

Kansas

GOVERNMENT JOURNAL

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True Kansas PRIDE

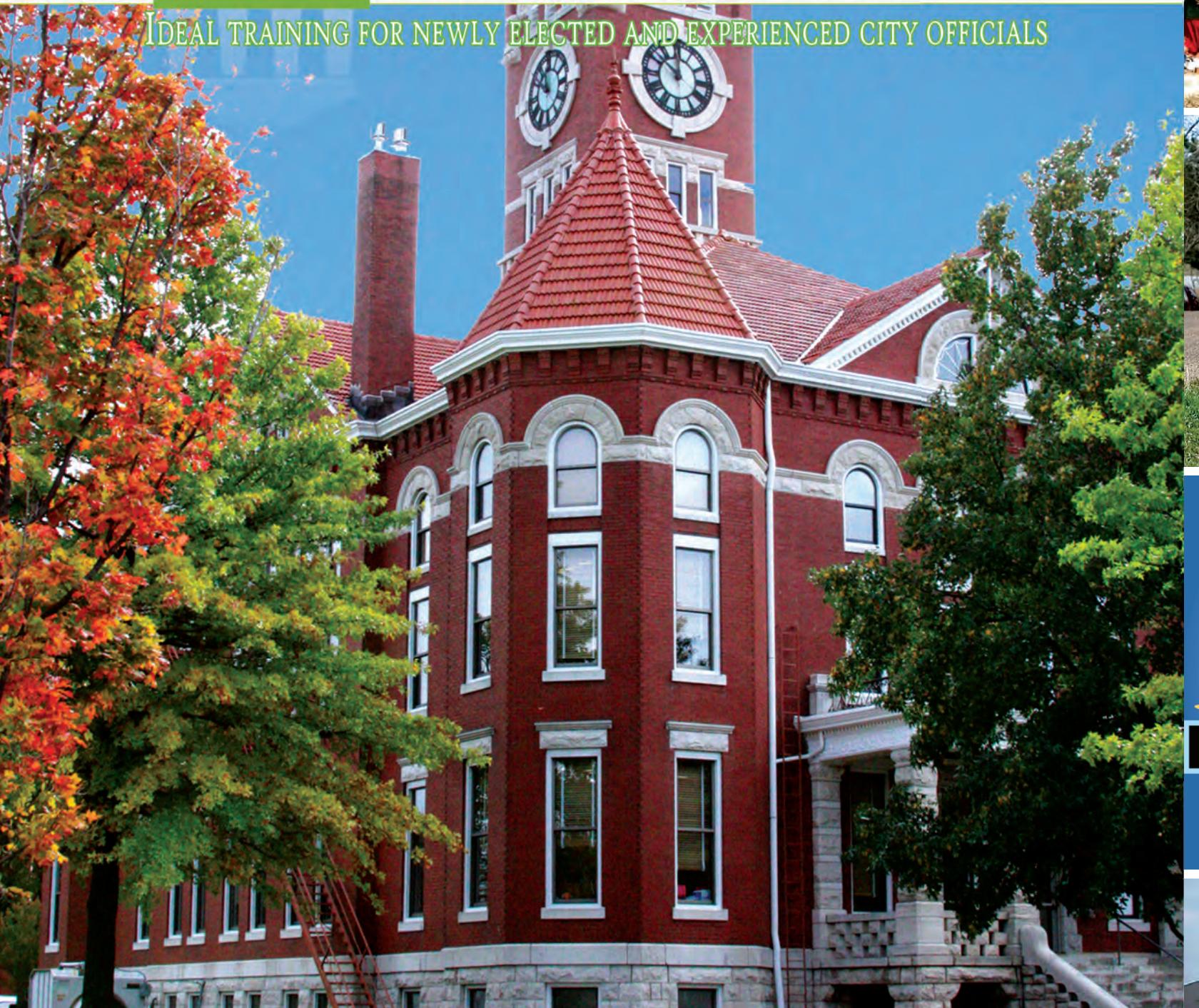
Cleaning Up Your City

Kansas Sesquicentennial



GOVERNING BODY INSTITUTE & MAYOR'S CONFERENCE

IDEAL TRAINING FOR NEWLY ELECTED AND EXPERIENCED CITY OFFICIALS



MAY 13-14, 2011 TOPEKA, KANSAS

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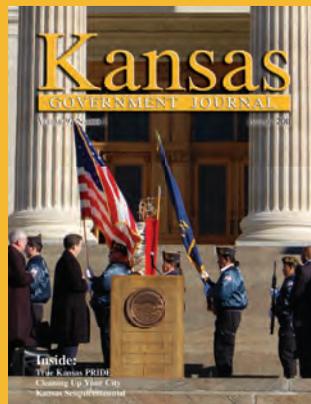
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About the Cover:
Governor Sam Brownback honors the colors as they are posted for the Kansas Day at the Capitol celebration in honor of the Kansas Sesquicentennial. See related article, beginning on page 16. *Photo by Amanda Schuster.*

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The mission of the League shall be to unify, strengthen, and advocate for the interests of Kansas municipalities to advance the general welfare and promote the quality of life of the people who live within our cities.



March

3 - KMIT Supervisor Training, Clearwater

4 - **LKM Governing Body Meeting, Topeka**

4 - MLA: Municipal Finance, Haysville

5 - MLA: Municipal Finance, Garnett

10 - KMIT Supervisor Training, Larned

12 - MLA: Municipal Finance, Ulysses

April

15 - MLA: Civility and Public Service, Great Bend

16 - MLA: Civility and Public Service, Fort Scott

29 - KMIT Board of Trustees Meeting, Neodesha

May

13-14 - Governing Body Institute & Mayor's Conference

The Governing Body Institute & Mayor's Conference will provide elected municipal officials with a curriculum that will assist them in effectively meeting the requirements and gaining knowledge of their elected role.

30 - Memorial Day

June

10 - MLA: Personnel Management, Colby

11 - MLA: Personnel Management, Arkansas City

17 - LKM Governing Body Meeting, Wichita

24 - MLA: Personnel Management, Atchison

30 - KMIT Board of Trustees Meeting, Andover

Obituaries

Delton M. Gilliland, 70, died September 29, 2010. He was an Osage County counselor and later county administrator. A lawyer by trade, Gilliland was chief prosecuting attorney for Ada County, Idaho and later a partner in the law firm Coffman, Jones & Gilliland.

Keith U. Martin, 89, died August 27, 2010. He was the first city attorney of the City of Mission, and helped to organize the City in 1951. Martin was a distinguished community member, serving on the Johnson County Judicial Commission, Kansas Board of Tax Appeals, and Kansas Water Resources Board.

Robert Talkington, 81, died December 26, 2010. He was a former Kansas State Representative, serving in the House from 1969-1972 and the Senate from 1973 to 1988. Talkington also served on the Kansas Board of Regents from 1995 to 1999 and in 2002. U.S. 169 highway in Allen County was designated "Talkington Highway" in his honor.

Photos clockwise: Past PRIDE projects have included the City of Spearville's Greenstreet Park playground, the City of Melvern's "Christmas Box project," and the City of Glasco's "Get It-Do It!" healthy community initiative.



True Kansas PRIDE

by Dan Kahl

Two thousand ten marked the 40th anniversary of the Kansas PRIDE program. The PRIDE program provides structure and recognition for community volunteer groups in Kansas working on community betterment. PRIDE volunteers are asked to engage their community in a process that involves assessing the priorities and needs of the community, establishing shared goals, and developing projects or action steps to bring about community improvement.

Margaret Mead said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." The truth of those words rings clear just by looking over the statistics from the PRIDE program.

During the 40-year life of the program, nearly 400 communities have organized PRIDE community improvement efforts. While only Fort Scott and Wakefield have been enrolled for all 40 years, between 50 and 100 communities participate in the free program each year. Collectively, these PRIDE groups complete an average of 1,057 community improvement projects each year. That equals more than 88 community projects completed every month.

PRIDE provides a powerful vehicle for helping groups mobilize for change. Over the life of the program, it is estimated that more than 42,000 projects have been completed to improve Kansas communities. Projects range from physical community improvements, to providing services addressing human or community needs, to projects that enhance or celebrate cultural events. PRIDE groups support schools, museums, local business, and community health initiatives.

How is PRIDE "building better communities?" The staff of PRIDE knows that the success of the program is as much about how the volunteer groups work, as it is about what they do. Completing projects is one way of documenting success, but PRIDE realizes that the process of community development work also creates positive results. Relationships are built over busy hands. PRIDE builds social networks, strengthens the public's

voice, aids community collective decision-making, and provides a broader network of citizens access to community resources and power—all aspects of community health and sustainability.

PRIDE volunteers knit communities together, and create an attitude for success. The sense of commitment and pride that comes through civic engagement is best told by the communities themselves.

Rossville PRIDE recently shared, "If you visit Rossville today, you'll see the wonderful improvements which the City has accomplished. But more importantly, as you talk to the residents, you'll hear an attitude of 'we can do it.' The success of these projects has given them this attitude along with the desire to want to continue seeking bigger and better things for their community."

Having an organization and structure for community betterment allows people an avenue to get involved and to feel good about supporting their community. And people DO get involved! In an average year, PRIDE generates 140,411 hours of volunteerism. Based on values of volunteerism established by The Independent Sector, PRIDE contributes about \$2.5 million of volunteerism to the state of Kansas each year.

Looking ahead to the next 40 years, the PRIDE program will continue to provide a network, resources, and recognition for the great work of community volunteers. The program will continue to assist community volunteers to organize and address on-going needs as well as to tackle difficult, long-term sustainability issues. This important work will continue to help Kansas communities be more resilient and sustainable.

 Dan Kahl is the Program Coordinator for Kansas PRIDE. He can be reached at dankahl@ksu.edu or (785) 532-5840.



The Sound of a Clear Message

In the early years of my education, one of my elementary teachers demonstrated the telephone game to our class. She lined up a row of students, side-by-side, and then whispered a message to the first student. That student passed on the message to the next person, who continued the game until the student at the end of the row received the final message. The game often started with the teacher whispering something like, “One day, as I looked up at the clouds, I saw a bird passing overhead.” By the time the message reached the end of the row, the words had morphed into something like, “Sunday, I shook the nerd dancing on his head.”

When the final student announced the message, all the students would giggle, and the teacher would present the class with the original message. The purpose of the game was twofold. One, it is incredibly easy for a message to be confused when passed from one person to the next. And two, rumors, particularly those about a person, can be quite damaging. This elementary lesson is one that cities battle on a regular basis—ensuring that the messages floating around main street align with what is actually happening with the city. It is exactly this issue that the City of Atchison is addressing with a unique feature associated with their new website.

New Beginnings

Atchison City Manager Trey Cocking began serving the City in fall of 2009 after a term as City Administrator in Cherryvale. One of the first priorities when Mr. Cocking began was to update the city’s website to better meet the needs of the citizenry. He initiated the process in spring of 2010 by requesting bids from various vendors. After receiving 28 proposals to launch the site, the City began working with eGov Strategies to update the site.

Atchison Director of Finance Mandy Cawby took ownership of the project and evaluated websites from across the country to find examples of ideal sites to inspire Atchison’s project. Cawby evaluated content, navigation, and style to determine three characteristics that Atchison hoped to achieve the City’s goal: website that is relatable, accessible, and professional. The site should be intuitive to the user’s interests, rather than fitting the mold of the city government’s structure.

The City wanted to create a striking first impression for four target groups: residents, visitors, businesses, and city services. They sought to create a site that would be attractive to tourists, informative to businesses, and transparent for citizens who expect access to city services 24 hours a day. The end product is available at www.cityofatchison.com.

Drawing on her research and past experiences creating websites, Cawby designed the templates for the homepage and secondary pages (i.e., the look of the website) using Microsoft Publisher, a tool often available with basic PC packages, then handed it off to the City’s website vendor for conversion to HTML code. She also wrote the content throughout the site to give it a unified voice and clear language. For cities considering a change to their website, particularly smaller communities, Ms. Cawby offered the following advice, “Using the team approach can be particularly helpful for cities that need to limit the expense of website creation. Look for someone in the organization that has the ability to write when

creating the content, look for someone with artistic flair to design the layout. Have a team member to consider navigation—the way the user will move through the site and the way information is organized—to ensure the site is useable.” Ms. Cawby concluded by encouraging cities to leave plenty of time for the process. “By giving yourself enough time, the end result will provide a significant pay-off for cities trying to provide a tangible online presence for the city.”

Squelching Rumors

A visitor to Atchison’s new page might notice a peculiar link at the top of the page labeled, “Rumor Watch.” Clicking the link reveals the main-street version of the Telephone Game. As we go to print, one of the first headers asks, “I heard the city’s giving free money away to downtown businesses? That’s our tax dollars! What gives?” The response clarifies that this is not the case:

No, it’s not true. Here’s where the wires probably got crossed Since 1999, the City has had a Community Development Block Grant from the Kansas Department of Commerce which funded a Downtown Façade Improvement Revolving Loan Fund that the City has managed with great success for the last 11 years. Businesses located in the downtown core could apply for a 0% interest loan from the revolving loan fund for facade improvements and pay it back over time, up to 15 years depending on the amount of the loan.”

The explanation continues to flush out the details of the block-grant program and provides a phone number to reach the city manager for additional details. The rumor watch addresses potential issues ranging from a rumored toll bridge to alleged city-employee misconduct. The city expands this portion of the website by working with the local media outlets. Atchison maintains a good relationship with the media, and when the media hears rumors, they pass the comments to the City, and the City responds on the rumor-watch link.

This is just one of the features that has resonated with Atchison’s citizens, and it reflects an effort to change how the City interacts with its citizens. The efforts for interaction partially arose after Mr. Cocking and Ms. Cawby saw citizens take a more active interest in the City when Atchison launched its Facebook page. The social-media site provided a source for citizens to join an accessible and transparent dialogue with the City. The City hoped to bring that high degree of openness from Facebook to the City’s website, and the rumor-watch feature reflects that effort. And, though people still may whisper and turn harmless statements into spiraling rumors, the City is taking a creative approach at turning the telephone game into a conversational opportunity to inform. The end result has been another opportunity for the City to reach its people with the best possible information—and the clearest possible reception.

 *Nathan Eberline is the Intergovernmental Relations Associate for the League of Kansas Municipalities. He can be reached at neberline@lkm.org or (785) 354-9565.*

CHANGES FOR LKM CONFERENCE

At its December meeting, the LKM Governing Body took action to make significant changes to the LKM Annual Conference. In previous years, concerns have been raised about the number of hotel nights and travel-related expenses for city officials. In addition, elected officials, most of whom have full-time jobs outside of city hall, often have to take two vacation days in order to attend the entire conference. To address these issues, we have developed a conference schedule that compresses the timeframe of the event.

Beginning in 2011, the LKM Annual Conference will begin at noon on Saturday and conclude by 3:30 p.m. on Monday. This action will provide savings both to the organization and to attendees without compromising the educational portions of the conference.

This compressed schedule should allow most attendees to arrive on Saturday afternoon and to check out of their hotel room on Monday. This will save a night of hotel room and related expenses. In addition, this schedule will reduce the number of days that a city official would need to be out of the office or away from work.



FRIDAY, OCTOBER 7

Optional day for affiliates (e.g., city attorneys association)

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 8

12:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. Trade Show & Registration Open
12:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. Legislative Policy Committee Meeting
2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Optional MLAs
6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Host City Social Event

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 9

10:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Trade Show and Registration Open
10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Concurrent Workshop Session I
11:30 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. Trade Show Luncheon
12:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. General Session
2:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Municipal Practice Roundtables
4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Trade Show Concluding Reception
6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. LKM Social Event

MONDAY, OCTOBER 10

7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Registration Open
8:00 a.m. - 9:15 a.m. Affiliate Breakfast
9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. Concurrent Workshops II
10:45 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. General Session
12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. Public Service Awards Luncheon
1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Concurrent Workshops III
2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. Business Meeting/General Session



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FORWARD THINKING & PLANNING PROTECTS STREET'S COMMERCE

BY MEGAN GILLILAND AND DENNY JOHNSON

The American Planning Association (APA) announced the designation of Massachusetts Street in Lawrence, Kansas as one of “10 Great Streets for 2010” under the organization’s Great Places in America program. APA Great Places exemplify exceptional character and highlight the role planners and planning play in creating communities of lasting value.

APA singled out Massachusetts Street for its forward thinking and commitment to comprehensive planning since the 1970s. Comprehensive plans positioned businesses along the street as central to the area’s economy, thereby focusing further retail growth away from proposals that would have hurt the vitality of downtown. Through street art and historic architecture, Massachusetts Street celebrates its rich past as an anti-slavery haven in a turbulent part of 1860s America.

“Massachusetts Street is a shining example of a classic downtown that remains both viable and vibrant. Not only is Massachusetts a hub of retail activity in Lawrence, it is also the center of social and entertainment activities,” said Mayor Mike Amyx. “I am proud the City’s planners and leaders capitalized on the opportunities available for redevelopment in downtown Lawrence and that the resulting area is now home to an eclectic mix of retail shopping, service-oriented businesses, restaurants and drinking establishments, and many residential opportunities for local residents.”

Through Great Places in America, APA recognizes unique and authentic characteristics found in three essential components of all communities—streets, neighborhoods, and public spaces. APA Great Places offer better choices for where and how people work and live every day and are defined by many things including planning efforts, architectural styles, accessibility, and community involvement.

*A view of the north end of historic Massachusetts St.
Photo provided by the City of Lawrence.*



“We’re very excited today to name Massachusetts Street as one of this year’s Great Streets,” said APA Chief Executive Officer Paul Farmer, FAICP. “An unsuccessful court challenge in the 1980s by developers wishing to build nearby retail malls protected the importance comprehensive plans play in helping protect established downtowns and their businesses,” he added.

Since APA began Great Places in America in 2007, 40 Neighborhoods, 40 Streets and 30 Public Spaces have been designated in 47 states and the District of Columbia.

Municipal leadership and two comprehensive plans have guided the Massachusetts Street’s growth for the past four decades. In 1974, the City secured a \$300,000 grant to transform Massachusetts Street into a picturesque, pedestrian-friendly corridor. The 1977 Plan ’95 and 1982 Comprehensive Downtown Plan underscored Massachusetts Street as the community’s primary business district.

“You cannot replicate the uniqueness of Massachusetts Street,” said Mayor Mike Amyx. “Our community and our planning processes have actively sought to respect and enhance Massachusetts Street’s history and prominence as the region’s social and business district.”

Tremendous foresight saved the street during the “Mall Wars” of the 1980’s. Plan ’95 and the Comprehensive Downtown Plan formed the basis of a federal district court’s ruling to deny a developer’s request to build mega retail malls in close proximity to Massachusetts Street.

Four buildings are listed in the National Register of Historic Places, including the Romanesque Revival Douglas County Courthouse, built in 1904 and designed by famous Kansas architect John G. Haskell and Frederick Gunn. The Lawrence Preservation Alliance, established in 1984, was instrumental in encouraging the City to adopt the Downtown Conservation Overlay District and Guidelines in 2001, National Register District in 2004, and updated guidelines in 2009.

Lawrence was founded prior to the Civil War in 1854 and was a direct result of the Kansas-Nebraska Act. As a free state that was bordered by a pro-slavery state, Lawrence was the site of many skirmishes with pro-slavery ruffians prior to the Civil War. Locally-owned shops and restaurants on Massachusetts Street, such as Free State Brewery and Liberty Hall, reflect the town’s history and firm abolitionist stance, as do two permanent sculptures, *The Flame* and *Freedom*.

The nine other APA 2010 Great Streets are: 5th Avenue in San Diego, CA; Wydown Boulevard in Clayton, MO; Broadway Street in Red Lodge, MT; Spring Street in Eureka Springs, AR; Washington Street in Hoboken, NJ; Bank Street in Wallace, ID; Middle Street in New Bern, NC; Washington Street in Middleburg, VA; and Liberty Street in Franklin, PA.

 *Megan Gilliland is the Communications Manager for the City of Lawrence. She can be reached at mgilliland@ci.lawrence.ks.us or (785) 832-3406. Denny Johnson works Public Affairs for APA. He can be reached at djohnson@planning.org or (202) 349-1006.*





Mainstreet News

City of Ellinwood Recognized by KDHE

The City of Ellinwood received a first-time ever recognition from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) for its recycling and composting efforts.

“The City of Ellinwood demonstrated their community-wide commitment to environmental stewardship when City Administrator Bob Peter, the Rotary Club, and Chamber of Commerce chose a ‘Going Green’ theme for their annual After Harvest festival and activities,” said Bill Bider, KDHE’s director of Bureau of Waste Management.

The unique theme of the After Harvest Festival showcased the City’s 20-year-old recycling program and 10-year-old composting site. The program boasts an annual collection rate of 70 tons in recyclable materials, and over 400 tons in compostable yard waste.

“It is our intention to look for other cities, counties, non-profits organizations, and private businesses that are truly making a difference in their communities by voluntarily adopting practices that will provide long-term benefits to their citizens,” said Bider.

Cities Receive Recognition

BusinessWeek magazine named the City of Salina as being the best place to raise kids in Kansas for 2010. Salina boasts a major manufacturing center for economic vitality, a low cost of living and crime rate, and good school test scores. Salina Area Chamber of Commerce representative Dennis Lauver said, “We have great

schools...we are the Kansas Arts Community of the Year. This news verifies what many people across Kansas already know: Salina is a great place to live, work, and play.”

The Cities of Lawrence and Olathe were also named runners up for the state.

Lawrence Launches New Web Page

The City of Lawrence has launched a new web page to share its sustainability success stories with residents. From the e-recycling events hosted by Waste Reduction and Recycling to the algae biofuel pilot project at the Waste Water Treatment Plant, the new page highlights how the City is already addressing sustainability in our facilities and operations.

The page also provides useful resources for citizens, including information about recycling, the weatherization grants program,

and bicycle routes and trails. “Sustainability means making decisions that balance the needs of the environment, economy, and society—for both present and future generations,” said Eileen Horn, the county-city sustainability coordinator. “In the City of Lawrence, that means finding more efficient, smarter ways of serving our community. We share our citizens’ commitment to sustainability, and are working in our facilities and operations to save energy and reduce waste.”

KCK Receives TIGER Grant

Local officials in Kansas City, KS signed agreements to kick off \$50 million in infrastructure projects funded by a federal TIGER Grant. The Mid-America Regional Council coordinated a regional application for competitive TIGER grant funds available through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The grant will fund improvements to the State Avenue corridor in Kansas City as plans to launch a Bus Rapid Transit line continue. The Johnson County Metcalf/Shawnee Mission Parkway regional transit also received funding from the TIGER grant.

TIGER funds will support transit infrastructure improvements, including additional transit centers, better pedestrian access to

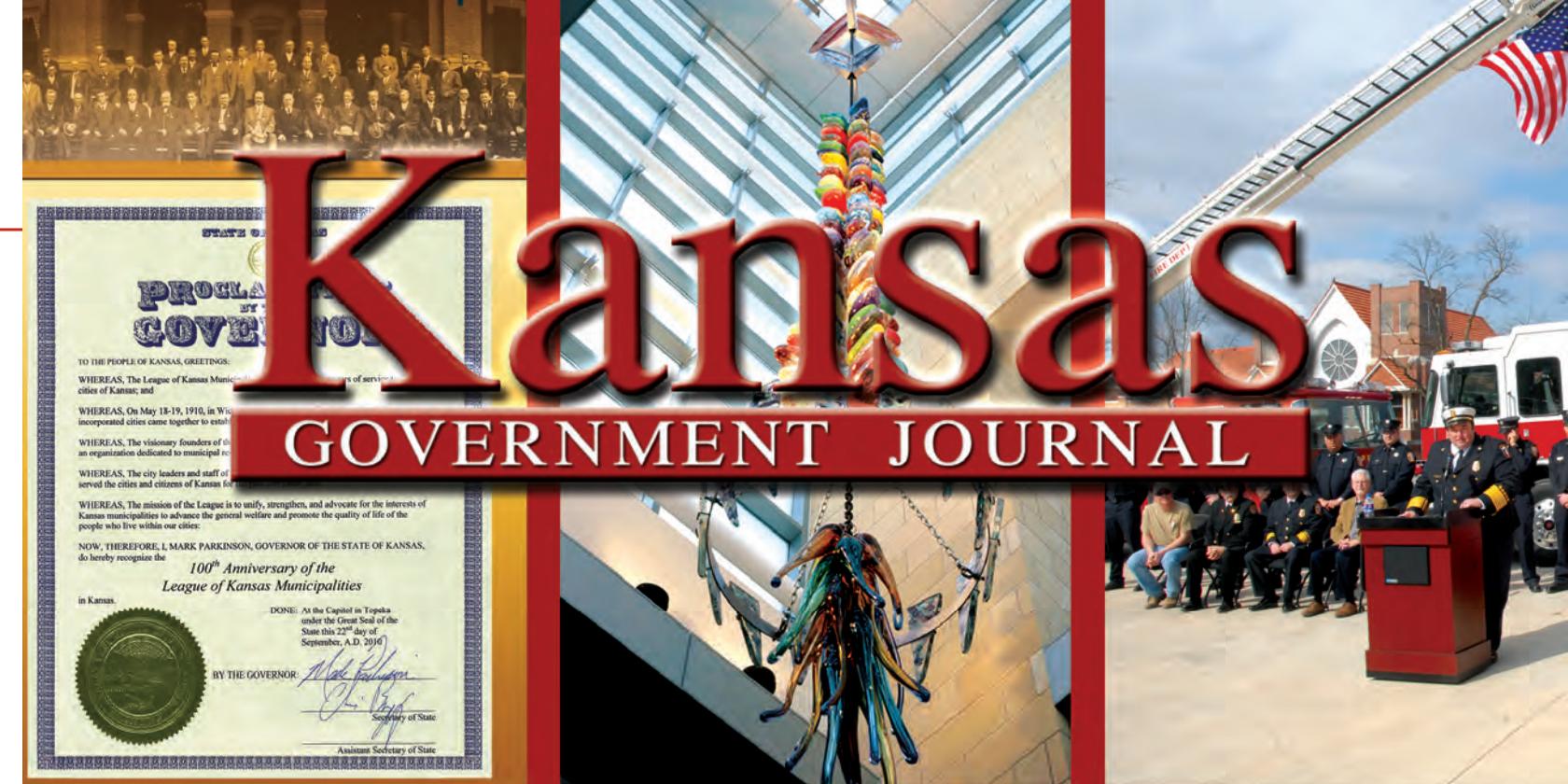
transit facilities, bus stop improvements, and traffic signal priority for buses. The aim of the Kansas City Regional TIGER application is to promote region-wide economic prosperity by improving and enhancing the core transportation systems necessary to drive local and regional success.

The Unified Government Transit Department was also presented with a Certificate of Achievement from the Kansas Public Transit Association. The award was presented to UG Transit in recognition of its achievement as a recipient of the regional federal TIGER grant. “These upgrades will help improve future public transportation in our community,” said Transit Director Emerick Cross.

City of Tonganoxie Allocates KDOT Grant

The City of Tonganoxie has received a grant to complete the second phase of the Chieftain Trail, which will extend a pedestrian/bike path. The City will match 20% of a \$200,000 grant provided by the Kansas Department of Transportation’s, Transportation Enhancement Program. The funds will go toward the design and procurement of property/easement for the trail.

The grant itself will then be applied towards the actual construction of the trail. Tonganoxie City Clerk Kathy Bard conveyed the importance of the trail extension for safety’s sake by saying that “it would get the kids under the highway.”



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Questions? Please contact Amanda Schuster at aschuster@lkm.org or (785) 354-9565.

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Cleaning Up Your City

by Josh Jones



Iysha Niblock, left and Erica Otero place trash in bags as they and other volunteers conduct a Neighborhood Improvement Project cleanup in the Towns Riverview South neighborhood in Garden City. Photo by Brad Nading, Garden City Telegram.

The common issue of blight, brownfields, and other unsightly property is all too often ignored or underfunded. One report by the U.S. Conference of Mayors surveyed 136 cities and found that collectively the cities had more than 22,537 brownfield sites, each with an average size of 8.6 acres.¹ Long Beach, California Mayor Bob Foster said, “Cities across the nation have learned to do more with less, but these difficult economic times have made new developments on brownfields even more challenging.”² Despite these challenges, many ideas and examples can be found about how cities are addressing these needs, sometimes through some very interesting, transforming measures on both large and small scales.

In the sunny state of California, beauty is abundant, but it was not always that way in every area. For instance, in West Covina, a 1,000 ft. high, 1 sq. mile dump that held millions of tons of toxic hazardous waste proved to be quite the eyesore and public danger.³ Eventually, the landfill became so overfilled that neighboring homes had to be evacuated because of high levels of toxic gas. The landfill was later closed, but with such a negative history, all redevelopment efforts by its previous owner failed. Finally, the City engaged the community and created a plan that featured a regional open-air shopping center, office buildings, a golf course, and other recreational opportunities.⁴ Though the transformation of a hazardous brownfield was

difficult, the City succeeded and today the landfill is now a landmark, having undergone a complete transformation. The project created 1,000 jobs and had an estimated \$74 million economic impact in the region.⁵ The former president of the West Covina Community Association Don Carman said, “West Covina residents no longer have to suffer with the embarrassment of living alongside a landfill. Now we can say we live next to an amazing landmark!”⁶

In West Palm Beach, Florida, a blighted neighborhood was plagued by abandoned properties. The City diligently sought out federal grants and tax incentives, and through these measures, created a shining new residential development that includes affordable housing.⁷ Again, this example created additional jobs and economic growth. In fact, the aforementioned U.S. Conference of Mayors report found that among the 62 cities surveyed “if brownfields were redeveloped [in these cities], they could realize nearly \$688 million to \$1.66 billion annually in additional tax revenues.”⁸ The redevelopment of brownfields and blighted properties, is in every sense, a good investment. Palm Shores, Florida Mayor Carol McCormack attributes her city’s initiative in cleaning up brush and overgrown plant areas with having brought new businesses to the town, which in turn further enhanced the City’s own beautification efforts.⁹ The U.S. Conference of Mayors appropriately dubbed this behavior as “reaping what you sow.”¹⁰



Marion, Indiana Mayor Wayne Seybold caught on to this idea early when property values began to drop and houses started foreclosing in his town. Fighting against the threat of the property becoming hazardous and harboring illegal activity and squatters, Mayor Seybold's administration created a plan that sought to protect current, and encourage future economic development. The plan involves turning over tax delinquent property to the city from the county after all appropriate legal procedures have been conducted to otherwise redeem the property.¹¹ The City then undertakes the work of mowing weeds and seeking buyers to occupy a renovated home. In cases where demolition is necessary, the City feels that "it has a role in alleviating the condition even when the cost of

demolition exceeds the market value of the lot." Otherwise, City Attorney Joshua Howell notes that "the structure [would] continue to deteriorate, blighting the neighborhood, and jeopardizing health and safety."¹² One such effort in the City turned a major downtown eyesore into a law office, a Habitat for Humanity house, and a remodeled home. Another area, an old warehouse, was turned into the Splash House—a water park boasting the state's largest wave pool.¹³ Building Commissioner Larry Oradat said, "It truly is a win-win-win situation. People are back in adequate housing, the neighbors are delighted, and the City is getting reimbursed for its costs through property taxes."¹⁴ Lori Grifa and Leslie Anderson of the New Jersey Redevelopment Authority cite several opportunities and reasons to consider property redevelopment/clean-up: creation of incentives for new businesses, parking areas, affordable housing, employment opportunities, and community amenities.¹⁵ Indeed, property redevelopment and clean-up can be an advantageous opportunity.

There may be some cities, however, that simply cannot foresee the immediate redevelopment or large scale clean-up of major land parcels even despite the availability of federal grants (which may require matching on the part of the city), or the project may be on a smaller scale that requires a different approach. Additionally, recall the increasingly common requirement of doing more with less. One example of "making improvements in the face of cutbacks" can be found in an unconventional venue—a prison.¹⁶ Even with expensive safety and security as a top priority, Commissioner Gary Lanigan of the New Jersey Department of Corrections managed to keep the prison system he oversees in top operating condition. Feeling the impending void of 283 cut staff positions in 2011, the Commissioner realized that use and role of volunteers would become increasingly important—every position from teaching and literacy assistants to counselors and religious coordinators will be supplemented with the use of volunteers he noted.¹⁷ Volunteers can fill many voids that cities may be feeling, including a lack of fiscal and human capital.

Cities have found one subset of volunteers to be particularly willing and eager to help out—youth. From Boy Scout Eagle projects to City Youth Councils, cities all across the United States have managed to tap into the energetic vein of engaged youth in their communities. In the realm of land use and planning, for instance, youth can:¹⁸

- Improve plans, providing input and new perspectives.
- Develop leadership skills by participating in planning and government processes.
- Gain exposure to careers in local government and related professions.

Pleasanton, California Youth Master Plan Implementation Committee member Daniel Zakaria said, "I really enjoyed participating in this project. It gave me the opportunity to interface with people I normally wouldn't meet and see a whole new world of ideas and perspectives that I hadn't considered before."¹⁹

Concerning property clean-up, graffiti is a common eyesore in many communities that quickly degrades neighborhoods. A local example of the empowering use of volunteers can be found in Garden City, where 70 youth volunteers took brushes and rollers to paint over graffiti and clean up a neighborhood. The Neighborhood Improvement Project that they were organized by a group that seeks to form alliances between individuals and business owners to improve neighborhoods in the community.²⁰ Clint Brock, master patrol officer for the Garden City Police Department said,



Mimi Medina sits on the shoulders of Adrian McElroy to paint over graffiti on a well house wall in Towns Riverview South. Photo by Brad Nading, Garden City Telegram.



Andi Thammavongsa, center, along with 70 other students paint over a section of fence that was once covered in graffiti during the Neighborhood Improvement Project event. Photo by Brad Nading, Garden City Telegram.



Lutheran youth attending the Kansas District Youth Gathering in Topeka hold onto a rope as they helped set a granite grave marker that had been knocked over at Mount Auburn Cemetery. Photo by Phil Anderson, Topeka Capital Journal.

“Getting kids involved in cleaning their community makes them have more pride and respect for Garden City.”²¹ The kids echoed enthusiastically, student Ricky Everett saying, “It really helped out the community.”²² Community groups and non-profit organizations can have a great impact in supplementing the planning and organizing phases of community project development. Oftentimes, all cities have to do is approve projects that are brought to them, already planned and organized, by community groups.

Another local example in the City of Topeka, involved 400 Lutheran teens who gathered one weekend to complete 15 service projects across the City. One of the projects encompassed 30 of these youth who worked to restore Mount Auburn Cemetery. Vandals had toppled many granite grave markers, but for three hours, the youth came together to put everything back in order, sometimes requiring the use of ropes to lift heavy grave markers back into their places. The youth were even able to do some family history work while laboring. The volunteers reported the project as being “a lot of fun” and a good opportunity “to help out people in the community.”²³

If cities do choose to plan and organize projects themselves, The Sanford/Seminole County YouthBuild program in Florida offers an encouraging model. Its program “offers at risk youth the opportunity to receive a formal education, on the job training in the construction field, counseling, leadership development, and job placement. The program has assisted with the construction and rehabilitation of 20 homes for low income residents in Seminole County.”²⁴ Not only does the program serve the City’s interests of cleaning up run-down properties, but it also serves to enable troubled youth to build a better future.

Whether cities are looking to completely redevelop entire neighborhoods or simply wanting to clean up one property, there are countless examples across the country and in the State of Kansas that show all municipalities that they are not alone in undertaking difficult projects. Federal grants are available, an assured investment into the future of the economic health of the community provides encouragement and willing volunteers and organizations are more than eager to provide service to their communities—especially youth. Warehouses can be turned into water parks, landfills to regional landmarks, and housing rubble

into attractive remodeled homes. All it takes is some planning for the project, organization of resources, and diligence in carrying the work out. A little elbow grease doesn’t hurt either. Cities can do more with less through innovative measures, and amazing results can be achieved.

☀️ Josh Jones is a Management Intern for the League of Kansas Municipalities. He can be reached at jjones@lkm.org or (785) 354-9565.

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²Brock, Ed. *American City and County*. “Turn brownfields green again.”

³Chung, Christopher. *Western City*. “West Covina Transforms Landfill to Landmark.” July 2010, p. 16.

⁴Chung, Christopher. *Western City*. “West Covina Transforms Landfill to Landmark.”

⁵Chung, Christopher. *Western City*. “West Covina Transforms Landfill to Landmark.”

⁶Chung, Christopher. *Western City*. “West Covina Transforms Landfill to Landmark.”

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¹¹Bredeweg, Tom. *Actionlines*. “Marion turns eye sores into attractive spaces.” August 2010, p. 3.

¹²Bredeweg, Tom. *Actionlines*. “Marion turns eye sores into attractive spaces.”

¹³Bredeweg, Tom. *Actionlines*. “Marion turns eye sores into attractive spaces.”

¹⁴Bredeweg, Tom. *Actionlines*. “Marion turns eye sores into attractive spaces.”

¹⁵Grifa, Lori, and Anderson, Leslie. *New Jersey Municipalities*. “The Redevelopment Identity – Do You Have Yours?” October 2010, p. 28-29.

¹⁶Lanigan, Gary. *New Jersey Municipalities*. “Making Improvements in the Face of Cutbacks.” October 2010, p. 63.

¹⁷Lanigan, Gary. *New Jersey Municipalities*. “Making Improvements in the Face of Cutbacks.” October 2010, p. 64.

¹⁸Amsler, Terry. *Western City*. “Involving Youth in Local Planning.” September 2010, p. 17.

¹⁹Amsler, Terry. *Western City*. “Involving Youth in Local Planning.”

²⁰Springer, Monica. *The Garden City Telegram*. “Teenagers Take Part in NIP Cleanup Effort.” April 5, 2010.

²¹Springer, Monica. *The Garden City Telegram*. “Teenagers Take Part in NIP Cleanup Effort.”

²²Springer, Monica. *The Garden City Telegram*. “Teenagers Take Part in NIP Cleanup Effort.”

²³Anderson, Phil. *The Topeka-Capital Journal*. “Lutheran Youths Help Clean Topeka.” November 20, 2010.

²⁴Presley, Darrel. Personal Interview conducted electronically on December 8, 2010.

Kansas Department of Commerce Awards Grants

The Kansas Department of Commerce is awarding over \$9.2 million to 29 Kansas municipalities in the form of Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). The program funds were awarded to city projects that benefit low-moderate income persons, prevent/eliminate slums and blights, or resolve an urgent need not met by local resources. Projects funded by the program typically fall under housing, public facility, or economic development concerns.

Since 1998, the Department has awarded more than \$266 million in CDB grants. Commerce Secretary Bill Thornton said, "We are pleased to announce the awarding of these funds to some very deserving Kansas communities. These grants will allow the Department of Commerce to assist the small and rural communities that are so important to the livelihood of our state."

One example of the application of CDBG funds is the City of Lindwood's project to build an emergency water connection to Leavenworth County Rural Water District No. 10 and to install a new replacement water well. Another example can be found in Pratt County where a new firehouse will be built in Sawyer. The firehouse will be built in part by local volunteer labor and several bid winning construction contractors.

Bob Hearn, a member of the firehouse core committee, noted that "it may not be an old-fashioned barn-raising, but it will come close. We're real fortunate, not every small community has the people who can do concrete work or electrical work or who have the equipment to do the job. The Sawyer Fire Department...is looking to the future, with plans to purchase another small truck that would be more efficient in fighting grass fires."

KDHE Receives Federal Funds

Funds related to the Federal Diesel Emissions Reduction Act have been granted to various organizations in the Midwest, including the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

The state agency will receive \$233,218 to be applied to school bus upgrades and equipment retrofitting on long-haul and in-town

trucks. The grant program seeks to provide financial support for retrofits, engine upgrades, vehicle replacements, idle reduction, and cleaner fuels. The projects funded by the grant only use technologies that are verified and certified by the Environmental Protection Agency and that are shown to reduce diesel emissions.

Government Coalitions Receive Funds

The Kansas Energy Office has awarded \$1.7 million to 10 government coalitions using federal funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. In the past, some governments used similar funding to hire a sustainability coordinator, which has already proved to be a very successful investment.

Now, one group of local governments is looking forward to using their two-year \$85,000 grant to hire an energy manager. The City of Baldwin City, the City of Eudora, and the Eudora School District will all share one energy manager whose job will be to conduct energy audits on public buildings, vehicles, and equipment.

Eudora Superintendent Don Grosdidier said, "There is a tendency for us right now to try and be as efficient as we can be,

and this allows us to have another set of eyes looking for ways that save money and save energy." Eudora City Administrator John Harrenstein said, "It's probably a body of knowledge that we don't have, and without the grant, the City wouldn't have the money to hire someone to do it."

The new energy manager will have several goals to meet, including: identifying alternative energy upgrades that could be implemented, establishing outreach programs in the community on energy efficiency, training personnel on energy conservation, and developing a school curriculum on energy management and conservation.

Kansas CPM Program Celebrates New Class

The University of Kansas' Certified Public Manager (CPM) Program recently celebrated another graduating class for 2010. The program leads to a national certification of management excellence. The program is offered through KU's Public Management Center in Topeka, which is part of the university's nationally ranked Department of Public Administration. More than 1,100 students have graduated from the program since it began in 1993.

The 300-hour curriculum is designed to enhance the skills of high-potential managers and focuses on the competencies needed for dynamic leadership in public service. The 2010 graduates met two to three days a month for one year beginning in January and attended classes in Hays, Overland Park, and Topeka.

"The world of public service has become very dynamic in light of changing economic, demographic, and social conditions," said Charles Jones, director of the Public Management Center.

"Managers face unprecedented challenges when it comes to defining and advancing the public good. The CPM Program prepares students for these challenges by encouraging intellectual incisiveness, providing management frameworks, promoting renewed dedication to integrity and public service and through opportunities to network and gain self-confidence."

The 2011 program will be offered in Topeka, Johnson County and southwest Kansas (rotating between Liberal, Garden City, and Dodge City) beginning in January. For information or to register, contact the Public Management Center at (785) 296-2353 or e-mail Terri Callahan at tcallahan@ku.edu. The League of Kansas Municipalities is a partner in supporting the CPM Program.

Kansas SESQUICENTENNIAL

by Amanda Schuster

15

1861 KAN



A Bit of History

January 29, 2011 marked 150 years since the Kansas territory became a member of the United States of America. With a rich, historical background Kansas was put on the map by Francisco Vasquez de Coronado, one of the first European explorers to discover a land of great plains and vast herds of bison.

Prior to becoming a territory, Kansas was traveled by many on the Santa Fe and Oregon Trail. Trails were established by traders and immigrants in search of rich farmland to make a home. After the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854, the territories were opened to white settlers unknowing that Kansas would soon become a battle ground between proslavery and free-state forces that made “Bleeding Kansas.”

Over the course of six years, several drafts were made to admit Kansas as a free-state. Finally, after becoming a national issue, the Republican platform of 1860 layed a track for Kansas to be admitted. Abraham Lincoln, an important key to the platform, was elected President. The Kansas bill was finally passed and signed by James Buchanan just a few months before Lincoln took office. On January 29, 1861, Kansas then became the 34th state.

As a result of being admitted as a Free-State, Kansas was now on the border of rebellion and the nation entered the Civil War. Kansas supplied 20,000 men before the war ended. The state also suffered

the highest mortality rate of any of the Union states. Within its boundaries, one attack is proven to be most notorious—William C. Quantrill’s surprise attack on Lawrence. The City was a prime target for terror as it was known for being the headquarters of “Free-State sympathizers.” Quantrill and his men raided Lawrence, burning the City and killing nearly 150 people.

In the late 19th Century, settlement began to really transform the state. Immigrants brought their farming techniques to the great plains and rolling hills. As a result of the Civil War, beef was in short supply and the great cattle drive brought travelers and ranchers to the area. The transportation of several million longhorns from Texas to Kansas delivered cattle to the East.

From the beginning, Kansas faced many struggles and difficulties. On May 21, 1927, Kansas officially adopted a state flag. Among the State Crest and Seal illustrated on the flag, is the state motto, “Ad Astra Per Aspera,” which appropriately translates “To the Stars Through Difficulties.”

By the 20th Century, significant changes occurred in agriculture, industry, transportation, and communication. During World War I, agriculture took off as the demand for food increased. The transportation industry flourished with diesel-powered trains, commercial airlines, and highways. Communication also was revolutionized by radio and television.



Sesquicentennial Celebrations

To reflect on its rich history, the State of Kansas will celebrate its sesquicentennial throughout the whole year of 2011. A new logo and stamp were designed to commemorate the anniversary.

Events for Kansas' 150 Celebration started a day early, on January 28 with Kansas Day at the Capitol. At the commemoration, key government dignitaries read a special resolution recognizing the important people and events in Kansas history. Honored guests representing Kansas' past and present were also recognized, and Kansas Poet Laureate Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg read a poem she wrote specifically for the event.

The next day, on Kansas' actual birthday Governor Sam Brownback signed a proclamation declaring January 29, 2011 as the Sesquicentennial of Kansas Statehood. Festivals, concerts, theatrical performances, quilt shows, and more took place across the state.



Kansas educators are taking advantage of the state's milestone as well. Celebrate Kansas Voices was created in 2010 as an online learning community empowering learners to become witnesses, archiving local oral history, and then sharing that history safely on the Internet. Anyone is welcome to join the learning community. More information can be found at <http://celebratekansas.ning.com/>.

Kids Voting Kansas utilized the opportunity by partnering with the Kansas Museum of History. Together, they held an election for Kansas' favorite notable person. Kids had the opportunity to go online and choose from 10 people with notable history in Kansas. In the end, Amelia Earhart won with a total of 429 votes. Kids Voting Kansas educates elementary and secondary students by involving them in the voting process in hopes of increasing lifelong voter participation.

The Kansas State Historical Society (KSHS) also helped educators in the classroom with ready-to-go lesson plans. Designed for elementary through high school age students, the plans cover topics from territorial Kansas to Kansas in the 20th Century. All materials are available to download at <http://www.kshs.org/p/ready-to-go-lesson-plans/15619>.

Another way that Kansans honored the state's 150th was through "Bake a Cake for Kansas Day". Kansas were encouraged to bake and share a cake with their community and then post pictures on Kansas 150 facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/Kansas150?ref=ts>) and Flickr page (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/kansas150/>).

Many other celebrations that will be ongoing around the state includes an exhibit at the Kansas Museum of History, a Home on the Range concert in Hutchinson, and an Ad Astra Ball in Lawrence, just to name a few. For a complete list of Kansas 150 Celebrations visit <http://www.travelks.com/s/index.cfm?aid=583>.



Information for this article was found at <http://www.kssos.org/forms/communication/history.pdf> and www.kshs.org.

 Amanda Schuster is the Communications Specialist for the League of Kansas Municipalities. She can be reached at aschuster@lkm.org or (785) 354-9565.



...Pre-Christmas Day Trips

In the week-and-a-half leading up to my annual Christmas break, I had the opportunity to do a couple of one-day road trips visiting buddies in two central Kansas cities.

I had been invited to see the newly-remodeled city hall in Lindsborg back about the time of the LKM Conference. Lindsborg moved out of its city hall for about a year during the huge renovation/restoration project, and the wonderful corner building and its upstairs were converted into a marvelous and beautiful blend of period history and modernization (the building is like stepping back into time, but it features all the latest technological bells and whistles... and the council members are issued Kindle readers, to boot). To stay true to the building's past (and to qualify for restoration tax credits), innumerable details and subtleties had to be attended to. My hosts and tour guides were City Administrator Greg DuMars and Finance Director Larry Lindgren, both long-time friends and associates of mine. Greg and Larry pointed out the big and small restoration specifics, including preserving the massive vault/safe, customer counter and corner-angled entry way of the building's bank heritage, along with replicating styles/colors of wall moldings and about a gazillion other minutiae. But, it was all worth it. The finished product is stunning, and the City really got a good deal on the \$200,000 or so tax credits they received for their effort. The credits were sold (at a favorable discount rate) to help finance the project—I didn't really know how that all worked, and it was interesting to find out, as well as hear what well-known investor submitted the best bid on the credits (though I can't tell!).

Greg, Larry, and I went to lunch at the Ol Stuga (<http://olstuga.com>), which boasts a tradition of serving great "bar" (i.e. "college") food for many years—and has been owned and operated by Mark Lysell since 1977. Of course, I had to try the Brent Nelson sandwich, as it was advertised...fantabulous. Just the month before, the Ol Stuga, and the Brent Nelson were featured on the Good Morning America Weekend show (www.kake.com/news/headlines/Lindsborgs_Ol_Stuga_To_Be_Featured_On_GMA_Weekend_108565279.html).

P.S....the trip to Lindsborg also gave me a chance to purchase another three-pound jar of Larry's first-ever crop of light-golden (EKL) honey—my first jar had been delivered to me by City Clerk Jeri Sperling at the conference—but, that's it for the first year...honey all gone...

A week later, I enjoyed a cup (or five) of coffee and pleasant conversation in South Hutchinson with the city's first-ever city administrator Matt Stiles. He reported for duty in September 2010. Matt is a fellow Wichita State University (WSU) MPA grad (as is his wife, Rebecca). Matt served the last several years working for the City of Bel Aire (during which time I got to know him), under the tutelage and direction of another WSU guy, Ty Lasher. Matt is really enjoying the somewhat rare opportunity (given his chosen

profession) to return to his hometown (South Hutchinson is in the Nickerson school district, so Matt is a NHS grad), and is looking forward to the many challenges of being "the first," which includes also being the public works director. At this point, Matt has kept very busy setting up new systems and writing lots of policies. His wife Rebecca works at the Promise Regional Medical Center, near where I once lived on the northeast edge of neighboring Hutchinson. And, so, the newest phase of the couple's life journey together has taken a big step forward. Best of luck, Matt and Rebecca.

My book recommendation this month is *The Last Boy: Mickey Mantle, And The End Of America's Childhood*, by Jane Leavy. I read Leavy's fine biography of Dodger Hall of Fame pitcher Sandy Koufax back when it came out a few years ago, so when I first saw this book last fall I knew I would be buying it sooner or later; but my family beat me to the punch by giving it to me for Christmas. In my view, there had never been a thorough biography of my childhood hero, but I figured that Leavy got the task accomplished. And, it appears that she did. This is the definitive saga—warts and all—of the man I had idolized. And, there WERE warts...big, ugly, and numerous. Mickey's life tale (including the nearly 27 years between the end of his playing days and his death in August of 1995) is tragic in many ways...sometimes difficult reading for someone who grew up adoring him as a hero. Of course, much of the story IS heroic...Mickey was injured more than most knew about in this career, and played through significant pain nearly his entire 18 years in the big leagues. And he was NOT ego-driven...he was as good a teammate and as humble as any ballplayer ever—much different in those ways from his immediate center-field predecessor, "Joe D"—and was person enough to admit his many faults. A great deal of the "non-warts" Mantle story has been told for a long time, and is well known by baseball enthusiasts. From his growing up days in the "tri-state" (Oklahoma/Kansas/Missouri) lead/zinc mining area (virtual mountains of toxic "waste chat," equally toxic, red-stained creeks and ponds, etc.), later officially-designated the most environmentally-hazardous place in the entire country, to his amateur and early-professional ball-playing days in places such as Baxter Springs (as a 17-year-old "whiz kid," he hit two home runs into the Spring River in one game) and Independence (where he played his first season in pro ball, in 1948). But this book adds elements and layers even to that phase of no.7's life that were new to me. If you are a Mickey fan, like me, or a baseball fan, like me, this is a must-read book. And, as do most well-written biographies, this one contains a bit of history...always a good thing...especially if you are a history fan, like me.

 Don Osenbaugh is the Director of Finance and Field Services for the League of Kansas Municipalities. He can be reached at dosenbaugh@lkm.org



Enterprise Asset Management System Provides Solution for Topeka Public Works

by Eric Hrnicek

When the Shunganunga Creek in Topeka overtopped its banks on May 7, 2007—a 100-year flood event that forced 500 people to evacuate their homes—the City of Topeka Department of Public Works handled much of the cleanup, according to Mike Teply, then department director. On that day the Shunganunga, which runs from the southwest part of Topeka to the Kansas River northeast of the city, flooded businesses as well as residences. And, although the Public Works Department incurred more than \$90,000 in cleanup expenses, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) reimbursed the City just 40% of this amount, or \$36,341, said Teply, now the Department's Director of Engineering and Development.

“Back then we hadn't implemented our enterprise asset management system in our Street Maintenance Section, so we were unable to provide the details FEMA required,” he said. “So we were reimbursed primarily for expenses incurred only by the wastewater and stormwater utilities.”

Nearly three years later, however—after a snowstorm pounded Topeka in late December 2009 and early January 2010—things in Public Works were much different. During several weeks in January 2010, the Department spent time and money fixing street damage, mostly potholes, caused by the snowstorm. But this time, nearly all divisions in the Department were online with the City's enterprise asset management system.

Teply's staff used this system to track and compare pothole-repair expenses to those incurred at the same time in 2009. Because Public Works could document an incremental increase in costs, FEMA reimbursed the Street Maintenance Section \$31,794 for expenses associated with the snowstorm damage.

“FEMA requires exact documentation and extensive details for labor, equipment, materials, and associated costs—information we now collect as we go along,” Teply said. “Since we now know our costs immediately, we can receive substantial reimbursement from FEMA for work we do as a result of a storm.”

Transportation Operations can review an expandable “Project Summary with Cost” report to learn costs for street-related projects at a glance. Users can drill down into specific work orders and subsequent equipment, material, and labor records, which add up to work order

and then project costs. Because the city manages the costs and records associated with each storm as a project, expenses can be summarized easily, quickly, and accurately as needed for FEMA reimbursement requests.

Accurate tracking of projects, work orders, and costs is just one of many information-management improvements Teply attributes to Topeka's enterprise asset management system, now implemented throughout the Department's six diverse divisions: Development Services, Engineering, Water, Water Pollution Control (sanitary and stormwater utility), Transportation Operations, and Facility Management. Today, more than 75 employees throughout Public Works use the system, based on ESRI's ArcGIS technology and Azteca's Cityworks for maintenance management, during day-to-day operations.

Cleanup in January 2010 from a significant snowstorm meant spending time and money fixing street damage, mostly potholes. However, the City used its enterprise asset management system to track and compare pothole-repair expenses to those incurred at the same time in 2009—and received nearly \$32,000 in reimbursement from FEMA for expenses associated with the snowstorm damage.

It's a seismic shift compared with 2004, when the divisions were managing the City's infrastructure using a potpourri of systems and software for asset inventory, maintenance, permitting, and code enforcement, including hundreds of Microsoft Access databases and Excel spreadsheets plus at least three computerized maintenance management systems (CMMS) implemented at various levels.

One CMMS, for example, was being used as a historical database instead of a maintenance management system. Another CMMS was being used as a data repository rather than an active CMMS and was not tracking costs. In addition, these multiple datasets and multiple software packages required multiple levels of maintenance and tens of thousands of dollars annually in software maintenance fees.

“We had no clear focus on where we were headed,” recalled Teply.

Each division had its own way of asset management, which typically involved collecting data from multiple sources, both electronic and paper, and from different places. To coordinate work orders, employees relied heavily on telephone calls, interoffice mail, faxes, and e-mails instead of automation. In some cases, work orders were recorded on

paper first and entered into a system after the fact. “Since no one could view the same work order simultaneously, it was difficult to tell where something was in the process,” Tely said.

As a result, there was frustration. Staff members in one division, discouraged that their CMMS wasn’t producing the results they needed, routinely re-entered data into Access and Excel. While staff members in some divisions complained about limitations with their CMMS, others chose to abandon their system altogether.

In almost every division, staff lacked sufficient training and support, according to Scott Cattran, vice president and director of Infrastructure at Woolpert, the firm Topeka selected in 2004 to develop the City’s information management master plan.

“There was progressive use of technology, but a lack of coordination among divisions,” Cattran said. “Integration of people, processes, data, and technology was needed to manage the City’s infrastructure holistically.”

Behind the effort to create an enterprise information management and decision-support system for Topeka were:

- Kyle Tjelmeland, the department’s GIS manager, who understood and communicated the long-term benefits of an enterprise system;
- Tely and division managers in Public Works; and
- the City Council, which ultimately was interested in creating a 311 citizen request management system.

However, some Public Works employees, based on their experiences with existing systems, were far from enthusiastic and a little bit hesitant about introducing yet another system to the City’s repertoire. Why would another system be any different? Why should they expect different results?

Seeing is believing

Woolpert began to answer those questions with its approach to Topeka’s information management master plan—a comprehensive, 106 page document that showed the way to streamline and integrate processes, data, and systems.

First, Woolpert worked closely with Public Works to discover and document, in plain language, the department’s work and workflows: What do you do, and how do you do it? How can we improve and streamline these processes?

Woolpert then identified the data and applications that supported these tasks, along with the department’s critical information systems: those that worked, those that required enhancement, and those not needed to support business functions.

Next, Woolpert worked with the City to answer this question: What do you want the enterprise system to do?

Topeka’s final information management master plan contained 19 recommendations that now are either complete or in process; one has been revised and one has been eliminated. Significant recommendations in the plan called for the following:

- moving to an enterprise GIS environment;
- eliminating five redundant work and asset management systems and implementing a new enterprise asset and maintenance management system to be used by all six divisions within Public Works;
- centralizing GIS operations and initiatives within Public Works—a significant change in organizational structure;
- integrating the enterprise asset and maintenance management system with the call center, which would become a one-stop shop for citizens’ requests for service and work orders;

- integrating with the City’s enterprise resource planning system;
- making improvements to and integrating with the utility billing system;
- merging and making improvements to the permitting and code-enforcement systems; and
- integrating with the document management system for records management.

Woolpert’s enterprise geodatabase design, based on Esri’s ArcGIS, encompassed data from all six divisions in Public Works plus existing GIS data migrated into the new model from legacy data formats. After consolidating all this data, Woolpert helped the City review and update the data, which is now the foundation for systems such as the enterprise asset management system.



*City of Topeka offices downtown.
Photo provided by the City of Topeka.*

Get started with an enterprise system

Develop a comprehensive information management master plan. Key elements in the City of Topeka’s comprehensive, 106 page plan include the following:

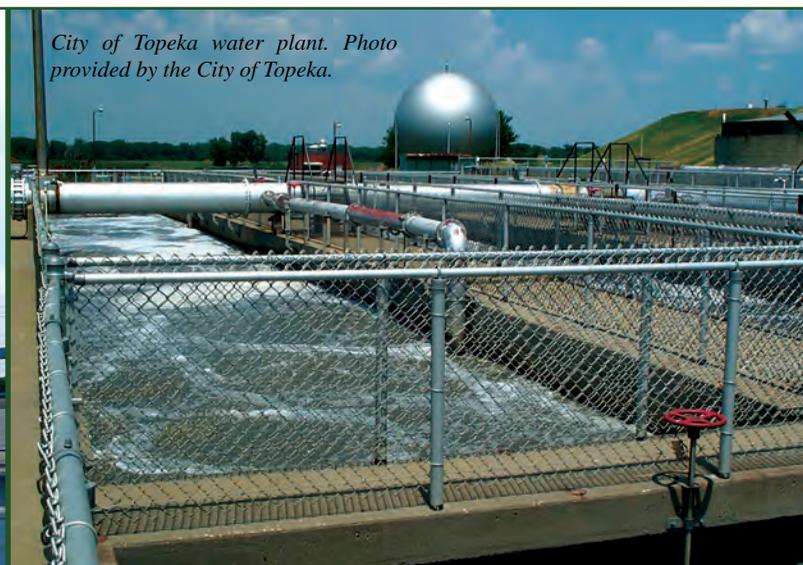
- Existing conditions in each Public Works division, including data, applications in use, and existing concerns;
- Needs assessment, including regulatory constraints, organizational constraints, data access and development, workflow in Public Works, and prioritized needs;
- Information management strategies;
- Analysis and 19 recommendations;
- Implementation schedule, budget, and six project priorities; and
- Appendix, including integrated information portal software requirements specification, maintenance management benchmarking requirements, and permitting and code-enforcement benchmarking requirements.

Three software vendors were given key requirements for the Topeka’s new CMMS, along with sample datasets from the City, so vendors could develop demonstrations to prove how their systems might meet the City’s requirements. Vendors had to follow scenarios that matched the City’s work processes; the solution had to integrate with the GIS and use the City’s GIS and other data. Vendors were scored on their ability to meet each scenario.

In the final analysis, the City considered features and functions; costs (software, yearly maintenance, implementation, and training and data migration); cultural factors; and integration with other systems, such as 311 and permitting in the future. Azteca's Cityworks was selected for asset and maintenance management.

"Before people can be open to change, they should be able to clearly see the benefits," Cattran noted. "We presented division heads and their staff with a demo of exactly what they could expect from these new systems. When they could see how each enterprise asset management system would work with their own data—as opposed to a canned demo—the possibilities were truly illuminated."

City of Topeka water plant. Photo provided by the City of Topeka.



A new way of doing business

It made sense to implement the asset and maintenance management system in the Water division first since it had the greatest need and would realize benefits the fastest, Cattran said. That's because the division's existing CMMS had been only partially implemented, so it was making do with Excel spreadsheets and an Access database for inventory data. Moreover, the Water division could not track work orders electronically.

"Implementing Cityworks brought about a dramatic change in the Water division by making it much more efficient," Cattran said. "That gave all the other divisions more confidence in moving to an enterprise system."

The enterprise GIS and asset management system are now integral for day-to-day operations within Public Works, and that's the most significant benefit, Teply said. However, implementing a successful system required more than just choosing the right software package; it required staff to make some recommended changes in their work processes to improve the way they do business. Here's how Public Works staff members are using and realizing the benefits of an enterprise system.

To ensure consistent asset management in all divisions within Public Works, the department uses the system not only to track costs during and after natural disasters such as floods and snowstorms, but also to track costs for routine work orders.

In the past, Teply might have been able to calculate the total number of water main breaks and the total cost of repairs for the year. Now the department can use the enterprise asset management system to track, record, and compare specific details associated with each water main break repaired — intersection, date, types of equipment and materials used, and labor hours per person, plus all costs. This helps the water division identify trends, such as a series of breaks in adjacent areas or spikes in overtime.

A "Broken Main Response-Repair Times" report from the enterprise asset management system lists all broken water mains by date range. "Disrupt Time" and "Gallons Lost" translate to lost revenue and customer dissatisfaction. Trends based on break type and location might lead to decisions about water main replacements.

"By analyzing reports from the enterprise system, now we can see ways we can reduce costs or change some of our processes to use our workforce more efficiently," said Teply.

The water division, for example, also has used the system to track time, materials, and equipment costs for repairing accidental damage done to water mains by contractors working on excavation and construction projects. Tjelmeland said costs now recovered per incident average about \$1,500.

Besides tracking costs, Public Works divisions now track and document work order details in the enterprise system, which is configured with all the step-by-step tasks associated with a particular work order for a particular asset.

Transportation Operations managers can use an "Intersection Workorder Summary with Cost" report to quickly determine and compare the cost of work orders performed per intersection over a certain time period.

Four reasons for success

Topeka's implementation of an enterprise system succeeded because Woolpert and the City of Topeka:

1. Addressed head on—in the information management master plan—the organizational and cultural challenges of getting multiple departments on the same system;
2. Ensured buy-in by including major stakeholders from all six Public Works divisions and from the GIS group throughout the planning and implementation process;
3. Conducted detailed business process engineering—based on recommendations in the information management master plan—to improve communication and tasks within and among Public Works divisions; and
4. Customized the system to reflect how the City planned and managed preventive maintenance.

In the past, there was no central way of tracking information about work done on an asset, so divisions reacted to and solved problems as they came along. Now city crews, using laptops in the field, must complete certain tasks and record certain data in the system before closing out a work order. As a result, the City can run reports to determine which assets have chronic problems and may need rehabilitation or replacement.

Tjelmeland said the system also helps keep work orders from slipping through the cracks. "There's much better tracking of work to be done," he said. Since the system was implemented, he noted, response times for traffic-signal outages and pothole repairs have been reduced significantly.



The enterprise asset management system also has allowed the divisions to plan and schedule preventive maintenance automatically. “Previously, it was hit or miss,” admitted Teply, since staff used to rely primarily on homegrown databases or corporate memories for planning preventive maintenance tasks. “Now, the system lets us schedule which tasks need to be done and when, and lets us know if a task isn’t completed by a certain time so we can evaluate why—perhaps there was an emergency instead.”

In the past, for example, staff in the Water Pollution Control division used Excel to track sewer line segments and note the last cleaning dates; staff queried Excel for segments not cleaned during the previous two years and then manually wrote cleaning work orders. Now that cleaning timeframes for sewer line segments are set up in Cityworks, the system automatically determines which lines need to be cleaned next and automatically generates the cleaning work orders, thus saving time.

The Water Pollution Control division can use a “Gravity Main Work with Footage Summary” report to compare resources being used for preventive maintenance (proactive) versus corrective measures (reactive) and quality assurance/quality control. In general, taking care of corrective measures, which can happen at any time of the day or night, requires more resources than handling preventive measures, which can be scheduled during a normal workday and planned for efficiency.

To improve communication within and among divisions, Teply says staff members across the board in Public Works are more productive since they no longer spend time searching for and copying work orders, faxing or sending documents through interoffice mail, or wondering if colleagues have completed their part of a process. For example, the enterprise system has improved the process for new utility service applications.

“We don’t have to worry about where the documents are because we have it all right here,” Teply said. “So customers are getting new utility service faster and with very little, if any, chance of error.”

And whenever more than one division is involved in a project, such as a water main break that requires concrete work and street repairs, the enterprise system makes it easy to coordinate work among divisions, Teply said.

The system also has improved customer service at the department’s call center, now staffed by employees who document service requests reported by citizens directly into the enterprise asset management system.

In the past, call takers answered calls and transferred callers to the appropriate Public Works division based on their service issue, such as strong odors, low water pressure, nonfunctioning traffic signals, and potholes. Call takers now log a service request directly into the system via a Web-based portal, following on-screen prompts to gather detailed information quickly from the caller—no matter whether the request pertains to water, sewers, streets, or any other public works issue.

Once a request is documented in the system, an employee in the appropriate division can review and prioritize the request, dispatch a crew for an emergency, or take another action. The benefits are twofold: consistent documentation for the department and faster, one-stop reporting for citizens.

Teply said he’s even used the system to respond to questions citizens have asked city council members about an ongoing public works project or issue. “If a citizen asks a city council member why his street has been torn up for three days, all we need is an address, and it’s easy for us to check the enterprise system and tell the council member right away what’s happening and why,” Teply said. “So it’s becoming a very beneficial customer service tool for us.”

To manage, maintain, and update a smaller application portfolio and reduce software maintenance costs—since five redundant work and asset management systems were eliminated when the enterprise system was implemented, Topeka reduced its fees for software maintenance and upgrades by at least \$35,000 annually and now spends less time tracking down software maintenance contracts.

To coordinate training and share expertise throughout the department since all divisions now use the same enterprise system—Teply said that since more than 75 employees are routine users of the enterprise asset management system, it’s easier to share technical expertise with one another. As a result, most divisions now have at least one employee who has taken a leadership role in providing supplementary training to coworkers—in addition to the centralized training and support provided by Tjelmeland’s GIS group as more users join the system. “Since we operate fairly lean, this helps us take good advantage of the staff we have,” Teply said.

Building on the enterprise application

Teply is looking forward to several next steps in the short term: adding permitting and code-enforcement functionality and launching a Web-based portal to help citizens report service issues and guide contractors and developers through the permitting process.

“In the next three or four years, we expect to expand this enterprise system to other departments in the City, like Parks and Recreation, because other departments are seeing the value of consistency when it comes to asset management,” Teply said. “They have seen what we have done with the diverse operations in Public Works, so they recognize that it can work and benefit their departments and not change things too much.”

☀ *Eric Hrnicek, is a P.E., GISP, senior system designer, infrastructure information management for Woolpert. This article was reprinted with permission from CENEWS.com, January 2011 web exclusive.*



Legal Forum

by Sandy Jacquot

Fuel Tax Debate in Shawnee County

One caveat about this article is that it will analyze and inform city officials about a Kansas Attorney General opinion issued on December 27, 2010 by then Attorney General Steve Six. The League of Kansas Municipalities' (LKM) attorneys often point out in trainings that Attorney General Opinions are the opinion of one attorney and are, at best persuasive. The Kansas courts have said, "The court may cite it as persuasive authority, but if the opinion is without 'authoritative legal support,' it should not be followed." *Appeal of R&R Janitor Service from a Decision of Director of Taxation*, 9 Kan.App.2d 500, 503, 683 P.2d 909 (1984)(Citations omitted). Attorney General Opinion 2010-19, is a sound opinion, and is in keeping with the legal position of LKM attorneys on the issue of whether or not counties may use their home rule authority to redirect city motor fuel tax money to the county coffers.

Last Fall, Shawnee County adopted a charter resolution to amend K.S.A. 79-3425c(b), which provides for the percentage of payment of motor fuels funds to the various counties, and cities within those counties. The statute specifically provides for a different split of the money between the county and cities in Sedgwick, Shawnee, and Wyandotte counties. Thus, Shawnee County determined the statute was nonuniform and was subject to the use of a charter ordinance to change the tax distribution.

The statute reads in relevant part: "(b) all payments shall be made to the county treasurers of the respective counties, and upon receipt of the same: (1) The county treasurers of Sedgwick and Shawnee counties shall credit 50% of the moneys received to the road and bridge fund of such counties and apportion and pay the remainder of such moneys to the several cities located in such county. . . ." This statute also apportions the special city county highway fund. Shawnee County merely changed the statute by charter resolution to keep all of the money enumerated in section (b) of the statute.

The City of Topeka requested an Attorney General Opinion regarding the County's ability to use a charter resolution to change the distribution of money to the City. The opinion begins by noting the dual role of counties in government. They exercise various state functions, such as registering motor vehicles and conducting elections, thereby making them agents of the state.

They also perform various local functions for their residents, such as maintaining roads and bridges and providing local health services. This dual role is important in analyzing whether or not the statute in question is one that may be subject to a charter resolution under K.S.A. 19-101a, which states that the "board of county

commissioners may transact all county business and perform all powers of local legislation. . . ." subject to certain restrictions.

The opinion then analyzes whether the statutory motor fuel distribution is "county business" for the purpose of being able to use a charter resolution. Using Kansas cases and other Attorney General Opinions that addressed similar types of statutes, the opinion analyzed whether changing the distribution would be a matter of county business or local legislation. In this case, the opinion concludes, "[d]istribution of motor fuel taxes affects municipalities other than counties, and, therefore, is not 'county business.'" The opinion states that Shawnee County cannot take away motor fuel tax money from other cities.

The next part of the opinion deals with the part of the statute that directs the county treasurers to distribute the money to the various cities within certain counties. It used a Kansas Supreme Court case that analyzed a similar duty with respect to motor vehicle registration funds. *Weber v. Board of County Com'rs of Marshall County*, 289 Kan. 1166 (2009). The Court looked at the role of the county commission and the role of the county treasurer. It concluded that the funds are in the domain of the county treasurer, not the county commission. Thus, in that case, the county commission had no interest in the motor vehicle fund. Using the same rationale, the opinion concludes that the motor fuel money was under the control of the county treasurer, not the county commission. Thus, the county commission had no claim on the funds.

This is an important opinion for cities for obvious reasons. Any statute that requires counties to apportion tax dollars to cities that might have a nonuniform provision could be subject to a charter resolution to reduce cities' rightful amount of money. Besides the poor public policy of allowing one level of government to seize money that belongs to another level of government, there could never be any certainty in budgeting. Just as the City of Topeka faced the unexpected potential loss of \$2.1 million in tax revenue for the 2011 budget year, any city in Kansas could face the same type of budget shortfall, with no recourse if this type of action was allowed to stand. Ultimately Shawnee County did not proceed with its plan after receiving a petition that would have compelled an election on the charter ordinance.

 Sandy Jacquot is Director of Law/General Counsel for the League of Kansas Municipalities. She can be reached at sjacquot@lkm.org or (785) 354-9565.



Members of the City's Christmas Party Committee and Youth Advisory Commission during the delivery of the City's donated items. Photo by Sara Wright.

Mayor Pro Tem Mark Preisinger talks with a veteran at the VA Medical Center. Photo by Sara Wright.

Youth Advisory Commission's Madison Eddy gets to meet one of the veterans who will utilize some of the donated goods at the VA Medical Center. Photo by Sara Wright.

City Employees Present Holiday Donations

— by Sara Wright —

Every holiday season the City of Leavenworth chooses certain local organizations or families that need some additional support. This year, the City chose two—the Alliance Against Family Violence and the Veterans Affairs Voluntary Services. Both were presented with employee generated donations.

In December representatives from the City presented Sister Jane from the Alliance Against Family Violence with a check for \$520. The money came from proceeds of the 50/50 raffle that the City held for its employees during its end-of-year Holiday Party.

The Alliance Against Family Violence is the only 501(c)(3) non-profit agency in Leavenworth County that provides services to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, child abuse, and/or stalking. It also runs the only 24-hour local crisis line and provides a safe place for victims of domestic violence to stay.

The City also presented a truck full of donated goods to the Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service Program Office at the Dwight D. Eisenhower VA Medical Center. Representatives from the City were able to visit with several of the veterans in person.

The donated goods were collected after the City received a list of needed items and created an angel tree in the City Manager's Office. City employees were encouraged to stop by and pick up an angel with a list of items attached to it. They were then instructed to purchase these items and return them in a gift bag. In addition,

the City's Youth Advisory Commission gathered any extra angels and distributed them during the annual Breakfast with Santa in early December, allowing residents to also get in on the giving.

The Dwight D. Eisenhower VA Medical Center is an organization that brings greatly needed programs and services to thousands of veterans. Donations and a broad range of volunteer contributions help supplement the services offered at this location and make veterans hospital stays more enjoyable.

"This was a really nice way for the City to give back to the community," City Manager J. Scott Miller said. "Both organizations were ecstatic to be receiving these donations and I'm extremely proud of our employees for putting forth such an effort this year."

To learn more about the Alliance Against Family Violence or to donate to this local organization, please visit www.aafv.net. To learn more about the VA Voluntary Service Program or to contribute to the veterans, please contact the Dwight D. Eisenhower VA Medical Center, Voluntary Service Program Office at (913) 682-2000 ext. 52017 or 1-800-952-8387 ext. 52017 or visit <http://www.leavenworth.va.gov/giving/>.

 Sara Wright is the Public Information Officer for the City of Leavenworth. She can be reached at swright@firstcity.org or (913) 680-2610.



Members of the City's Christmas Party Committee present a \$520 check for the Alliance Against Family Violence. Photo by Sara Wright.



Classified Advertising

Assistant City Attorney

The City of Topeka is seeking a public service minded attorney to serve as the chief legal advisor for the Police Department. This Assistant City Attorney position with the Legal Department provides legal representation and legal advice both to the Topeka Police Department and City employees, officers and elected officials in state and federal court and before arbitrators and administrative agencies. Requires Juris Doctorate, licensed in Kansas state and federal courts and must have five years of professional law practice in a relevant field. Send City of Topeka employment application, resume and writing sample to City of Topeka, Human Resources, Attention Michele Smith, 215 SE 7th Street, Topeka, Kansas 66603. Full position details and City application available at www.topeka.org/employment. The City of Topeka is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

City Administrator

The City of Grand Island seeks an innovative, visionary, dynamic and proven leader who is a superior manager and communicator to serve as City Administrator. Grand Island, a community of nearly 47,000, is a growing community that fosters cultural and economic opportunities for its residents. The current overall City budget is \$146.2 million in total appropriations including a general fund budget. 500 plus City employees make up the workforce. A Bachelor's degree with major course work in Public Administration, Business Administration, Economics, Finance or a related field is required. The salary range is \$112,072 - \$157,697 annually commensurate with experience and qualifications. An excellent benefit package is included. For more information on this outstanding opportunity, contact Amy Hall at (308) 385-5444, ext. 190 or at ahall@grand-island.com. The on-line application process is available at www.grand-island.com. The filing deadline is February 11, 2011. EEO/AE/M/F/D/V/G

Deputy City Attorney

The City of Topeka is seeking a Deputy City Attorney. This position reports to the City Attorney/Director of Law, is the

principle assistant in the administration of the City's legal affairs, serves as the Acting City Attorney in the City Attorney's absence and supervises other attorneys. Responsibilities include legal work in the areas of Administrative Law, Finance, and Contracts, serving as the legal advisor to various departments and drafts contracts, pleadings, motions and other legal documents on behalf of the City of Topeka and its elected officials, and/or employees. This position also drafts and/or reviews ordinances and resolutions for form, content and legality prior to presentation to the City Council for consideration.

Minimum qualifications include graduation from an accredited school of law with a Juris Doctorate and licensed to practice law in the State of Kansas. Must have at least five years of professional law practice with two years of supervisory experience.

Minimum starting salary is \$67.6K, actual salary DOQ.

City of Topeka employees enjoy great benefits ranging from health/dental/life/retirement to generous leave accruals. Topeka was recently named a "10 Best Cities for the Next Decade" by Kiplinger Magazine for our stable economy, low housing costs and much more. See the full Kiplinger article at www.kiplinger.com/magazine/archives/10-best-cities-2010-for-the-next-decade.html

City of Topeka employment application and resume required. Full position description and application available at www.topeka.org/employment

Director of Finance

The City of El Dorado, Kansas, is seeking a Director of Finance. The City of El Dorado is located in South Central Kansas, approximately 30 miles northeast of Wichita, KS, with a population of approximately 13,000.

El Dorado is the County seat of Butler County and provides residents easy access to the amenities of Wichita, Kansas the most populous City in the State. Access to the rest of the state is facilitated by El Dorado's location at the intersection of major highways, including I-35 and KS-254.

The position will be responsible for, but not limited to, financial policy development

and implementation, financial statements, forecasting, monitoring of the CIP and operating budgets, fund allocation, preparation of the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, assessments, and bond sales. The Finance Director will manage fiscal strategies in conformance with generally accepted governmental finance accounting and auditing principles and practices. The City's 2011 Operating Budget and Capital Improvement Plan is \$26,986,033.

The minimum requirements are a Bachelor's degree in Finance, Accounting, Business or Public Administration, or related field. Prefer 10 years of progressively responsible experience, including five years of managerial experience in government accounting, financial management or related field. A Certified Public Accountant license is preferred. An MPA or MBA is desired.

The salary range is \$51,417.60 to \$74,547.20 with an excellent fringe benefit package. All offers of employment are conditional upon the successful completion of a credit and background check, physical screening, and drug/alcohol screening. Applicants may apply at www.hrepartners.com or send cover letter and resume including three (3) references should be submitted to Human Resources, City of El Dorado, 220 East First St., El Dorado, KS 67042.

Director of Member Services

The Kansas Power Pool (KPP) is accepting applications for the position of Director of Member Services. The Kansas Power Pool located in Wichita, KS is a Municipal Energy Agency currently supplying full requirement electric service to 26 Cities in Kansas.

KPP seeks candidates that have demonstrated ability to organize, set and implement priorities, manage multiple tasks and evaluate performance. Preference to candidates with experience with municipal (public power) organizations in particular previous experience communicating effectively with City Governing Bodies and Staff in Kansas. Knowledge and experience in developing and preparing presentations, budgets, including management of programs developed to assist and enhance programs associated with municipal electric systems.



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Candidate will in particular be responsible for the development, enhancement and implementation of the KPP's energy efficiency program(s). Strong interpersonal and professional skills. Candidates must be willing to travel to meet with members cities on a regular basis as well as to participate in industry related organizations. Degree in appropriate field or equivalent experience is required.

Benefits include vacation, KPERs, health insurance, holidays and sick leave.

Submit applications/resumes, work and salary history with a cover letter and four work related references to Kansas Power Pool, 200 W. Douglas, Suite 601, Wichita, Kansas 67202. The position is open until filled. Kansas Power Pool is an equal opportunity employer.

Finance Director

The City of Prairie Village is seeking a highly responsible, creative, and progressive individual for the position of Finance Director. This position is responsible for, but not limited to, the day-to-day management of the City's finance department, maintaining and reporting the financial resources of the City, preparing special financial information and forecasting as needed and preparing the City's annual Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) and annual budget. For more information about this opportunity, please go to the City's website at www.pvkansas.com.

Executive Director

The Southeast Kansas Regional Planning Commission (SEKRPC) is seeking applications for the position of Executive Director. Candidates should demonstrate a history of organization management and financial administration skills. Candidates should have excellent delegation, implementation, and follow through skills. Candidates must demonstrate an understanding of local, state, and federal community, and economic development programs. The successful candidate shall be responsible for overall management of the Commission's office and staff of eight and shall direct day-to-day activities, formulate internal management practices, prepare annual and programmatic budgets and direct

preparation of Commission meetings. Must be able to write and manage grants and be CDBG certified by the Kansas Department of Commerce or willing to become certified. Must have excellent written and verbal skills and personnel management experience. Must be adept at presentations and public speaking. Qualified candidates should possess a minimum of a bachelor's degree in public or business administration, community or regional planning or related field. A combination of appropriate work experience and college may be considered. Five to ten years of administrative/management responsibility in an organization(s) related to regional governance, including economic development or related experience is requested. Starting salary is commensurate with experience within a range of \$55,000 to \$65,000 per year. A cover letter of interest, resume, and a listing of four (4) professional references should be mailed to: Chairman, Southeast Kansas Regional Planning Commission, 410 S Evergreen Ave, PO Box 664, Chanute, KS 66720 or by email to: tomr@ckt.net. Applications will be accepted until February 28, 2011. Further information about SEKRPC is available at www.sekrpc.org. The position will remain open until filled. SEKRPC is an EOE.

High Voltage Electrical Worker

The City of Herington is currently accepting applications and resumes for the position of high voltage electrical worker. Two years experience is preferred. Applicants must be able to work in inclement weather and have a thorough knowledge of the equipment and procedures used in the construction and maintenance of electrical distribution systems. City of Herington residency is preferred. Must pass a drug screen upon conditional offer of employment. Valid Kansas driver's licence required. Salary DOQ. Excellent benefits including health insurance, life insurance, KPERs retirement plan and paid vacation and sick leave. Applications may be obtained at City Hall, 17 North Broadway, 785-258-2271. Applications and resumes should be returned to the City of Herington, P.O. Box 31, Herington, KS 67449 or faxed to 785-258-3552. For more information contact Mike Wendt, Utilities Superintendent, at

785-258-0140. Position is open until filled. EOE.

Planning & Development Services Director

The City of Overland Park, KS., (pop. 170,000+), an attractive, progressive, AAA bond rated & rapidly growing suburban community in Johnson County (Kansas City metro area), seeks an exceptionally qualified Director of Planning & Development Services to be an integral member of the City's management team. Responsibilities include coordinating the development, implementation, & administration of City's land use & zoning regulations, comprehensive planning projects, bldg codes, engineering services, property maintenance requirements, environmental health ordinances & programs, public/private partnerships, & GIS & CDBG programs. Will prepare & administer the department budget; select, supervise, & train staff; coordinate Community Development Committee meetings; & supervise staff support of Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, Business Improvement District Advisory Board, CDBG Committee, Code Board of Appeals, & Landmarks Commission. Bachelor's degree in city or urban planning, landscape architecture, engineering, geography or public administration with an emphasis in city planning or additional equivalent experience. Master's degree in urban planning or public administration desirable. Eight to ten years of experience is expected in managerial or supervisory positions related to planning, design, bldg codes or construction. Salary is DOQ. Open until filled. Apply by completing an online application at www.opkansas.org and attaching a resume and cover letter with salary history and a brief summary of a major professional accomplishment. If you are unable to apply online, you may visit the HR Office between 1 p-4 p, M-F, except holidays.

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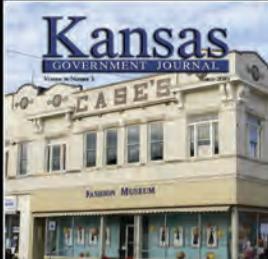
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Thoughts on the State of the Union Address



These are indeed interesting political times. As a more or less full-time observer of political events, I thought I might comment on some of them in this month's column. Back in the day when I was a graduate student working on a doctorate in political science, my focus was political parties. Some of my friends in those days suggested it was really just parties, but we'll leave that story for another time and another place. In any case, I have always

been interested in the political system of the United States, and in fact at one time thought I would be a pretty good political science professor discussing these things with students and colleagues. So I watched with great interest the other night the State of the Union address as something a little bit different was taking place.

Well, before I launch into discussion of what was taking place, I should really own up to the fact that I watched some of the State of the Union address, but kept flipping back and forth between it and the Kansas - Colorado basketball game. Regardless of that fact, the point that was interesting about the State of the Union was the intentional shuffling of the seating arrangements within the House chamber. Typically in the past, the Democrats sat on one side of the room, while the Republicans sat on the other side of the room. Various governmental leaders from the federal government, including agency secretaries, the Supreme Court, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, etc. are usually seated towards the front of the room, and that's how it has been for as long as I can remember. This year, however, there was a shuffling of this seating chart and the Republicans and Democrats sat together throughout the chamber. Now, I will leave it to the political pundits, and the future, to determine whether this was a harbinger of better days to come for working together in Congress. Whatever it was, I thought it was an interesting visual, and certainly the media took great delight in describing it over and over again. The television feeds continued to show individuals from both parties sitting next to one another, highlighted who these individuals were, and then described some of their conflicts in recent years. All very interesting, and one can only hope that it will lead to increased civility, and a positive outcome for the governance of the country.

But it occurred to me that what they were doing, perhaps as a show for the television cameras, perhaps not, was something that city officials do every day. In Kansas, for example, city officials run without party affiliation. They run based exclusively on their records and on their position on issues which are facing the communities in which they live. They are not endorsed by, nor do they advertise a political affiliation. To further distance city elections, and for that matter school elections, from political party labeling, these local government elections in Kansas are held in April rather than in November. Thus, not only do these local officials run without party affiliation, but they also are running at an election which is held at a completely different time of the year from those elections for

other positions throughout the state. The real reason for the different election cycles is to allow for the full airing of city issues for the city elections. It has always been felt that if they were coupled with the November general elections, that the local issues would be consumed by the larger, and more well covered, state and national issues.

Now the fact that city officials run without political affiliation does not mean that city officials are not political people. They certainly are, and in most cases, do in fact have political affiliations. They simply do not use these political affiliations when running for city office in Kansas. So, at every governing body meeting of every city in the State of Kansas, it is most likely that there is a mixture of Democrats and Republicans throughout the chamber, seated at the governing body table. They do not sit next to one another based upon whether they are Republicans or Democrats. In fact, as you would expect, different cities have different ways of handling this. Some are seated by district representation, some are seated randomly, some are seated alphabetically, and there are probably other seating mechanisms that are known only to the cities, and the city clerks, of those communities.

So what does this mean for governments? Well, I think what it means is that while political parties are very important in a state and national sense, I think the functions of city government, whose integral services are provided on a daily basis (24/7), are just that, services which must be provided and which the public expects to be provided everyday. It does not matter to the average Kansas citizen whether the service is provided by a Republican, or a Democrat, but simply that excellent service is provided at the best possible cost. You cannot overestimate the fact that what city officials do on a daily basis is work to provide the best level of service to their communities regardless of their political philosophy or affiliation. Citizens find that the issues which face city governing bodies are often along the lines of whether or not to repave main street or to build a new fire station. It revolves around things like fixing pot holes and clearing the snow from city streets. It involves planning and zoning and various other services which make communities liveable. None of these things have a label and it does not matter if you are a Republican or a Democrat, a liberal, moderate, conservative, or all of the above. What matters is that the services are provided, and that they are provided at a cost and in a manner which is acceptable to the public that is being served. Local government, and particularly city government, is a government which provides the daily services that are necessary to everyday life.

Working together is part of the local government model. I certainly hope that our leaders at all levels of government will be able to find a way to make positive strides and to eliminate the things that divide us to find common ground so that the country can move forward. It is an interesting time to be a political observer. I am always amazed at the resilience and positive nature of the American form of government.

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