



THE
MARYLAND
MUNICIPAL
LEAGUE

Maryland Municipal League

State of the League Report

July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016

Rising to the Challenge

MML's 2015-2016 President, **Spencer R. Schlosnagle**, Mayor of Friendsville and the FIRST MML President from Garrett County, chose "*Rise to the Challenge*" as the signature theme for his year at MML's helm. His ambitious schedule of visits to member municipalities provided the opportunity for him to challenge municipal officials across Maryland to view adversity as opportunities. "**President Spence**", as he preferred to be called, played the role of "ambassador-in-chief" in an extraordinary way with his exuberant optimism and pleasant disposition. The Board of Directors followed his lead and was enthusiastically productive during the Board year. **Mayor Schlosnagle's** leadership team, consisting of **Rockville Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton** (Legislative Committee Chair), **Mount Rainier Mayor Malinda Miles** (chair of the Hometown Emergency Preparedness Ad Hoc Committee), **Union Bridge Councilperson Ellen Cutsail** (chair of the Communications Committee), and **Oakland Councilman Jack Riley** (2016 Convention chair) all "rose to the challenge", setting new records for member engagement and commitment.



Legislative Matters

When the General Assembly adjourned at midnight on Monday, April 11, despite the fact that a heavily amended version of the League's priority HUR restoration bill passed the Senate several weeks earlier, the bill never came to a vote in the



House Environment and Transportation Committee. In addition, the \$20.3 million included in the Governor's FY '17 budget earmarked for municipal transportation needs was reduced to \$19 million by the House and Senate budget conference committee members, which meant that municipal HURs would be level funded in FY 2017.

Although the year-to-year infusions of additional transportation monies for municipalities have been much appreciated since Maryland has begun recovery from the Great Recession that began in 2008, there seemed to finally be recognition by an increasing number of legislators this year that dependence on "one-time" allocations is neither predictable nor sustainable for local governments. Once it became apparent that the MML priority bill was not going to pass during the 2016 legislative session, House leadership pledged to form a workgroup to study the local transportation funding issue over the interim with the intent to produce recommendations and introduce legislation supported by the Speaker of the House of Delegates in the 2017 legislative session. View the [2016 Final Legislative Report](#) online (15-page PDF document).

Convention Matters

The Opening General Session of the 2016 Maryland Municipal League Convention, simply titled *RISE*, was once again held in the new Performing Arts Center at the Ocean City Convention Center. The state-of-the-art venue provided an excellent venue for the annual flag parade, award presentations and keynote speaker Jason Roberts.

All available exhibit space was sold to 234 exhibitors - a record high! Municipal Main Street, located in the Dockside Hall, had 44 municipal and MML Department/Committee displays, one booth shy of tying the record number of participants set in 2015.



The 2016 achievement awards recognized entrants for examples of “rising to a challenge”. Award winners were the **City of Laurel** (Community Redevelopment Plan) and the **Towns of Rock Hall** (Dock, Dine and Discover Program) and **Bladensburg** (Municipal Collaboration Program). **Scott Delude**, Town of Oxford Public Works Superintendent, received the 2016 Roland B. Sweitzer Municipal Employee of the Year Award.



During the annual dinner on Tuesday evening of the Convention, 6 individuals were inducted into the Municipal Officials Hall of Fame, which recognizes those who have served as elected city/town officials for 20+ years. **MML Past President and Chesapeake Beach Mayor Bruce A. Wahl** received MML’s Lifetime



Achievement Award and **Governor Larry Hogan** offered the keynote address. We were indeed fortunate to have two of Maryland’s former Governors join **Governor Hogan** at the Tuesday event. **Governor Harry R. Hughes** and **Governor Parris N. Glendenning**, who is also an MML Honorary member, were special guests of **President Schlosnagle**.

At MML’s convention business meeting, President Schlosnagle recognized a record high 60 municipalities who qualified for the MML/MUSCO Sports Lighting Banner City/Town designation in 2016 including two member municipalities new to the Banner City/Town program; Thurmont and Trappe. This program, in its ninth year, recognizes member commitment and involvement in the activities of the Maryland Municipal League.

Financial Matters

MML maintained a strong, financially stable position during the fiscal year and received an unqualified opinion from the audit firm of Mullen, Sondberg, Wimbish and Stone, PA. The [audited financial statements](#) are available online.





Of Note:

- MML's Strategic Partner program entered its twelfth year retaining all the 2015 Partners and adding a new Leader level partner, Sprint, in 2016. The program currently hosts 20 incredible partners yielding \$100,000 annually in non-dues revenue for the League.



- The 2015 Fall Conference was held October 26-28 at the Hyatt Resort in Cambridge. Three core Academy for Excellence courses, four elective classes including a session on eradicating blighted and foreclosed properties and a bonus session on Community Policing added superb educational opportunities for attendees. One of the highlights of the networking and social events of the Conference was a Halloween party where attendees were invited to wear costumes. A good time was had by all!



- The Maryland Mayors Association (MMA), chaired by **Kensington Mayor Pete Fosselman**, held its annual winter conference in Annapolis in early February. The 2016 conference drew a record number of registrants - 66 mayors from every region of Maryland, including 9 first-time attendees. The business agenda included legislative briefings, workshops and a press



conference announcing MMA's support of a MML 2016 bill to stabilize the distribution of Highway User Revenues (HUR). A highlight of the conference was the annual reception at Government House hosted by **Governor and Mrs. Hogan**. **Lieutenant Governor Boyd Rutherford** also attended. The Governor, who had announced his battle with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma in the summer, received an enthusiastic response from the mayors after announcing that he was cancer-free!

- MML **President Schlosnagle** lead a delegation of 50 from Maryland to *Music City*, Nashville, Tennessee for the annual NLC Congress of Cities in November. **Gaithersburg Councilman Mike Sesma** began his final year on the NLC Board but he welcomed two new Marylanders to the Board; **College Park Mayor Patrick Wojahn** and **Greenbelt Councilperson Leta Mach**, both of whom chaired NLC Standing committees last year. Pursuant to League bylaws, both joined the MML Board as ex-officio members during their terms on NLC's Board.



- The "If I were Mayor..." Essay Contest for 2016 drew 2628 entries representing 105 schools statewide. We were pleased to have **Lieutenant Governor Boyd Rutherford** and **State Superintendent of Schools Jack Smith** recognize the 11 winners during the awards ceremony at the State House on May 12th.



Staff Notes:

- MML welcomed **Caleb J. Wolf** as the newest member of the team in August. Caleb was an intern with the City of Annapolis as part of the MML partnership with the University of Maryland School of Public Policy in 2013. He serves as Executive Assistant to the Executive Director.
- **Kevin J. Connors** became the new Legislative Assistant in mid-November, replacing **Trish Westervelt** who took a position with the Hogan Administration at Transportation.
- **Wendy Kautz** joined us in December as the part-time Finance and Personnel Services Assistant.
- **Bill Jorch** actually left a position at Transportation in February to become the new Associate for Legislative and Research, replacing **Tom Curtin**.

The Maryland Municipal League continues to enjoy credibility and respect at the highest levels of government. That achievement is due to the committed municipal officials who have taken part in our many activities during the past year. Thanks to good teamwork and commitment, the Maryland Municipal League continues to *speak with one voice* on behalf of the 159 MML members. Thank you for your service to your association.



Maryland Municipal League
The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns

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