From: NJLM Daily Update
To: bthomas@neptunecitynj.com
Subject: Kovach Speaks at CRC Meeting; Expedited Inspections; ARP Portal Opens
Date: Friday, June 4, 2021 2:21:19 PM

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June 4, 2021

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Municipal Clerks: Please forward to your Mayor, Governing Body, and Department Heads. To assist in providing guidance and information we have created a COVID-19 resource page. We will continue to update the page as we get pertinent information and include announcements in our Daily Updates.

I. State Issues

a. Kovach Presents Municipal Concerns at Cannabis Regulatory Commission Meeting

The Cannabis Regulatory Commission (CRC) held a meeting this week where League President, Mayor Janice Kovach of Clinton Town, spoke about some of the issues facing municipalities with the rollout of the legalized cannabis, including parking concerns, odor control mechanisms, and other quality of life issues. A recording of this meeting can be found on the CRC website. While the League has never taken a position on legalized recreational cannabis, we continue to advocate on behalf of all municipalities to ensure each is provided with the regulatory flexibility and appropriate local authority necessary to ensure individual communities are able to make their own decisions.

The League would like to thank the CRC for its efforts to ensure municipal concerns are addressed, and we look forward to a continued partnership with the CRC as they move to draft and adopt statewide regulations. The CRC's next public meeting is scheduled for July 13, 2021 at 6 p.m.

Contact: Frank Marshall, Esq., Associate General Counsel, FMarshall@njlm.org or 609-695-3481 ext. 137.

b. Expedited Construction Inspection Bill Heads to Governor

Yesterday, the Senate approved S-3095/A-4850, which the League opposes, sending the measure to Governor Murphy for his action. The legislation would establish an expedited construction inspection program that would allow able and willing property owners to pay an additional fee to jump the inspection line and receive an inspection within two days rather than the current three days.

While S-3095/A-4850 ostensibly provides for a mechanism for expedited inspections, the more likely unintended consequence of this bill is a complete shift from inspections being performed by municipal officials to third-party entities. This would be a tectonic shift in the nature and function of construction inspections and is something that needs far more consideration and discussion with a host of impacted stakeholders.

Further, language within S-3095/A-4850 would make the municipal building department a transaction agent for third-party inspection entities – with enforcing agencies acting as a middleman for the collection of fees from applicants only to be turned over to the third-party inspection entities. This comes at an administrative cost to municipal building departments, for which the legislation provides no means by which the building department would offset or recoup such costs.

The League hoped to work with the bills' sponsors on certain amendments to address these issues but, ultimately, these concerns were left unaddressed. League efforts now turn to the Governor's office where we will seek a conditional veto to return to the bill to the legislature to address municipal concerns.

Contact: Frank Marshall, Esq., Associate General Counsel, FMarshall@njlm.org or 609-695-3481 ext. 137.

c. Division of Local Finance Government Services releases LFN 2021-10

Recently the Division of Local Finance Government Services released Local Finance Notice 2021-10 extending the deadline for all local units with a calendar year budget cycle to complete and file their 2020 audits to September 31, 2021. This extension also applies to counties, calendar year municipalities, and all calendar year authorities, including fire districts.

In addition, the Division is authorizing counties and calendar year municipalities to include in their annual audits the most recent audited GASB 68 and GASB 75 information published by the Division of Pension and Benefits. Please note that the Division does reserve the right to revise its guidance regarding the GASB 68 and GASB 75 reporting as circumstances change. The guidance on the treatment of GASB 68 and 75 does not apply to government entities following GAAP accounting.

Contact: Andrew LaFevre, Legislative Analyst, alafevre@njlm.org , 609-695-3481 ext.116.

II. Federal Issues

a. DLGS Provides Application for Municipalities Under 50,000 Population Coronavirus-19 State and Local Recovery Funds.

This week, the Division of Local Government Services (DLGS) posted the application portal for municipalities with a population under 50,000 to apply for funding allocated in the American Rescue Plan. For more information, please read the League's recent blog post.

Contact: Paul Penna, Legislative Analyst, ppenna@njlm.org or (609) 695-3481 ext. 110.

b. Highlight Municipal Infrastructure Needs and Successes with #LeadWithInfrastructure

As Congress debates the details of an infrastructure package with the Biden Administration, including how it is paid for, it is critical that New Jersey municipalities highlight infrastructure needs and successes on social media and tag federal members.

Using the hashtags #RebuldWithUs and #LeadWithInfrastructure, please share pictures, graphics and descriptions of local infrastructure needs and success stories on your social media accounts. Examples of tweets can be viewed on the League's Social Media Sample Page.

Contact: Paul Penna, Legislative Analyst, ppenna@njlm.org or 609-695-3481 ext. 110

III. COVID Update

COVID-19 Weekly Update

Yesterday the Assembly and Senate passed A-5820/S-3866, which will expire all COVID-19 Executive Orders 30 days after the Governor signs the bill with limited exceptions. We anticipate the Governor will sign this bill very shortly. For more on this legislation, please see our recent blog post.

Earlier this week, Governor Murphy joined US Secretary of Education Dr. Miguel Cardona visiting Bergenfield High School to discuss the importance of in-person learning. In addition, White House COVID-19 Response Coordinator Jeff Zients joined Governor Murphy at his briefing to announce that President Biden is declaring June a national month of action to mobilize an all-America sprint to get more people vaccinated by July 4th, including new commitments from some of the largest childcare providers in the country to provide free drop-in childcare to parents getting vaccinated; extended hours at pharmacies for vaccinations, including many pharmacies open 24 hours every Friday in the month of June starting next week; and continued commitment from the private sector to incentivize vaccinations including free beer for everyone over the age of 21 on July 4th courtesy of Anheuser-Busch.

COVID Data for June 3, 2021:

- 255 new positive cases for a total of 888,288 confirmed cases
- 7 new confirmed deaths for a total of 23,575 confirmed deaths
- The rate of transmission is at 0.72
- 1,263 cases linked to 281 school outbreaks since August 2020
- 8,755,436 vaccine doses have been administered, including 4,970,356 who have

received at least one dose and 4,110,212 who are fully vaccinated. 54% are Pfizer, 42% Moderna, and 4% J&J.

Vaccine Information

Governor Murphy announced that the state will begin to transition away from mega-site vaccination sites to a community-based model. The mega-sites are now scheduling the final shots for our mega-sites. Earlier this week, the Atlantic County and Gloucester County mega-sites have stopped delivering first doses. The dates for the mega-sites to administer their final first dose is as follows: Bergen County, June 4; Morris County, June 23; Middlesex County, June 26; and Burlington County, July 1. These sites will remain open to ensure the delivery of scheduled second doses at these sites. The last day for those second doses are June 18 in Gloucester County, June 19 in Atlantic County, June 24 in Bergen County, July 16 in Morris County, July 17 in Middlesex County, and July 23 in Burlington County.

As a reminder, the vaccination incentive Vax Pass under the new "Vax and Visit NJ continues. Homebound residents who have not yet connected with their local health department, or a home health agency, and who need an in-home vaccination should visit www.covid19.nj.gov/homeboundvax or contact the call center at 855-568-0545.

Contacts:

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- Lori Buckelew, Senior Legislative Analyst, lbuckelew@njslom.org, 609-695-3481 x112.

IV. 2020 Annual League Conference

a. It's Not Too Late!

We hope that the NJLM Virtual Conference allowed you to look back and forward on the challenges of the day, be it the COVID-19 pandemic, social and restorative justice or how to balance the competing interests in preparing for your 2021 budget. While we expect to be back in-person in Atlantic City in 2021, the virtual conference offers a unique benefit. The content of the approximately 80 programs and 145 virtual exhibitor booths will be available on-demand through October 31, 2021.

Anyone who is registered can simply log in to the Conference website to view any of the programs or visit any of the exhibitor booths. And for those who did not attend, it's not too late. We will continue to accept registrations for access to the Conference site. Those who register now will not be able to apply for CEUs but will have full access to all programs and exhibit booths. And please continue to visit the exhibitors who chose to support the 105th Annual Conference by stopping by their booths. You can contact exhibitors directly with any questions or comments by simply using the "Request Information" button on each booth. This will generate an automatic email to the exhibitor and they will contact you with a reply.

V. Also of Interest

a. 2021 Planning and Redevelopment Conference

New Jersey communities are struggling with a multitude of economic, social, and environmental challenges. Join hundreds of New Jersey professionals, elected officials, and community activists at the 2021 Planning and Redevelopment Conference on June 10-11 hosted by New Jersey Future and APA New Jersey, as we restart, recover, and reimagine land use in a rapidly changing and post-pandemic environment.

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