-2829 by phone, 402-476-7052 by fax or lynnm@lonm.org by e-mail. ■

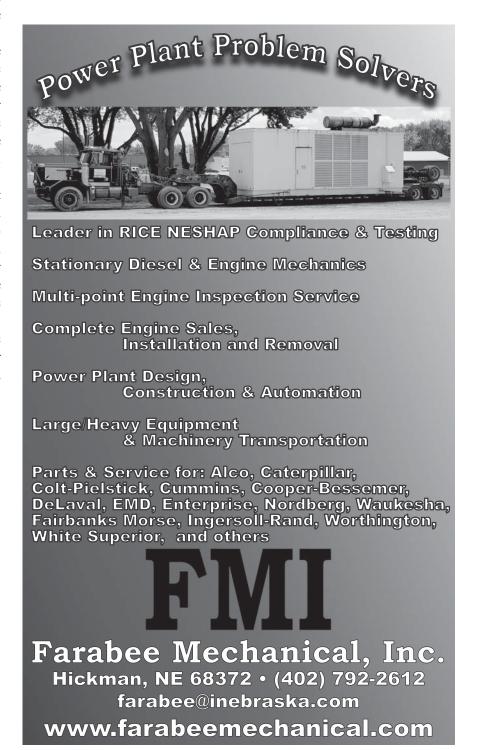
families and neighbors," added Backsen

Tax revenue generated by visitor spending also has grown. Tourism now saves each Douglas County household \$730 per year.

Visit https://www.visitomaha.com/industry/wtll for a video highlighting the impact of tourism on Omaha. ■

Source – City of Omaha

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Directory of Municipal Officials

Position/Information Changes

City or Village Cedar Rapids Nemaha Position/Information
Board Member
Board Member

Delete Brian Metz vacant **Add** Ryan Heikes JD Roberts 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

City Treasurer. City of Bayard, Nebraska, seeks a full-time City Treasurer. Bayard is a City of the 2nd class with a population of 1,209 and is located in scenic Western Nebraska, 3 miles north of Chimney Rock. This long-term position will oversee the financial functions of the city including, but not limited to, municipal (fund) accounting and budgeting, payroll, accounts receivable, accounts payable, utility billing, and excellent customer service. Requirements also include strong customer-oriented communication skills on the telephone and in person, the ability to carry out city council policies, and be able work with the public and all city employees. Bachelor Degree in a related field is preferred, but relevant experience with a strong accounting background will also be given consideration. Salary dependent on qualifications. Benefits offered by the City of Bayard include partial paid health insurance, employee paid dental and vision insurance, AFLAC, partial paid short term disability, vacation and sick leave, 125-plan and retirement investment opportunity. A pre-employment drug test and monthly random drug tests are also required. Applications can be obtained at 445 Main Street, by downloading on the City website at www.cityofbayard.net, or by emailing nate.heffron@cityofbayard.net. For questions, please contact Nate Heffron, City Clerk at (308) 586-1121. Application review to begin immediately. Position is open until filled. EOE.

Positions

Utilities Director. City of Gordon, NE is accepting applications for the position of Utilities Director. Minimum qualifications include a high school diploma or equivalent and a valid driver's license. College education and CDL preferred. A minimum of five years of increasingly responsible experience in utilities operation and management required. Administrative and supervisory experience preferred. Nebraska water and wastewater operator licenses preferred. Applicant must be highly motivated with great work ethic. Starting salary is negotiable within the range of \$14 - \$16 per hour. Excellent employee health insurance, 4% pension match, and other excellent benefits.

Position will remain open until filled. A more detailed job description and applications are available on the city's website or at the City Office (311 N. Oak Street). Applications can be submitted on the city's website, emailed to employment@gordon-ne.us, mailed to P.O. Box 310 Gordon, NE 69343, or submitted in person at the City Office. This position is subject to a veteran's preference pursuant to Neb. Rev.Stat. §48-227.

League of Nebraska Municipalities Phone: 402-476-2829

Phone: 402-476-2829 Web site: www.lonm.org

Mark your calendar for these League conferences

Utilities Conference
Jan. 17-19, 2018
Cornhusker Marriott Hotel,
Lincoln

Midwinter Conference Feb. 26-27, 2018 Cornhusker Marriott Hotel, Lincoln

Municipal Accounting and Finance Conference June 20-22, 2018 Graduate, Lincoln

Annual Conference Sept. 19-21, 2018 Holiday Inn, Kearney



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Model Ordinances

Model ordinance packets are published annually and provide an easy way to update your code with state law changes. Packets are available to any municipality regardless of whether it publishes its code through the league, in-house, or by any other method.

Mark your calendar for these League conferences

Utilities/Public Works Section Annual Conference

Jan. 17-19, 2018 Cornhusker Marriott Hotel, Lincoln

Midwinter Conference

Feb. 26-27, 2018 Cornhusker Marriott Hotel, Lincoln

Municipal Accounting and Finance Conference

June 20-22, 2018 Graduate, Lincoln





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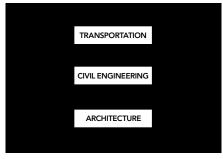
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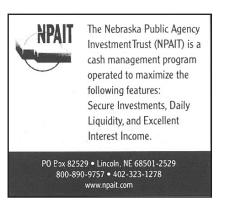
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