



Massachusetts Town Clerks' Association

The Public Recorder

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From the President, Andrew T. Dowd

Congratulations to all for running a successful Presidential Primary! Voter turnout was very high across the state, giving us a sense of what November will be like. As we quickly transition into Town Election/Town Meeting season, I wish you all the best of luck – may the winners win big!

I recently participated in a roundtable discussion at the State Auditor's Office - Division of Local Mandates. DLM has undertaken a review of state statutes enacted over the past five years to determine if legislation enacted during this time period has a significant financial impact upon the cities and towns in the Commonwealth, to determine the costs and benefits of each statute impacting municipal finance, and to make recommendations to the legislature relative to its impact on municipal finance. They are planning to release their report on this review towards the end of March. We had a very productive meeting. Once again, it was a privilege to have a seat at the table, it is evident that our state officials value input from the MTCA. DLM staff are well aware of impacts legislation can have on our local communities. Now that draft Early Voting regulations have been released, DLM will be able to further review the impact and determine if mandates do exist.

Speaking of Early Voting, please review the draft regulations which were recently distributed. If you have specific comments or concerns, please feel free to copy me on your reply to Michelle.

Please mark your calendars for our summer conference, June 15th – 17th at the Hotel 1620 in Plymouth www.hotel1620.com This new location promises to be a great venue, both affordable and convenient. The Education Committee is in the process of putting together some great educational offerings. You won't want to miss it!



Thanks,

Andy –

Andrew T. Dowd,
MTCA President 2015-2017

BEACON HILL REPORT

by Thomas Joyce, Esq.

Congratulations on conducting Presidential Primary Elections this month! By all accounts you did your part in making it a "Super Tuesday!" Great job!

At the Statehouse, House and Senate Clerks are working tirelessly to process thousands of bills reported out of the Joint Committees by the deadline of Wednesday March 16th. However, many committees sought extensions of time to report on a number of their respective bills.

I suspect the Joint Committee on Election Laws may report a few new bills favorably, including House Bill 3937 a bill filed by Representative Kaufman and others which would require the State Secretary to adopt regulations in consultation with the Registry of Motor Vehicles and other data collecting agencies to establish a system for automatic voter registration. This will be a huge undertaking indeed.

Another significant issue of interest, the Conference Committee on Public Records Reform is extremely close to reaching a compromise and is expected to report any day. I remain confident that the changes the MTCA sought will be part of the final bill. The final proposal will then go to the legislature for an up or down vote without amendments.

Your legislative committee and I will be watching this bill very closely.

As to our major legislative goal this session, the bill establishing the use of electronic poll books, it remains under review by House Counsel and I am hopeful to help get it passed by the full House and over to the Senate before the House becomes focused on consideration of its version of the fiscal 2017 appropriations bill which is expected to be debated in the third week of April.

As you can see things in the public policy arena

are very fluid at the moment. With formal legislative sessions concluding at midnight on July 31st in this election year, House and Senate members will be eager to pass their initiatives over a relatively short period. That is not to say that they cannot advance their bills during informal sessions until years end, but they will be focused on constituent services and re-election campaigns as well.



UPCOMING MTCA CONFERENCES

MTCA SUMMER CONFERENCE

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MMA SUFFOLK CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

The Massachusetts Municipal Association, in partnership with Suffolk University, will again offer the MMA-Suffolk University Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management program to communities for the academic year 2016-2017.

This year we will be offering the program in the beautiful new fire headquarters in the Town of Westborough.

The MMA – Suffolk Certificate program is a special offering designed exclusively for Massachusetts municipal employees interested in furthering their professional careers in local government and pursuing graduate degrees. This program is an excellent opportunity to provide a valuable critical learning experience for new and seasoned managers and key employees.

We have had an outstanding response to the programs we have run in past years in Natick, Reading, Barnstable (twice!), Watertown, Duxbury, and Burlington. The program is a high-quality academic offering where students earn true academic credits toward a public administration graduate degree at a fraction of the normal cost.

The all-day program will be offered on 25 Fridays from **September 2016** to **May 2017**. This year we are offering the program at the new fire department headquarters in the Town of Westborough. Successful participants will receive a Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management, and credits toward an MPA degree. Tuition for the entire 25-day program is \$2,500.

We anticipate that admission to this program will be very competitive. **The deadline for submitting applications is Friday, April 29th.**

An Information meeting will be held:

Friday, April 8th at 1:00 p.m. at the Westborough fire department headquarters, 42 Milk Street.

Please pass this along to any department heads or employees you think may be interested.

A brochure and applications are available at: www.mma.org/certificate. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Paul Bockelman

Director of Administration & Finance

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—Mary-Ellen Lannon, Town Clerk of Winchester

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—Joyce Bradshaw, Town Clerk of North Andover

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Newsletter of the MTCA

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