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From: NJLM - Municipal Clerks [mailto:njlm-clerks@cityconnections.com]
Sent: Thursday, January 08, 2009 3:41 PM
To: Lashway, Lisa
Subject: Municipal Clerks from NJLM

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LEAGUE ALERT

Municipal Clerk: Please forward to Mayor and Governing Body.

January 8, 2009

Re: I **Agendas for Stakeholder Meetings on Draft GWRA Recommendations**

Re: II **Federal Stimulus News**

Re: III **Library Funding**

Re: IV **Pinelands Commission Pinelands Model Septic System Management Ordinance**

Re: I Agendas for Stakeholder Meetings on Draft GWRA Recommendations

Dear Mayor:

Mayors Committee for a Green Future Co-Chairs, Mayor Meryl Frank of Highland Park and Deputy Mayor Fred Profeta of Maplewood have asked us to advise you that on December 15, 2008 the DEP released the Draft Global Warming Response Act Recommendations Report, and announced a series of six stakeholder meetings designed to gather feedback on these recommendations.

The draft report and schedule of meetings can be found at: http://www.state.nj.us/globalwarming/.

The schedule and agendas for each of the six stakeholder meetings can be accessed at http://www.state.nj.us/globalwarming/home/stakeholder.html . Be aware that the meeting that had been scheduled for Wednesday, January 7, was postponed due to inclement weather. This

meeting has been rescheduled. It will be held on Thursday, January 22, 2009 from 2-5 PM in the DEP's Public Hearing Room in Trenton.

Also at the website you will find a summary table of the 40 2020 supporting recommendations found in the draft report, organized to reflect the issues that will be covered at each of these meetings.

The summary table also provides page references for where the more detailed description of those recommendations can be found in the draft report. To make these stakeholder meetings as productive as possible, we strongly encourage all attendees to read the draft report ahead of time, and familiarize themselves with the recommendations relevant to their stakeholder session(s).

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

William G. Dressel, Jr.
Executive Director

Re: II Federal Stimulus News

Dear Mayor:

As we write this letter, the Congressional Budget Office projects a 'jaw dropping' $1.2 trillion federal budget deficit this fiscal year. U.S. unemployment numbers roughly equal the population of the State of New Jersey. Roughly one out of every 600 homes in New Jersey faces foreclosure. Governor Corzine, in an effort to address state revenue declines, has cut an additional $15 million from already diminished municipal property tax relief funding programs. And Congress has set a goal for passage of the next economic stimulus bill by mid-February.

And, through the League, New Jersey municipalities have made their needs known.

In response to a December, 2008 request from the League, local governments all around New Jersey completed a survey specifying local infrastructure programs that could begin, with the requisite funding, by the end of June. By January 6, when the new Congress convened, over 80 municipalities had listed locally needed projects, the cost of which would total over $500 million. Since then, others have weighed in.

On January, 7, the League forwarded the lists to Senators Lautenberg and Menendez and to the rest of our entire Congressional Delegation, asking them to do all that they can to secure direct funding for these investments. We have already heard back from Senator Lautenberg, who has thanked us for the information and pledged to fight on our behalf.

If you were unable to complete the survey by the 6th, we urge you to do so as soon as possible. (You can access the survey at http://www.njslom.org/Municipal-Stimulus-Pkg.rtf.) You should then forward your needs to Senators Lautenberg and Menendez and to your district's Congressman. (You can access addresses at http://www.usa.gov/Contact/Elected.shtml.)

Our thanks to all of you. We will do our best to keep you posted on important stimulus package developments.

Very truly yours,

William G. Dressel, Jr.
Executive Director

Re: III Library Funding

Dear Mayor:

Resolution 2008-03, passed at the League Conference this past November, calls for an amendment to N.J.S.A. 40:54-8 regarding tax levies for free public libraries. Specifically, the resolution calls for a reduction in the required payment for library funding from the current "1/3rd of a mil" to "1/6th" of a mil on every dollar of assessable property within such municipality based on the equalized valuation of such property.

We believe that, as local governments confront unprecedented fiscal challenges, a reform to the statute is both appropriate and necessary. We note that such a change would not prevent a municipality from providing more funding than it required, but merely lower the required payment for municipal libraries.

We are seeking legislative sponsors for this initiative. In the meanwhile, we are providing you a model resolution that you can pass, if you see fit.

Very truly yours,

William G. Dressel, Jr.
Executive Director

Resolution Recommending Amendment to N.J.S.A. 40:54-8
Regarding Tax Levies for Free Public Libraries

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40:54-8 requires the Governing Body of every municipality which is governed by the law concerning free public libraries to annually appropriate, and raise by taxation, an amount equal to one third of a mill on every dollar of assessable property within the municipality, based on the equalized valuation of such property; and

WHEREAS, this law was first enacted in 1944 and has only been amended once, that being in 1985; and

WHEREAS, the last amendment was over 23 years ago, and the initial law is now 64 years old; and

WHEREAS, the equalized value of property within New Jersey in 1944, as well as in 1985, was substantially less than the equalized value of property today, considering the rate of inflation and the boom in the real estate market in the mid-to-late 80's and again in the early-to-mid 2000's; and

WHEREAS, though the equalized values of real estate have increased many times over – perhaps as much as 50 times the equalized values in 1944, and as much as two or three-fold since 1985 --- the state law (40:54-8) has not changed the fractional obligation of each municipality to contribute toward its free public library; and

WHEREAS, the amount each municipality is required to contribute under the current statute far exceeds the reasonable needs and requirements of the free public libraries in the municipalities governed by this law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the [fill in name of municipality] hereby urges the Legislature to revise the statutory requirements, in order to reduce the mandated financial obligation on the municipalities and their taxpayers under 40:54-8; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the [fill in name of municipality] urges that N.J.S.A. 40:54-8 be amended to read as follows:

"The governing body or appropriate board of every municipality governed by this article shall annually appropriate and raise by taxation an amount of not less than one-sixth of a mill on every dollar of assessable property within such municipality based on the equalized valuation of such property as certified by the Director of the Division of Taxation in the Department of the Treasury. Nothing herein shall prevent the municipality from appropriating a greater amount where the governing body, in its discretion, determines that such amount is appropriate," and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be forwarded to the Senator (fill in name of State Senator), Assembly (fill in name of Assembly representatives), the New Jersey State League of Municipalities and the Governor of the State of New Jersey.

Re: IV Pinelands Commission Pinelands Model Septic System Management Ordinance

Dear Mayor:

Bunea Vista Township Mayor Chuck Chiarello has advised the League that the Pinelands Commission (PC) is considering a Pinelands Model Septic System Management Ordinance. A copy of a power point presentation that was provided to the League by Ed Wengrowski of the PC staff will be posted tomorrow as a **link to this letter.**

The power point provides an outline -- not the details -- of the proposal. It recites that the Pinelands rule will be directed at the homeowner, rather than at municipalities. But it also advises that the ordinance is "not likely to be well received by municipalities which have not embraced the new NJDEP septic management rule."

Until the draft rule is made available, it is not possible to assess the impact on municipal government. Issues to be considered at that point will include, but are not limited to, whether the PC is acting within, or beyond, its statutory authority and whether the proposal constitutes an unfunded mandate. The League is particularly concerned that state agencies during these dire economic times avoid imposing new financial burdens on local government.

Should you have any further information regarding this matter or have any questions or concerns about this communication, please contact Deborah M. Kole, Staff Attorney, at the League, Ex. 137, or at dkole@njslom.com

Very truly yours,

William G. Dressel, Jr.
Executive Director

NJLM

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Trenton, NJ 08608