

PMA INFORMER

The Voice of Professional Municipal Administrators
In Newfoundland and Labrador

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PMA CORE PROGRAM

PMA continues to roll out a series of five core modules to prepare municipal administrators for the challenges they face in the day to day administration and operation of a municipal office.

To date, three have been offered with much success. To date, **200** municipal employees and elected officials are enrolled in this program.

Module I	Roles, Responsibilities, Relationships
Module II	Municipal Office Administration
Module III	Cash Handling/Budgeting/Financial Evaluations
Module IV	Municipal Accounting
Module V	Municipal Planning

All modules are one full day each and have been developed and facilitated by Keith Warren and Gerard Lewis of LW Consulting.

Module IV is scheduled to be offered on April 15, the first day of convention 2015 in Corner Brook. The final module is scheduled for the Fall Forum in September of 2015.



UNDERSTANDING COUNCIL / STAFF RELATIONSHIPS

While the topic of Council/Staff roles and relationships has been discussed forever, it is one that still needs discussing. I stumbled upon an article online by Jim Clemmer of The Clemmer Group. While I've only included excerpts from it, I thought it worth sharing in this issue of the PMA Informer.

Building a strong partnership between staff and council is essential to effective municipal management. In many instances this lack of harmonization is caused by lack of agreement on the defined roles for both staff and council members. When council "snoopervises" staff or gets deep into operations, or when staff sets public policy and establishes community priorities, the distinction between the two is blurred. This often sets up a vicious circle of ever eroding trust and teamwork that spirals downward.

Council and staff members are both responsible for recognizing the issue and working to resolve it. With council membership changing every four years, it is difficult to form a lasting relationship between council and municipal staff. With many trust and teamwork gaps, each side often doesn't understand the other's perspective. Staff can have the unrealistic expectation that council should act as a team. But many council members have individual agendas that correspond to the area they represent. Staff needs to take their direction from council as a whole, not individual members.

On the other hand, council may have little idea of the havoc their behavior is causing throughout administration. Many don't realize that other members are dealing with individual operating issues and drifting away from council's policy setting, planning, and priority setting roles. Their frustration, comments, or questions of staff can come across as disrespectful and questioning their competence. That needs to be fed back to council and perhaps council members privately and constructively confronted with their behavior and its impact on staff morale and effectiveness.

It's hard to see the picture when you're inside the frame. Gaps between council and management staff generally develop gradually without much notice. They are often ignored or even considered normal. Every leadership group can benefit from stepping back periodically for an objective look at their situation. As "we/they gaps" widen, they diminish effectiveness and create communication problems. Municipal leadership groups can dramatically improve their effectiveness by recognizing and bridging their gaps to work together for the good of communities they serve.

TRAINING FACT

PMA has had over 1180 Administrators and Elected Officials participate in their training sessions since 2013.



In this edition of the Informer, a special mention goes out to the Town Clerks, Town Managers, and other employees who have devoted many years to municipal government. The following have retired during 2014:

Randy Walsh	Stadium Engineer	CBS	38 yrs
Ford Colbourne	Public Works	St. Anthony	36 yrs
Genevieve Tremblett	Clerk/Manager	St. Alban's	36 yrs
Regina Organ	Clerk/Manager	Norris Point	35 yrs
Harvey Henstridge	Town Manager	Triton	30 yrs
Norma Stacey	Town Manager	Fortune	30 yrs
Wayne Slade	Town Manager	Arnold's Cove	30 yrs
Ella Humphries	Clerk/Manager	Northern Arm	28 yrs
Stanley Lights	Equipment Operator	CBS	27 yrs
Blanche Bennett	Town Clerk	Fogo Island	20 yrs
Claude Bragg	Labourer	Channel-PAB	9 yrs
Emily Smith	Town Clerk	Hawke's Bay	6 yrs

PMA would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the passing of long time member, Barry Coates, Town Manager, Town of Stpehenville. Barry had been with the town for 37 years. He was a long time supporter of PMA and is greatly missed by all who knew him.

PMA CONVENTION 2015

April 14-17, Corner Brook
Glynmill Inn & Greenwood Inn and Suites

Reserve your room now by calling
Glynmill Inn: 1-800-563-4400
Greenwood Inn & Suites: 634-5381

If you have suggestions for education topics, agenda items, or entertainment ideas, we encourage you to contact our office at 726-6405. We appreciate the involvement of our membership and look forward to your input in putting off the best convention to date!

MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Mentoring is a collaborative partnership in which a senior administrator provides guidance, advice, and encouragement to one with less experience. The Mentee is accountable for drawing out what he/she needs and wants, while the Mentor is accountable for giving knowledge and support when requested. We are hoping this endeavor proves to be more than just answering occasional questions, but an ongoing relationship of learning, dialog, and professional development.

PMA has compiled a list of senior administrators who are willing to become mentors. In a sector where there is a large turnover of staff, new clerks are often faced with challenges and wonder where to turn. We want to be able to provide them with a contact of someone they may ask specific questions to, or even visit your town office and see how you operate on a daily basis.

This is how the process works:

1. Any new administrators looking to be mentored are encouraged to call the PMA office.
2. A committee will review the list of Mentors to determine those available in that particular region, and best suited to meet the needs of the Mentee.
3. PMA will act as the organizer and make arrangements for both parties to talk and/or meet. (Please be advised that any costs incurred for travel, etc. will be the responsibility of the Mentee and/or their respective council.
4. PMA will encourage a continued relationship of ongoing dialogue and learning.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES – 2015

Please note that the below dates are tentative and subject to change.

Feb 27	Eastern, Clarenville
April 14-17	Annual Convention, Corner Brook
June 19	Western/Labrador, Rocky Harbour
Sept. 24-25	Central, Fall Forum, Gander
Nov. 20	Avalon, St. John's