

NEW HAMPSHIRE MUNICIPAL MANAGERS ASSOCIATION MEETING MINUTES

February 13, 2004

BUSINESS MEETING

ATTENDEE INTRODUCTIONS: Bob Curdie (Bristol); Sue Desruisseaux (Goffstown); Greg Doyon (Franklin); Ty Gagne (Primex); Carol Garnfield (Meredith); James Howard (Concord); JoAnn Klatskin (NHPDIP); Jeremy Lamson (Pittsfield); Jessie Levnine (New London); Tom LoPizzo (Primex); John MacLean (Keene); Tom Mahon (Primex); James Pitts (Bow); Earl Rinker (Rye); David Stack (Pembroke); Bob Veloski (Bristol); John Wheeler (Sunapee); Tom Dunn (LGC); John Scruton (Plaistow); Maura Carroll (LGC)

RANGE RIDER PROGRAM: Last month the association discussed the Range Rider Program i.e. who would benefit and the cost. Since last month the Local Government Center has offered to sponsor the program. Jim McSweeney has offered to fill the Range Rider role and will be invited in to speak at an upcoming meeting.

PUBLIC WORKS TRAINING COUNCIL is establishing standards for an accreditation program for NH Public Work Departments. Assessment Teams will be established which will be interdisciplinary. Representation from NHMMA has been requested. Discussion related to the time commitment, sharing responsibilities on a regional basis, and expectations. Carol will gather more information and report back next month.

DISCUSSION OF SB2, WARRANT ARTICLES AND TOWN MEETING ISSUES

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE BY MAURA CARROLL:

There are 250 bills this session which is less than last session. Focus is on long term issues such as Education and Telephone Utility Tax. Seems to be a strong grass root effort to let the exemption expire this year but telephone lobby has also been strong. House Ways and Means has scheduled a vote on three occasions but no vote has occurred at this time. A subcommittee has been formed. A compromise is being proposed by some to grant the 2 year exemption and share the state telecommunication tax with municipalities. LGC has been asked to draft a Resolution for governing bodies to request the exemption expire. Deadline for this to be out of committee is 3/11/04.

CACR 22 – Spending Cap for State was amended to establish spending cap for municipalities. Amendment has been defeated. However, original bill still intact and may still effect municipalities with downshifting of costs.

SB 464 – State Property Tax Exemption for Private Post Secondary Schools was introduced by Senator Clegg. Hanover would lose \$376,000 and Goffstown \$67,000 in property tax revenue. Argument by schools is that they are unable to compete with out of state private schools which have minimal property taxes. LGC supports

reimbursement to private post secondary schools through a statewide scholarship reimbursement fund not through local property taxes.

HB1298 – Binding Arbitration for cities and towns where the governing body is also the legislative body. LGC opposed.

HB1309 – Shooting Range exempt from local noise ordinances supported by gun advocates. In House Judiciary Committee.

HB 651; SB 326 – NH Retirement System. HB 651 repeals additional contributions and grandfathers those already in. Could buy back service at any time. Actuaries report that long term cost is neutral. SB 326 – 35% share reduction for Police, Fire and Teachers – extra duty not covered by 35% paid by state – would need to come from town, county, school or private company contracting service. Discussion regarding Special Accounts draw down due to health insurance subsidies. NHRS rates will increase July 2005.

SB 357 – Quarterly Tax Billing. Opposed by Tax Collectors whose towns follow the calendar year. Managers questioned why? Reason was related to audit??? Managers felt that was not an issue.

HB 526 – Sexual Harassment – consideration of elected officials as employees. Questions regarding who would investigate, who would pay for defense of elected official, who would pay for the defense of employee, insurance??

HB 1295 – Amendment to Right to Know Law – local government settlement agreements would become part of the public record. Problems: may open community up to more lawsuits; privacy rights of individuals may be violated.

SB 302 – Technical Change to Education Funding to be heard next Tuesday at 10:45 AM – numbers didn't match language – new numbers have yet to be released.

Affordable Housing Bill is dead but issue is still alive.

Adjourned 1:50 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sue Desruisseaux

MINUTES SUBJECT TO ACCEPTANCE