Note from the President

Peter Auger, City Manager of Novi

What an interesting year this has been, so far.

From those who I’ve spoken with who attended the 2014 ICMA Conference in Charlotte, NC, I heard it was another inspiring and informative conference. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend, but I sure look forward to attending next year in Seattle, on September 27th-30th, 2015.

Gaining knowledge through other people’s experiences is the best way to not repeat mistakes of the past and a better way to launch for success in the future. MLGMA believes in helping members gain education. We continue to offer MLGMA Scholarships to those who need assistance to cover the cost of some of the educational opportunities that are out there. We offer scholarships to some great education experiences. I have attended two, KSG at Harvard and The Gettysburg Leadership Institute, and both were great experiences.

The final round of 2014 scholarship applications are due October 31st. So if interested, get them in. Don’t put it off.

If you didn’t have the opportunity to be at this year’s MLGMA Summer Workshop in Bay City, then you may have missed the survey results of our membership. Nate Geinzer’s PowerPoint presentation is still on the website, if you are interested in the information. Your board is not only asking but will follow-up on the data we gained.

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Note from the President Continued

Crazy innovations and having fun with the mundane -- no not me!

I don’t know if any of you have caught the YouTube video that The City of Hillsboro, Oregon did as part of the recruitment of a new police chief, in 2013. The “risky” viral video is the subject of an Alliance for Innovation “Innovation Edge” e-newsletter, which the MLGMA partner wanted to share with us.

I know it may not be everyone’s cup of tea, but I love the risk-takers of the world. Think of it this way, how many people are really inspired by mundane commercials for products on TV versus the commercials during the Super Bowl that have fun and humor involved? While telling your organization’s story, do you want it to be forgotten or have people remember it? This may be something to think about. Do what everyone does or be your unique self -- ahhh, that is the question.

Now I have to get back to sipping my coffee…

Sincerely,

Peter Auger,  
MLGMA President  
City Manager, Novi
Oak Park City Manager Erik Tungate thinks he has proven himself to be a “bulldog.”

The recession that started in 2008 was a kicker in Oak Park. When Tungate stepped into his current position, in 2012, he inherited the task of dealing with a $2 million deficit in the city budget.

“We dealt with the budget deficit by taking on challenges that had existed for years, head on,” like bulldogs, with a series of revenue increases, cuts, and reforms, Tungate says.

Crain’s Business Detroit named Tungate one of its “40 Under 40,” this year, for his career accomplishments.

Journalist Kirk Pinho identified the 38-year-old’s biggest achievement; “Eliminating $2 million deficit in a budget of $17.4 million and turning it into a 12 percent general fund balance,” Pinho wrote.

“As a general rule, you cannot only cut your way to prosperity,” Tungate says.

“In Oak Park, our residents have supported tax increases on a number of occasions. In 2012, they passed a PA 345 public safety pension and health care retiree tax millage, which took $2.8 million off the table -- no longer the responsibility of the city’s general fund,” Tungate says.

Tungate says it took a combination of revenue increases, cuts, and reforms.

“We literally reformed virtually every single thing we could get our hands on,” he says.

Tungate says being “transparent” with residents and engaging them in town hall meetings helps get people on the same page. “Don’t hide in your office behind your title. Take it head on and take ownership of it. Don’t just kick the can down the road...and the people will support you.”

As for how Tungate came to be a city manager, his path was “not traditional,” he says.

He put his MBA in finance from Wayne State University to work as a financial analyst in corporate banking. Then he veered toward a career in economic development, including positions with the Hamtramck DDA, Detroit Economic Growth Corp., and Wayne County EDGE, before a stint as acting city manager in Hamtramck.

“I arrived at becoming a city manager, because I have a true dedication to public service, number one, and I’m extremely passionate about Detroit and its suburbs,” Tungate says.

Tungate serves on MLGMA’s NextGen Committee, a group aimed at supporting new and mid-career management professionals. His advice is to be “tenacious.”

“We just started an internship here in Oak Park, last summer. It sure rings true that the people who are the most tenacious, willing to work, network, and do what it takes are the ones who typically get those internships. Then as an intern, you can make a pretty strong impression on someone in a short period of time,” Tungate says.

Link to the article to watch a short video interview.
Lessons from the 100th ICMA Conference

By Keith Van Beek  
Assistant County Administrator, Ottawa County,  
MLGMA Liaison,  
2014 ICMA Conference Planning Committee

This year is the 100th anniversary of ICMA. The ICMA’s recent annual conference in Charlotte, NC was a joint look back at the growth of the profession and a look forward to the future of the profession. A reoccurring theme at the conference was engaging the future leaders in our profession--holding on to the best knowledge and experience of past leaders while letting in new energy and perspectives of emerging leaders.

The annual “Michigan Banquet” was an opportunity for our state delegation to gather and network. Purely a social event (no speakers, no agenda), it is always a great time to share notes with colleagues and also create new friendships and invest in the next generation of managers. We were pleased to include several students at the dinner from Grand Valley State University who were at the conference.

The dinner itself, a wonderful evening, was held on the patio at the Ember Grille at the Westin hotel, the host conference hotel. We had just over 50 attendees. Special thanks to our dinner sponsors; RW Baird, Cornerstone Municipal Advisory Group and American Fidelity Assurance Company.

I attended pre-conference workshops this year for the first-time, which are four-hour sessions on topics such as collaborative leadership, employee engagement, and persuasion and influence. As opposed to a 45 minute or 1 hour session typical of conferences, these 4 hour workshops got more in depth on a topic of interest. This will definitely be something I do again in the future.

The main speakers are always a highlight at ICMA conferences. A favorite; Rebecca Ryan is a futurist and a repeat presenter from a popular session in Milwaukee. Ryan said that history suggests America is emerging from a “winter” cycle of economic downturn and we should likely expect a coming Spring. She suggested utilizing “strategic foresight” to prepare for our communities’ futures. Strategic foresight, rather than traditional strategic planning, changes perspectives from coping with and reacting to the future to transforming and capitalizing on the future.

Another favorite was Dan Heath’s speech based upon his most recent best-seller Decisive: How to Make Better Choices in Life and Work. Heath provided a fast-paced guide to making better decisions -- around the acronym “WRAP.” WIDENING options when making choices; REALITY test your assumptions to avoid confirmation bias; ATTAIN distance before making a decision; and PREPARE to be wrong to avoid over-confidence.
Finally, the ongoing educational sessions offered a huge variety. I focused on several sessions this year, and I am working on ways to move from gauging “employee satisfaction” to figuring out to improve “employee engagement”.

The most common comment from those who attended the conference in Charlotte was how fantastic the city is and what a transformation it has gone through. Very clean, progressive, safe, and fun. The only drawback was for the many managers that took advantage of the Detroit Lions playing the home town Carolina Panthers, and losing!

Sincerely,

Keith Van Beek
Assistant County Administrator, Ottawa County, MLGMA Liaison,
2014 ICMA Conference Planning Committee
The educational opportunities were second to none. I was able to meet managers from all over the U.S. and some of our counterparts from other countries. My first ICMA conference experience was both humbling and gratifying on a number of levels. I was taught in graduate school that we work and live in a fish bowl as city managers. I definitely felt that I was now a much smaller fish and in a much bigger bowl.

As with most things in life, our attitudes and approach regarding our life experiences really dictate what we get out of things. All of the individual experiences I had were important, but it was the aggregate of the experiences from all of the educational opportunities, networking, speed coaching, Michigan Banquet dinner, and travel, that all facilitated my growth and the overall very positive experience. Without a doubt, it has made me a better city manager.

A big thank-you to the MLGMA membership and specifically the Professional Development Committee under the state Board, for the scholarship award that supported my attendance at the ICMA 100th Annual Conference in Charlotte, NC.

Respectfully,

Michael A. Hart,
City Manager, Davison
A First Look at the 2015 Winter Institute in Novi

By Victor Cardenas,
Chair, 2015 Winter Institute Planning Committee
Assistant City Manager, Novi

The MLGMA Winter Institute Planning Committee has been hard at work putting together an intensive, interactive, and interesting agenda for the 2015 conference, in Novi on January 27th through January 30th. The conference will be held at the Suburban Collection Showplace and Hyatt Place hotel.

We have lined up (nearly all confirmed) some fantastic keynote presenters, thought provoking breakout sessions, and fun after hour social events.

We’ve invited Mr Peter Smith the CEO of Adelaide City Council in Australia to address the attendees on Adelaide’s placemaking efforts.

Mr. Bill Capodagli, will be speaking on the “Disney Way” as it pertains to customer service.

Ken Wasco of Gordon Foods will address the group on the FACETS of leadership.

Ellen Duham-Jones co-author of Retrofitting Suburbia will also join us in Novi to share her research.

Attorney General Bill Schuette has also been invited and has tentatively agreed to address attendees on Friday, that is if he is re-elected in November.

Dave Limbardi of ICMA will be facilitating a workshop prior to the conference on the topic of executive presence.

We are bringing back Executive Coaching as a part of the winter conference! A popular offering in previous years, experienced, credentialed Executive Coaches from Aspire Collaborative Services LLC, specifically facilitated by Mary Jo Asmus, will be there.

Breakout sessions will center on economic development, developing Data Driven Approaches to Crime and Traffic Safety programs in your community, and much more.

We have some great partners that are in the final stages of organizing two social activities for Wednesday and Thursday nights. Tentatively, we are scheduled to have events at the local Whirlyball facility and at JD Motorsports, an all electric go-cart track.

Looking forward to seeing you all in January here in Novi!

Victor Cardenas,
Chair, 2015 Winter Institute Planning Committee,
Assistant City Manager, Novi
Your Member Survey Results Are In

Ninety six of you responded to MLGMA’s Member Survey, and your opinions are invaluable to the association and its committees.

If you attended this year’s MLGMA Summer Workshop in Bay City, then you may have caught a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the survey results, which was presented by Nate Geinzer, MLGMA Professional Development Chair and Assistant to the City Manager of Farmington Hills.

Some positives: almost all of the respondents plan to continue their MLGMA memberships. Most participate in MLGMA and find value in it.

The survey also pointed out some areas where MLGMA can improve. For instance, although feedback on the Winter Institute was generally favorable, people shared more constructive criticism in regards to the Summer Workshop. Although a number of people participate in things like regional groups, professional development opportunities, events, and other offerings, those numbers can certainly improve.

The MLGMA board and committees have taken note. The data will help us all continue to improve the MLGMA experience.

MLGMA Scholarships

The Professional Development Committee is now accepting a third round of 2014 MLGMA Scholarship Applications. Apply by October 31st for scholarships to attend conferences and trainings in late Fall up to the MLGMA Winter Institute. Scholarships are awarded to eligible applicants, following approval by the MLGMA Professional Development Committee, on a first-come basis.

NextGen Event: “Labor Relations 101”

From Derrick Kozicki, Assistant City Manager, Grosse Pointe Farms and Julius Suchy, Village Manager, Sparta

On November 7th, the MLGMA NextGen Committee will be hosting an event entitled, “Labor Relations 101” at the Michigan Municipal League office in Lansing, beginning at 10 a.m.

Experienced labor attorneys and municipal managers will be speaking on topics such as fostering good labor-management relations, negotiating strategies, dealing with impasse, and contract administration. The event is being sponsored by Mika Meyers Beckett Jones P.L.C. and Keller Thoma P.C..

NextGen Vice Chair, Derrick Kozicki welcomes all MLGMA members to attend, “whether you’re looking to learn the basics or just want a refresher this is the event for you,” Kozicki says.

If you’re interested in registering for the November 7th event or joining the NextGen group please visit mlgmanextgen.blogspot.com.

The MLGMA NextGen Committee has stayed busy this year providing networking and professional development opportunities for early to mid career professionals. The most recent event was at the MLGMA Summer Conference in Bay City, where the NextGen Committee held its annual conference dinner.

“When the event was an excellent opportunity for attendees from across the state to share ideas and make new connections,” NextGen Chair Julius Suchy says.
Not Your Average Police Chief Recruitment Video
How embracing innovation and risk-taking paid off big for Hillsboro, Oregon

Reprinted from MLGMA partner Alliance of Innovation’s newsletter, “Innovation Edge”

By City of Hillsboro, Oregon

It started with an idea to do something different – something you wouldn’t expect – in order to cut through the clutter, make an impact, and find the best fit for our community’s needs. In August 2013, the City of Hillsboro, Oregon created a unique and funny six-minute recruitment video designed to attract the right candidates as part of a national search for a new police chief. Not your average government or law enforcement recruitment video, this project was inspired by input from elected officials, employees and from community members who articulated what values they wanted reflected in Hillsboro’s next police chief. Through a combination of entertaining skits involving more than 20 Hillsboro police officers, along with two actors, we showcased Hillsboro, our Police Department’s connection to our growing community, our dedication to top-quality, professional public safety work, and our approachability. The video reflected our commitment to making the Hillsboro Police Department the best place to work by encouraging creative and visionary leadership and by maintaining a healthy sense of humor.

The results of this video were far more impactful than we expected. Once posted to the City’s website as part of the recruitment packet, the video quickly went viral and attracted local, national and international media attention – including placement on various news websites’ front page, as well as requests for live interviews on CNN, BBC radio and the Huffington Post. An influential national police website, policeone.com, featured the video, leading police officers from across the country to weigh in on the video’s value, mostly in praise of Hillsboro for showing the human side of policing.

Thanks to the quirky recruitment video, millions of people from across the United States (and many in other countries) learned that Hillsboro, Oregon was looking for a new Police Chief who valued a positive community relationship. That attention and free publicity was priceless in helping us to attract the best candidates in our nationwide search. In December 2013, we hired Lee Dobrowolski from the Salt Lake City Police Department, who stepped into his new position in Hillsboro in early 2014. Lee credited the video with helping him to make the decision to apply for this position, and helping him to realize that Hillsboro is the place where he and his family want to be.

“The only way we as law enforcement can be approachable to the community is to show that we are human, and humans have a sense of humor,” said Lee, “That video showed the police department is approachable. That is my style, and it is evident that the Hillsboro community is very supportive of its police department.”

Continued on next page
Not only did this video accomplish our primary goal of attracting the right police chief for Hillsboro, but it also had other very significant benefits for our organization and our community. One added value was the building of camaraderie within the police department, which had been without a chief since early 2013. The video also enabled a great deal of team building during the creation and filming. Following the video’s release, the excitement and pride within the department that resulted from the public response and support was very powerful.

The video also showcased our community’s culture and built our reputation as an innovative and strong city government that has the confidence to take risks in the pursuit of a better outcome. More than 153,000 people have watched the video posted on Hillsboro’s YouTube channel to date, while millions of others have watched the video in television news broadcasts. We received an enormous amount of publicity and feedback from as far away as New Zealand. Yes, some comments were critical of us for making light of law enforcement. However, many more comments, emails and phone calls from people and law enforcement professionals nationally and internationally brought big kudos for addressing the human side of police work, for telling a story that they can relate to, and for making them laugh. Hillsboro was honored to be awarded the Alliance for Innovation’s 2014 Innovation Award for the video, and it was also recognized as a “Best Police Use of Social Media” for 2013 by the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

The cost of the video was $10,400, which was primarily for video production. We chose to scale back our spending on a national recruitment firm, essentially using the savings to pay for the video’s production. We received an exceptional return on our investment. Hillsboro could not have paid for the tens of thousands for dollars (or more) it would have cost to generate this positive national and international publicity. The City owns the raw video as well, which will be used for other marketing and communication projects.

In the end, our entire community has benefitted from this successful project. We hired an exceptional police chief and, in the process, we created a positive buzz of pride and excitement in Hillsboro and within the police department, and sent a message to all that Hillsboro is a great place to work and live.

From our perspective, innovation and justifiable risk-taking should be the norm and not the exception for local government. If we truly want to excel in creating and maintaining successful communities in the future, we must proactively seek out and embrace innovative and creative solutions. Hillsboro will continue to “think outside the box” in our approach to providing the best possible services to our community.

Learn more by watching this video http://youtu.be/0i7yjabtBs8 or search City of Hillsboro, Oregon on YouTube.

MLGMA, Michigan Municipal League, and the Alliance for Innovation are partnered in efforts to provide members of the organizations exposure to national innovations along with sharing the innovative initiatives and projects of MI local governments. The Alliance is a network of local governments driving innovation throughout their organizations. You can learn more about the Alliance for Innovation and or the joint Alliance and ICMA Knowledge Network at transformgov.org or contact our Regional Director, Greg Stopka at gstopka@transformgov.org.
In This Issue:

Apply for MLGMA Scholarships to attend conferences in late Fall up to the MLGMA Winter Institute, by October 31st. Read more on page 8.

MLGMA NextGen Committee will host an event entitled, “Labor Relations 101,” on November 7th at the Michigan Municipal League office in Lansing. Read more on page 8.

Save the date for the MLGMA Winter Institute, January 27th to 30th in Novi. Read more on page 7.

Leadership ICMA

The application period for the class of 2016 has been extended. Apply by October 31st. Leadership ICMA is a competitive, intensive two-year ICMA University program designed to cultivate key competencies needed for successful leadership at all levels of local government management. The program is designed for ICMA members who have at least three years of management experience in local government or a related field. Participants join a class of select individuals to complete a series of five class modules and a team-based capstone project.

Gettysburg Leadership Institute

Apply before December 31, and save $100. The leadership lessons of the battle of Gettysburg, the leadership styles of Lincoln and Eisenhower, and the aftermath or disaster recovery of the town of Gettysburg after the battle of 1863 form the core of the Gettysburg Leadership Institute, a site-specific leadership institute offered in conjunction with the Gettysburg Foundation. April 29 to May 1, 2015 in Gettysburg, PA

ICMA Mid-Career Manager’s Institute

Apply before December 31, and save $100. ICMA is accepting applications for the 2015-2016 Mid-Career Managers Institute, an 18-month leadership development institute designed to meet the specific needs of mid-career managers.

ICMA identifies “mid-career” as those who hold leadership positions in their organizations, military, public/private sector, academies, and managers/assistants/department heads not ready to be credentialed but looking for their next challenge. The Institute also provides a focused educational experience for members already credentialed.

Senior Executive Leadership Institute

Apply before January 3, and save $100. The core of the SEI Leadership Institute is the study of leadership and the leaders role in high performance organizations. As a participant in the program, you will have ample opportunity to hone skills and test strategies that can help you build a high performance organization. May 30 to June 6, 2015, in Charlottesville, VA.
Kathie Grinzinger is this year’s recipient of MLGMA’s “John M. Patriarche Distinguished Service Award,” our association’s highest honor. Grinzinger -- a past MLGMA President -- leads the Michigan Municipal League’s Executive Search Service and previously served as Mt. Pleasant City Manager. Congratulations, Kathie!

MLGMA President Peter Auger landed a new job this September. He is now City Manager of Novi. Auger has previously served Auburn Hills, Davison, and the village of Ortonville. Congratulations on your new post, Peter!

Rebecca Fleury is the new manager in Battle Creek. Her previous gigs include managing the Village of Middleville and working for the city of Kalamazoo. May your newest endeavor be a rewarding experience, Rebecca!

S. Tutt Gorman is the new city manager in Portland. He is the principal attorney at Gorman Law PLLC and was Portland’s city attorney. Best wishes to you, Tutt!

Kurt Perron is now the village manager in Baraga. He has served as Chairman/President of the Bay Mills Indian Community. May the new position prove fruitful, Kurt!

Not yet a member?
Register to enjoy the benefits of membership in Michigan’s premier association of local management professionals.
www.mlgma.org/membership.html
or email membership@mlgma.org

MLGMA
Michigan Local Government Management Association
A State Affiliate of ICMA

The Michigan Local Government Management Association is the professional association for local government managers from municipalities, counties, and townships throughout the state of Michigan. The non-profit organization is the Michigan section of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), and members follow ICMA’s code of ethics. MLGMA is affiliated with the Michigan Municipal League and in partnership with Alliance for Innovation. The Manager newsletter is edited for MLGMA by journalist Jennifer Eberbach.

To suggest a story idea or contribute to the newsletter, email JenniferEberbach@gmail.com