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PM
PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

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IS IT TIME TO CHANGE PUBLIC SAFETY OPERATIONS?

New approaches to address new fiscal realities

ADVANCING PROFESSIONAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT WORLDWIDE

ICMA

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Body Language Shapes Who You Are

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Social psychologist, Harvard Business School professor, and one of *Time* magazine's "Game Changers" of 2012

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Author of five provocative bestselling books about the changing world of work

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September 22–25, 2013 | Hynes Convention | Boston, Massachusetts ICMA

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BY MARTHA PEREGO

ETHICS DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Are you ready? What's your game plan?

The worst of ethical calamities doesn't compare to the physical and personal toll of a natural or other manmade disasters. That said, leaders should not underestimate the harm that an ethical misstep can have on the staff, organization, and community. It's often manifested in that intangible, yet hard to repair, factor of trust.

The average ethical disaster starts quietly with the initial inquiry, rumor, or report of questionable conduct by a public official or agency. Next comes the response, almost always issued by a spokesperson, offering a denial, counter explanation, or vague statement of concern.

The second shoe drops when an inside source or diligent reporter presents more damaging facts that elevate the seriousness of the allegations or calls into question the veracity of those initial responses. With the heat up, perhaps the official or agency leader responds in person with a pledge for an investigation in order to "get to the bottom of it" and a commitment to do whatever is necessary to ensure that this never happens again.

Then . . . silence. The lack of action inspires prodding from the editorial page for leadership to do something! Long after the issue has faded from the front page, a final report is issued. It may include reference to new procedures, discipline or removal of the guilty parties, and perhaps a leadership change as the agency "seeks to move in a new direction."

What's missing? No mention of decisive and timely action that would restore trust—in other words, confidence that the leadership was committed to rooting out unethical or corrupt conduct, understood the systemic weakness that allowed it to happen in the first place, and took concrete steps to a prevent recurrence.

Taking the Path to Recovery

There isn't a standard playbook for handling an ethics crisis because unique

PM
PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

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circumstances will dictate the approach. That said, here are some basic steps to take to get on the path to successful recovery and reduce the likelihood that the organization leaders will stumble in their response.

Don't be quick to judge the source of the complaint. Whether it is an outlier or more mainstream person, either could be the source of a legitimate concern. One agency uncovered the fraud by senior-level department staff after a new employee joined the team, observed improper conduct, and reported her concerns directly to the city manager.

Drop the defenses. Publicly acknowledge that the issue is really worthy of concern and then outline the process you will employ. Be willing to bring in outside, independent resources if required to gather and evaluate the facts.

Conduct a thorough, expeditious investigation before taking action. It's hard to be fast and fair, but it's important to balance both. Critical time is often lost in the initial stages of a crisis as leaders ponder the public relations fallout, whether the issue is even worthy of review, and what to do next.

On the other side of the equation are decisions made (and later reversed) based on an initial but incomplete set of facts. Critical to the validity of the investigation is the "who." Refer matters outside the agency or use a third-party investigator for allegations of misconduct by senior leadership or when the independence of the investigator could be called into question—police investigating misconduct within their own agency, for example.

Be relentless in the investigation. An audit may initially reveal information related to the original allegation, but if it doesn't all make sense or add up, keep going. As one colleague with direct experience put it: "If what you find defies logic, you don't have all the relevant information."

Trust but verify. Source aside, this advice works for organizations. We place great trust in our employees, and that trust is reinforced when no evidence of misconduct has ever been presented. But the onus is on leadership to have proper internal controls and conduct appropriate reviews. Compliance and audit standards exist because they work.

The long-tenured employee who is so dedicated that she never takes leave, the workhorse who rejects all offers of assistance or backup, the nice but seemingly disorganized staff member who never has the required support documentation, and the supervisor who deflects questions about the details of his operations are warning signs of a problem that should be heeded.

Pay attention to the wounded afterward. That may be practically everyone in the organization. Staff outside the area where the improper conduct occurred may be really angry about the damage done to their own reputations. Those closer to the situation may be anxious about their employment status. And senior leadership may be left wondering how this could have happened on their watch.

In order of priority, communication should go to the governing body first, staff second, and then to the public. That way, those closest to the situation are not surprised by any disclosures of wrongdoing and understand what the organization will do to recover.

The legal requirement to respect privacy with regard to personnel matters doesn't muzzle leadership. Use the crisis as an opportunity to reaffirm the values that should drive everyone's conduct.

No one is totally immune from an ethics disaster. Consider how focused you are about establishing values that guide conduct in your organization, enforcing standards, and being prepared to act decisively if all else fails. PM

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BY BONNIE SVRCEK, ICMA-CM

EPIC TIMES AT ICMA

Achievements past and future

At ICMA's professional family reunion (a.k.a., 2013 Annual Conference in Boston/New England, September 22–25), a year-long celebration will be launched to recognize 100 years of what was first called the City Managers' Association.

As we prepare to gather in Boston, it is the perfect time for members, strategic partners, staff, and friends of the profession to begin to reflect upon and recognize past achievements as a professional association and begin the conversation on the next 100 years. Let's focus first on the recognition of significant milestones in ICMA's history:

- **Creation of ICMA (1914).** Eight of the 31 U.S. city managers meet in Springfield, Ohio, in December "to promote the efficiency of city managers and municipal work in general" and form the City Managers' Association (CMA). Under the group's first secretary (City Manager Ossian Carr from Cadillac, Michigan), the initial year's expenditures are $105.
- **Focus on inclusion.** CMA changes its name to the International City Managers' Association in 1924 in recognition of the many Canadian membership applications it had received. In 1991, the organization changes its name again to the International City/County Management Association to fully recognize the inclusion of county chief appointed officials who became eligible for full membership in 1969.
- **Adoption of the Code of Ethics (1924).** ICMA members formally adopt the City Manager's Code of Ethics, which consists of 13 articles and is influential in setting standards for all local government organizations. The code is subsequently amended in 1938, 1952, 1969, 1972, 1976, and 1995.
- **Creation of ICMA-RC (1972).** After three years of effort, ICMA secures official approval from the Internal Revenue Service to establish a national, portable, deferred compensation retirement plan that was named the ICMA Retirement Corporation.
- **Focus on diversity.** ICMA recognizes the role diversity plays, both in communities and in the association.
  - » Establishes the inaugural ICMA Task Force on Women in the Profession and the Minority Executive Placement Program in 1975.
  - » Membership elects first African–American president of ICMA in 1983.
  - » ICMA enters into its first memorandum of understanding with the National Forum for Black Public Administrators to support and promote opportunities for women and minorities in local government and to expand the roles of African Americans in all aspects of public administration in 1989.
  - » The first non-North American president of ICMA is elected in 1944.
  - » In 2002, the first female president of ICMA is elected.
  - » In 1991, ICMA establishes through affiliation the Hispanic Network, which provides specialized services and support to Hispanic local government professionals and, through them, to the broader Hispanic community.
- **Emphasis on international activities (1989–1990s).** The U.S. Agency for International Development awards ICMA its first multimillion-dollar Municipal Development and Management Project contract to assist local government officials in developing countries.
- **Adoption of strategic planning (2008).** The executive board adopts an ICMA strategic plan created by a member-driven task force to guide the priorities of the association.

Perhaps more importantly and definitely more difficult is the conversation that needs to occur regarding the future of ICMA. Based on my experiences during the past year, here are some initial thoughts regarding the questions that ICMA members must consider as we celebrate the past and focus on the future:

- **The Future of the profession.** How will we cultivate future local government management professionals who are indeed the future of the profession?
- **Diversity and inclusion:** How do we continue to advocate and engage in the conversation regarding the recruitment and retention of a diverse membership? Communities with a population of less than 10,000, for example, is a large part of ICMA's membership, yet the association's leadership is not reflective of this cohort of membership.
- **Member engagement.** It is often said "you get out of a membership association what you put into it." As we approach the second century of ICMA, we must define how to engage members in creating a new strategic plan and then how to engage members in the execution of the plan.
- **Association governance.** As we reflect on the past and focus on the future, we must ask ourselves whether ICMA should be a member-driven or staff-driven organization. How we answer this question will be a cornerstone of our next 100 years as the premier association of professional local government management.

As the 99th president of ICMA, I have every confidence that we will both celebrate our past and focus on our future with style. I invite you to be a part of the celebration and the conversation; many opportunities for member engagement will emerge during the next two years. Be a part of ICMA's future! PM

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WHAT WAS THE LAST SIGNIFICANT ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE YOU MADE, WHAT PROMPTED IT, AND HOW WAS IT RECEIVED?

RANDY BUKAS
City Administrator
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I have been involved in three local emergency dispatch consolidations in three states. The driving force in each consolidation was economics. The communities were under financial distress.

In one community, there was trust between law enforcement professionals, the county administrator, and me as town administrator, so the consolidation was implemented smoothly and in a short period of time.

In another, because of the distrust between law enforcement, along with an overall consolidation of county emergency communications, three boards were established to advise the telecommunication center operations.

In the third, again because of the distrust issues, an oversight committee was created to manage the communications center. Forming the boards in these two cities helped stabilize the distrust issue.

With consolidations, all the cities saved money, provided the same services, and helped former dispatchers find employment.

JENNIFER FADDEN, ICMA-CM
City Manager
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Upon the retirement of the Colleyville parks and recreation director, it was incumbent upon the management staff to review current organizational structure and identify opportunities for service delivery improvement.

We made the decision to consolidate the parks and recreation department with the public library, which is led by an experienced leader who has made the library a beloved community asset.

She managed the challenge of merging two departments that touch the community on a daily basis, and after only about one year into the transition, program and service synergies have developed and the consolidation can be considered a success.

While there have been challenges with the change, both the leadership team and the new department's staff have embraced the goal of providing the best service to city residents.

AMY FARKAS
Township Manager
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Our township is small, with 4,873 residents and eight full-time employees. With few exceptions, employees have all been working at the township for at least a decade. The last significant organizational change occurred in 2011, when our maintenance director retired after 41 years.

Rather than fill the position, we decided to shift his duties to the rest of our maintenance staff. Reassigning his duties was the easy part; the loss of institutional knowledge has been difficult to replace. He was literally a walking encyclopedia of Harris Township history.

While succession planning is important, our experience taught us that it's equally as important to capture institutional knowledge before an employee retires. To that end, we've started memorializing as much information as possible, be it histories of our parks for our parks plan or information about road construction for our street database.

ERIK KVARSTEN, ICMA-CM
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In 2010, I organized Gresham's senior management staff into two leadership teams—the Policy Leadership Team and the Operations Leadership Team—to vet significant policy and operational issues and to increase organizational capacity.

Grounded in the values of collaboration and collective responsibility, these interdepartmental teams have been successful at elevating the quality of staff work and improving coordination of Gresham's critical business systems. They have been generally well received.

Since then, they also have continued to evolve in purpose and scope. This fits with my philosophy of aligning talent to task, as dictated by needs, and my focus on continuous organizational improvement.

Nothing is static. We accomplish our work by being nontraditional, innovative, nimble, and resourceful. PM

JOIN US FOR OUR CELEBRATION!

1

ICMA turns 100 in 2014, and we invite you to join in our celebration! Visit the ICMA anniversary website and take a tour through the historical timeline to learn about ICMA's major accomplishments and milestones and share your story.

icma.org/anniversary

BROWNFIELDS TO GREEN

2

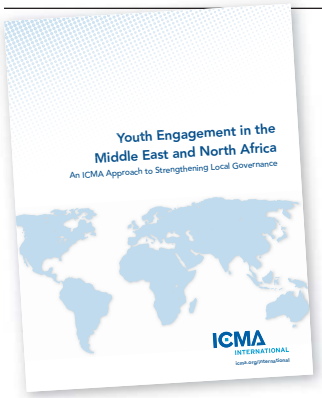
A Poster Gallery winner at ICMA's 2013 Brownfields conference featured how Sacramento, California, revitalized a blighted downtown site into mixed-use, transit-oriented development.

icma.org/LaValentina

3 CATALOG TO RICHES

Download a free PDF of ICMA's 2013–2014 Press Catalog, including a two-page spread that features new books. The PDF allows visitors to order online. Click on any book image or title and go directly to the product page at ICMA's website.

icma.org/2013-14catalog



4 CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH IN THE MIDDLE EAST/NORTH AFRICA

ICMA International proposes a framework for strengthening local government and increasing opportunities for young people in the Middle East/North Africa region in the wake of the Arab Spring, based on ICMA's experience in conflict-prone areas and its success with programs that engage youth.

icma.org/MENAyouth

INTRODUCTION

IS IT TIME TO CHANGE PUBLIC SAFETY OPERATIONS?

NEW APPROACHES TO ADDRESS NEW FISCAL REALITIES

With local finances being the driver for most cost-saving decisions that local government managers must make on a continuing basis, public safety services budgets are always a hot topic. These budgets can consume as much as 75 percent or more of a local government's overall budget.

The Census of State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies, conducted by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics every four years showed that in 2008, the last year available, there were some 18,000 police departments in the United States. The National Fire Protection Association estimated that in 2010 there were 30,000 fire departments in the United States.

When faced with effectiveness, safety, and cost savings, managers continue to look for solutions to all three. But are managers and residents ready to accept solutions that include contracting for services from a larger agency or consolidating smaller agencies into one bigger one, both of which actually are being done reasonably well in the United States and in other countries?

Here are two articles that focus on the sustainability of delivering police and fire services in the manner that has historically been done, and whether there are alternatives to the traditional approach.

The first article addresses the problems associated with maintaining the historical method of delivery, and the second article describes one city's successful efforts to take a new, more efficient approach. ICMA's Center for Public Safety Management staff members think you will find that these articles can help you evaluate your own community's public safety operations and consider possible alternatives to service delivery.

BY LEONARD MATARESE, ICMA-CM, IPMA-CP

IS THE CURRENT MODEL FOR PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICE DELIVERY SUSTAINABLE?

The economy is slowly improving and local governments, in some cases, are starting to see slight increases in revenue streams that had been devastated by the Great Recession. Nationally, local government recovery is uneven, with estimates that some states anticipate a 10- to 15-year recovery time frame to return to revenues that would approximate their prerecession levels.

The dramatic challenges that local governments faced over the past five years have forced a complete rethinking of how cities and counties operate across the board. Until the latest fiscal challenges, public safety operations were typically immune from close scrutiny because elected and appointed officials feared that they would be accused of endangering the public's safety.

This time around, however, with fiscal challenges so severe that even when communities had dramatically reduced funding for virtually all the nonpublic safety functions that make a community livable—parks, recreation, libraries, and museums—they were still unable to produce balanced budgets.

So managers finally began to scrutinize the internal operations of police and fire agencies, only to discover that the percentage of their operating budgets devoted to public safety had increased. ICMA's Center for Public Safety Management

(ICMA/CPSM) team members have seen numerous communities where the public safety budget exceeds 75 percent.

This forced a complete rethinking of what public safety agencies did and how they did it. We've seen police and fire departments take significant staff reductions while retreating back to their core missions. The end result has been that staffing and funding levels for police and fire agencies have been dramatically reduced with little or no impact on outcomes or the public's perception of safety. This information is supported by research, including a recent study by the Police Executive Research Forum.

THE INNOVATIONS NEED TO BE CONTINUED AND EXPANDED SINCE EVERY INDICATION IS THAT ALTHOUGH THE WORST OF THE FISCAL CHALLENGE IS OVER, MANAGERS NEED TO RECOGNIZE THAT THERE WILL NOT BE A RETURN TO THE WAY THINGS WERE PRIOR TO 2007. IN THE LONG RUN, THAT MAY WELL BE A GOOD THING.

The "New Normal"

Over the past several years, public administrators have talked about the new normal, meaning that even though there may be some type of recovery on the horizon, local governments will never return to the funding and staffing levels seen prior to the Great Recession. As television commentator Tom Brokaw put it, this was not just "a recession but rather a reset."

We are, however, starting to see the expectations of local government department heads, particularly in the area of police and fire services, increase and inch back, however slowly, to prerecession staffing levels. This, despite the evidence that they are still meeting their core missions even with reduced staffing by using better management techniques and making data-driven decisions.

The question now for local management and public safety administrators is whether to continue to make the operational changes that save significant amounts of money and were forced upon them by economic realities, or will they—can they—attempt to return to the historical manner in which public safety services had been provided?

During the past five years, ICMA/CPSM has worked with more than 100 local governments of all sizes providing at least 180 technical assistance projects in police and fire operations. ICMA's team members were consistently surprised to see significant opportunities for additional cost reductions, even in places where there had already been reductions in force.

Team members were also surprised to see how few departments truly have an understanding of workload versus deployment; for example, as measured by uncommitted time for patrol officers or the number of minutes a day that firefighters are actually performing work.

In communities that suffered significant reductions in staffing levels, police and fire chiefs were often surprisingly candid about the fact that they saw little change in their ability to provide services. They often boasted about their management team's ability to transform the organization to still meet their core mission, while operating under budget challenges.

I, for example, spoke with a fire chief in Wisconsin who explained how the department had taken an approximately 10 percent reduction in staffing levels during a three-year period. I asked him what the agency could no longer do, and what it was able to accomplish prior to the reductions in force. After thinking about this for a few moments, the chief responded quite frankly that he was unable to identify any service that had been eliminated even with a significantly smaller agency.

When ICMA analyzed actual workload versus staffing levels, we found a significant disconnect between what the assumed workload is and what the reality is in public safety departments. It is not unusual to see staffing levels twice the number or higher than what the workload calls for. (This will be reported in ICMA/CPSM's white paper *Staffing vs. Workload in 62 Police Agencies*, James McCabe, Ph.D., available at ICMA's 2013 Annual Conference.)

Agencies have historically relied upon federal grants to retain or add per-

sonnel, but that revenue source is also dramatically changing. Bernard Melekian, former director of the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Policing (COPs Office), and now a senior associate of ICMA's Center for Public Safety Management, says: "One of the most significant changes in recent years with respect to federal grant makings is a profound shift from measuring outputs to measuring outcomes. This is due in no small measure to the constriction of available federal funds. That constriction will continue for the foreseeable future. Further, those funds that are available will be subject to increased expectations as to intended results and increased scrutiny as to achieved outcomes."

The Status Quo

One of the reasons that public safety agencies faced such significant challenges in redesigning their organizations over the past five years was because, by and large, police departments operate exactly the same way they did 44 years ago, when I first became a police officer.

Although there are more computers, fancier light bars (patrol car overhead emergency lights), and now the community policing concept, officers are still running patrols in marked units and detectives are doing follow-up investigations.

The same is virtually true for the fire department, except that emergency medical services have been added; EMS has now virtually completely overtaken the department's fire suppression response.

In most communities, medical calls constitute some 80 percent of call volume. This rapid expansion of EMS has occurred with minimal cost-benefit analysis and few challenges to the underlying assumptions in place when the EMS systems were created some 40 years ago. (An outstanding review of the approach to emergency medical services and how many commonly accepted assumptions are flawed is in the white paper *Emergency Medical Services Evidence-based System Design for EMSA* (Emergency Medical Services Authority), written by the University of Oklahoma Emergency Medicine Department).

Labor Issues

Two things happened. In the 1980s, a number of states permitted public employees to unionize and treated public safety workers in a special category—with no strikes but giving them binding arbitration to settle disputes. The unions, in many cases, out-negotiated the local governments, largely because the unions were affiliated with experienced union leaders from the private sector who had considerable collective bargaining experience.

As a result, communities often gave up significant management rights rather than pay wage increases because salaries often rose through arbitration. In numerous places, those rights—which included minimum manning and were negotiated decades ago—are still in place and dramatically reduce the ability to effectively manage public safety departments.

In the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) of 1974, Congress amended the act, making it applicable to public sector employees. In *NLC vs. Usery*, however, the Supreme Court held that the act did not apply to state governments with respect to employees performing such traditional government functions as law enforcement.

But in 1985, the Supreme Court reversed itself and ruled that Congress did have the power to apply FLSA aid to state and local governments. So suddenly, local governments ended up with a unionized workforce with, in numerous cases, binding arbitration by outside arbitrators, and limitations on how many hours employees could work without being paid overtime.

In addition to these fundamental changes in how public safety agencies were now going to be managed and paid, people continued to cling to the system of local control of public safety services and even added more agencies. According to information from the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Emergency Management Association, the United States now has more than 18,000 police departments and more than 30,000 fire departments.[1] (According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the May 2012 median income salary for police officers was $55,270, plus overtime and benefits, which can easily exceed 40 percent of salary.[2])

America provides police and fire services unlike any other country in the world. In Canada, for example, there are approximately 200 uniformed police agencies, including federal and First Nation departments. Many are regional agencies ranging in size from the Lethbridge, Alberta, Regional Police Service with some 160 sworn officers serving 92,000 residents to the Peel Regional Police, Brampton and Mississauga, Ontario, with almost 2,000 uniformed members serving a population of more than 1,200,000.

The United Kingdom has only 52 police departments and constabularies. On April 1, 2013, Scotland's eight police forces, the Scottish

Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency, and the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland merged to form Police Scotland—a single police agency for the entire country.

In the United States, while the economic rules of the game changed dramatically, many local communities have continued to operate under the historic model of police and fire safety operations. Cities and counties still use police officers to provide services that could easily be undertaken by civilians—dispatch, crime scene, traffic enforcement, and so forth.

In fire departments, high-ranking officers conduct inspections that could be performed by civilians at a far lower cost. It should be clear that we can no longer afford this approach, yet the same model continues to be used.

Four Necessary Changes

Simply put, the model isn't sustainable and has to change. Here are four ways to accomplish this task.

1. Undertake a greater analysis of workloads and deployment to ensure that personnel are assigned when they are truly needed and not to maintain minimal manning levels based upon historical staffing patterns. Police departments have generally attempted to do this but often do not have the ability to analyze data in a manner that allows maximized personnel resources.

In fire departments, there has historically been constant staffing despite the fact that workload demand fluctuates. Fire departments are starting to move towards "system status" staffing, which means increasing or decreasing staffing levels based on actual calls for service demands. Delaware, Ohio, has recently won the ability to alter fire staffing levels to meet demand and has implemented some 12-hour shifts in addition to the standard 24-hour shift (see article on page 14 in this *PM*).

There also needs to be a greater use of civilians, particularly in the police service. Although some agencies have embraced the use of civilians to perform jobs formerly performed by sworn officers, there is often significant resistance to this effort.

In the paper "Making Policing More Affordable: Managing Costs and Measuring Value in Policing," published by the National Institute of Justice, authors George Gascon and Todd Foglesog suggest that the police model should be more like a medical model. In year's past, when visiting the doctor's office, a physician performed virtually all of the testing—taking temperatures, measuring blood pressure, and so forth.

Today, when visiting a doctor's office, the typical patient might be examined by a series of specialists who complete the patient's record prior to the physician actually seeing the patient. This allows the doctor to see a greater number of patients and focus on those areas where the physician's skill set is needed.

Mesa, Arizona, as one example, has instituted civilian investigators to follow-up on nonviolent crimes. Not only has this approach reduced costs, but it has also improved clearance rates—a method used to determine the percentage of crimes solved by the city,

2. Evaluate how to reduce the number of police agencies in the United States. Of the 18,000 police departments in the United States, 49 percent have fewer than nine police officers and 54 percent have fewer than 54. There are numerous opportunities to consolidate these smaller agencies into larger departments, which is what occurred in Canada.

Further, there are multiple success stories where police agencies have contracted for services with such larger agencies as the sheriff's office. The King County, Washington, sheriff's office, under the leadership of former Sheriff Susan Rahr, was particularly successful in implementing a unique program. Individual cities maintain the outward appearance of operating their own police departments while they are actually being staffed and managed by the sheriff's department.

The Broward County, Florida, sheriff's office provides contract policing service to 14 cities, including Oakland Park, which had previously operated its own police department.

ICMA CONFERENCE NOTE

The ICMA Center for Public Safety Management (ICMA/CPSM), in partnership with the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, will hold a "Symposium of the Future of Local Government Policing" in Boston, Massachusetts, prior to the 2014 ICMA Annual Conference. (The session is filled to capacity.)

The symposium will be composed of two member teams (chief administrative officer and chief law enforcement officer) from 50 local governments representing the diversity of ICMA's membership. After the conference, results from that meeting will be reported on the ICMA/CPSM website at www.icma.org/publicsafety.

REGULAR, FORMALIZED INTERACTION PROMOTES CONSTANT SHARING OF INFORMATION AND RESOURCES, OFTEN ELIMINATING DUPLICATION AND ADDITIONAL EXPENSE.

3. Investigate unexplored opportunities for joint efforts. In visiting most regions of the United States, ICMA teams have seen dramatic differences in the levels of cooperation between neighboring jurisdictions.

Probably one of the best examples of interagency cooperation can be found in Miami-Dade County, Florida. There, the Miami-Dade County Association of Police Chiefs, founded in 1937, is composed of not only the chiefs and assistant chiefs of 38 municipal police agencies but also the director of the Miami-Dade County Police Department.

Also included are the chiefs of the school board and university police forces, the heads of all state law enforcement agencies located within Miami-Dade County, including the state attorney's office, and the special agents in charge and assistants of all federal agencies operating in the county. The head of each of these agencies, totaling more than 58 law enforcement agencies, all sit on the executive committee of the organization and meet once a month.

The entire membership of some 300 police executives also meet for a dinner meeting once a month. The organization jointly sponsors an annual *Chiefs Ball* that generates revenue for families of fallen or injured officers. It sponsors awards for officer of the month and officer of the year for which each agency, regardless of its size, can nominate a member of its department.

This type of regular, formalized interaction promotes constant sharing of information and resources, often eliminating duplication and additional expense. It also leads to joint operations and sharing information to improve services to the community (see the chief's association website at www.mdcacp.org).

4. Consider alternative service-delivery systems. The public safety concept where firefighters and police officers are cross-trained has been in existence for more than 100 years and initially started in Grosse Pointe Shores, Michigan, which still operates a fully consolidated public safety agency.

Despite often vehement opposition to such approaches, these agencies can and do provide outstanding services to the public. Often, it allows a higher level of service than traditional approaches might, especially in such unique communities as Bald Head Island, North Carolina (population, 162).

And it's not just for small communities. Kalamazoo, Michigan's (population, 74,700) public safety department, in place for decades, has nearly 400 fully cross-trained public safety officers. And unknown to most of the public, the New York/New Jersey Port Authority is a cross-trained agency, with police officers also providing fire suppression and rescue services.

Time for New Approaches

If communities are going to continue to provide quality public safety services and to offer the salaries and benefits needed to attract quality applicants, local managers will have to move away from the historical and traditional manner in which those services are being provided. The challenge created by the Great Recession has forced public safety agencies to explore new approaches and different operational models.

The innovations need to be continued and expanded since every indication is that, although the worst of the fiscal challenge is over, managers need to recognize that there will not be a return to the way things were prior to 2007; that this is, indeed, the new normal. In the long run, that may well be a good thing.

Economic realities will force communities to try different approaches to historical models. They will require greater cooperation, eliminate duplication, and ultimately ensure that residents receive not only quality public safety services but also all of the other attributes that local government provides. PM

ENDNOTES

1 "U.S. Fire Department Profile Through 2011," published by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), Quincy, Massachusetts, which estimates that there were 30,145 departments in the United States. tp://www.nfpa.org/research/fire-statistics/the-us-fire-service.

2 U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Census of State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies 2008. http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=dcdetail&iid=249.

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BARGAINING FOR A NEW 12-HOUR FIREFIGHTERS' SHIFT STRUCTURE

LEARN WHICH STRATEGIES WORKED FOR DELAWARE, OHIO

BY R. THOMAS HOMAN, ICMA-CM, DARREN SHULMAN, AND JOHN DONAHUE

How does the largest city in a rapidly growing county meet demand for its firefighting and emergency medical services? For Delaware, Ohio, meeting the challenge required the development of a strategic plan, an income tax increase, and bargaining for a new shift structure.

Located in Delaware County in central Ohio, the city of Delaware is the largest city in the county with an estimated 2013 population of 37,000, which represents a 37 percent increase over its 2000 population. Delaware County is the 21st fastest growing county in the United States, according to 2010 Census data. This rapid growth has challenged the city to maintain service levels. One way it has attempted to meet this challenge is by exploring different methods of delivering community services.

In 2007, the Delaware Fire Department embarked on a strategic planning process that ultimately led to a fire levy in 2010. On November 2, 2010, Delaware voters approved a 0.3 percent income tax for firefighting and emergency medical services (EMS).

TAKEAWAYS

Read this article and find out how to:

› Use data to develop an alternative shift structure proposal.

› Negotiate strategies to use when attempting to implement an alternative shift structure.

› Use exhibits to persuade a neutral third party to award an alternative shift structure.

The levy supported the fire department's strategic plan and its four related goals: (1) construction and staffing of a third fire station located in the city's northwest quadrant; (2) replacement of aging equipment; (3) establishment of a long-term capital replacement plan; and (4) plans for the construction and staffing of a fourth fire station in the city's southeast quadrant.

In 2012, the department consisted of 44 uniformed personnel and one civilian. Each shift was assigned 13 full-time personnel, with typically 10 on duty, working a 24-hours-on, 48-hours-off shift schedule, with a Kelly Day—an adjustment day to compensate a firefighter when the set amount of time of 200 hours has been worked over 27 calendar days. This schedule creates a 50-hour workweek. The department responded to more than 4,900 incidents annually, from two fire stations, in 2012.

Collective Bargaining History

Delaware firefighters are represented by the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) Local 606. Ohio is a right-to-work state, which also requires collective bargaining for terms and conditions of employment and benefits.

Under the collective bargaining law, if the parties are unable to reach an agreement, the disputed contract terms are ultimately decided by binding arbitration. Lawmakers challenged Ohio's collective bargaining laws in 2011, ultimately leading to a state referendum maintaining them later that year.

In February 2012, the city began contract negotiations with IAFF Local 606 that expired March 30, 2012. As part of the contract negotiations, the city introduced a proposal to add a 12-hour peak-demand shift, in addition to the existing 50-hour shift and the 40-hour shift staffed by inspectors and the training captain.

Due to the passage of the levy, the city did not argue the inability to pay for the additional shift. Ultimately, Delaware was eventually successful in adding a 12-hour shift proposal through arbitration. This article provides guidance to other local governments hoping to add a new shift for emergency personnel.

Identification of New Shift

Before bargaining for an alternative peak-demand shift, take time to develop what that proposal will be. Instead of picking a new shift immediately, we recommend using the process described in this article. Following this process will give the shift proposal more credibility, and provide the evidence you will need if a proposal is the subject of fact finding or arbitration.

First, work with department employees to set goals. These goals will become the foundation of any changes you try to make. We convened a group of elected officials, fire department personnel, and members of the public to set goals through the strategic plan process.

Bringing this group together allows for shared goals. When goals are set in this manner, there is a greater chance that people will take ownership. The strategic plan resulted in two goals that ultimately provided support for the 12-hour shift proposal: faster response time and additional service.

Once shared goals are in place, the next step is to determine how to meet these goals. In order to do that, you need to collect data to determine the best way to meet local government goals. In Delaware, we implemented a record management software system to

track calls received by the department. This tracking should include several key statistics:

1. Incidents/time of day.
2. Concurrent calls (multiple calls received at same time).
3. Incident type (Fire, EMS, other).
4. Fire loss incidents.
5. Call location.

As this data is collected, empower employees to identify and propose creative new ways of achieving department goals. Employees appreciate the opportunity and you will get some great ideas. In our case, some of the ideas presented by firefighters included proposals to consider alternative shift staffing as a way to provide better service.

In Delaware, years of data showed that there was a consistent peak-demand period during the day in which most of our calls were received. Based on this data, we determined that the best way to improve service and reduce response times was to get additional firefighters on duty during those peak hours. This led to our 12-hour shift proposal.

Designing and Presenting Proposal to Union

We were unable to reach an agreement with the union to adopt a 12-hour shift. We were, however, successful in convincing an arbitrator to award the shift, in large part because of the decisions we made prior to and during negotiations. Here are the elements of our proposal that helped us succeed:

Grandfather clause. Moving from a 24- to 12-hour shift is a big change for employees. During negotiations, the union fairly argued that employees' lives would be turned upside down if they were forced to move from a 24-hour shift to a 12-hour shift. A considerable number of employees have child care arrangements based on their schedule.

It is also possible that employees have part-time jobs that would be disrupted by this change. We learned in fact finding that it takes a lot to convince a neutral party to make this big of a change in light of the impact on employees.

To address this concern, consider adding a grandfather clause. This may lengthen the timetable to implement a peak-demand shift, but if you grandfather the existing employees, the impact argument falls away. You will be able to argue that anyone hired after the date knows what they are signing up for and can plan accordingly.

The key is to get the shift into the contract. Long-term attrition will reduce the number of people who are ineligible for the shift and as you hire more employees, the pool of potential firefighters for the shift grows.

Match the proposal to the data. Basing our shift period on the data we collected supported our argument that adding this shift would improve service. Without data like this, you would be forced to resort to an economic argument.

In our case, the passage of the levy prevented us from making an "inability-to-pay" argument. Arguing that you need to enact a major change because it will save taxpayer dollars can work, but it is also easy to argue against penny pinching when lives are at stake.

Be flexible if employees request changes. When negotiating a peak-demand shift, offer to adapt your local government's proposal based on their concerns. Based on initial feedback when we presented the proposal, we included a shift differential to incentivize employees to take this shift voluntarily.

During negotiations, however, employees indicated that they felt paying a higher wage for the 12-hour shift would be unfair. As a result, we agreed to make the salary the same and incorporated that change into our proposal, even though we did not get agreement to go to the 12-hour shift.

Similarly, our original proposal did not have a grandfather clause included. After receiving feedback, however, about the impact on employees used to working a 24-hour shift, we added the grandfather clause into a later proposal and our arbitration offer. This showed we were willing to work with the union and make changes based on the feedback we received.

Continue to negotiate. Even if the union simply says 'no' to a peak-demand proposal, make numerous attempts in writing to discuss specific concerns and changes the union would like to see. Addressing the concerns can accomplish a variety of things.

ABOUT DELAWARE, OHIO

- Founded in 1808, Delaware was incorporated as a city in 1816 and adopted the council-manager form of government in 1951.
- Delaware, located about 25 miles north of Columbus, encompasses 19.1 square miles.
- The city's fire department's history dates to 1831 when it was formed as a volunteer group of "minute men" to provide fire protection throughout the village of Delaware.

Most importantly, it results in a better proposal, because the union's insight is valuable. Even if you receive no feedback, the attempt shows you are willing to negotiate and work with union representatives. By failing to respond, they may look unreasonable.

Our arbitrator asked the union if it had made any counterproposals to our 12-hour shift. Union reps were forced to admit that they had not. Finally, continuing to negotiate prepares you to answer criticisms of the plan at a fact-finding or arbitration hearing.

One argument we heard, for example, was that the peak-demand plan failed to account for large fires that occurred outside of the peak demand (at night). We addressed this concern by showing that we were increasing the number of firefighters at night and that most fire calls came during the day.

We also showed that most calls received were for EMS service, not fire. Had we failed to negotiate, we would have been unable to prepare exhibits to counter the claims at arbitration.

Evidence to Present at Fact Finding and Arbitration

A number of arguments, listed below, challenged Delaware's proposed peak-demand shift. The city offered its own counterarguments.

There is no peak-demand period. We had statistics that showed there was a peak-demand period. The union argued the opposite. We learned at fact finding that it was not enough to simply read off numbers to make our case for a peak-demand unit. Both sides had their own statistics, and the firefighters were able to relay powerful anecdotal evidence of incidents that happened at night.

While we presented numbers that most calls were during the peak-demand period, the union provided an example of a serious incident that happened at night. In the absence of a convincing way to depict statistics, at best, the two sides will cancel each other out. At worst, the neutral third party will focus on the vivid example provided by the union. In that case, you lose.

FIGURE 1. EXAMPLE OF VISUAL DEPICTION OF FIREFIGHTER AND VEHICLE LOCATION USED DURING UNION NEGOTIATIONS.

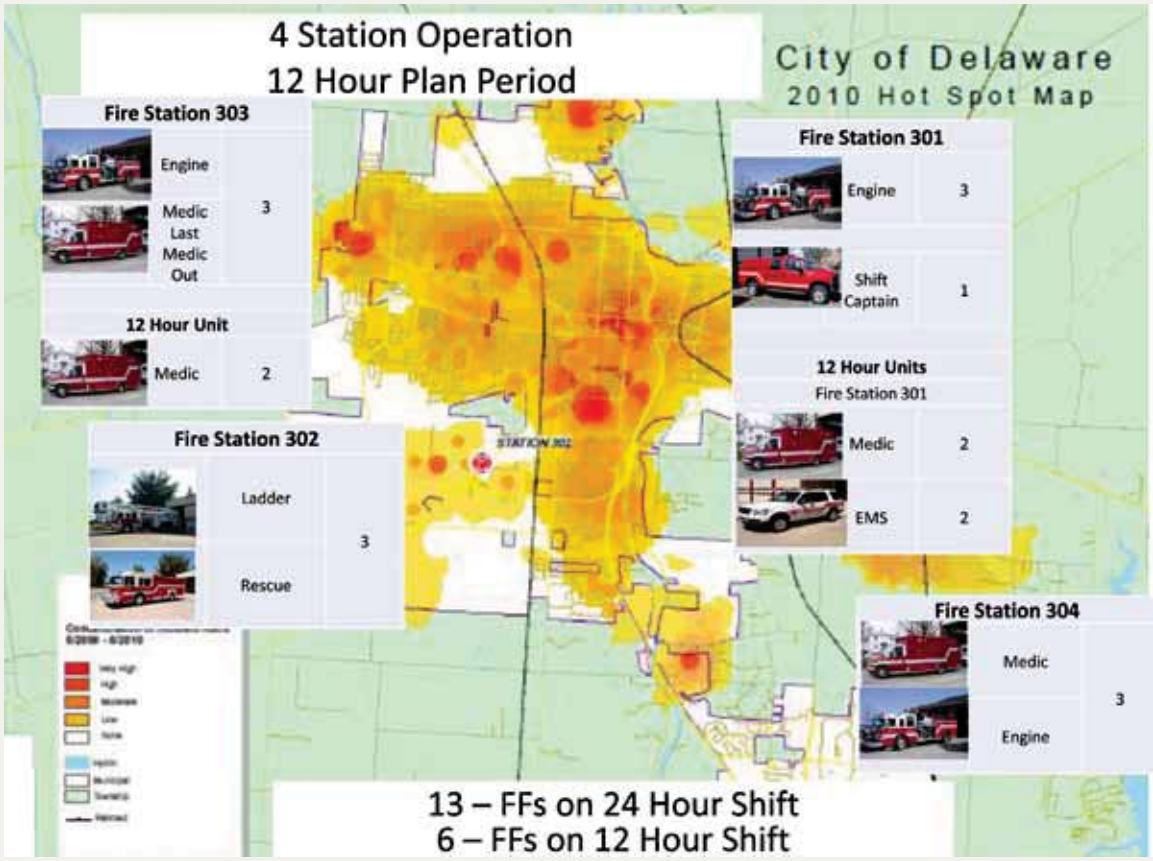

FIGURE 2. EMPLOYEE SCHEDULE FOR 12 FIREFIGHTERS WORKING THE 12-HOUR SCHEDULE.

Peak period coverage: 12-hour personnel versus 24-hour personnel

1 FF/P 12 hr shift	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
8:00 - 9:00														
9:00 - 10:00														
10:00 - 11:00														
11:00 - 12:00														
12:00 - 1:00														
1:00 - 2:00														
2:00 - 3:00														
3:00 - 4:00														
4:00 - 5:00														
5:00 - 6:00														
6:00 - 7:00														
7:00 - 8:00														
8:00 - 9:00														
9:00 - 10:00														
10:00 - 11:00														
11:00 - 12:00											84	hrs		
1:00 - 2:00														
2:00 - 3:00														
3:00 - 4:00														
4:00 - 5:00														
5:00 - 6:00														
6:00 - 7:00														
7:00 - 8:00														

1 FF/P 24 hr shift	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
8:00 - 9:00														
9:00 - 10:00														
10:00 - 11:00														
11:00 - 12:00														
12:00 - 1:00													Kelly	
1:00 - 2:00													Kelly	
2:00 - 3:00													Kelly	
3:00 - 4:00													Kelly	
4:00 - 5:00													Kelly	
5:00 - 6:00													Kelly	
6:00 - 7:00													Kelly	
7:00 - 8:00													Kelly	
8:00 - 9:00													Kelly	
9:00 - 10:00													Kelly	
10:00 - 11:00	On Duty			On Duty			On Duty			On Duty			Kelly	
11:00 - 12:00											60	hrs	Kelly	
1:00 - 2:00	Non			Non			Non			Non			Kelly	
2:00 - 3:00													Kelly	
3:00 - 4:00	Prime			Prime			Prime			Prime			Kelly	
4:00 - 5:00													Kelly	
5:00 - 6:00													Kelly	
6:00 - 7:00													Kelly	
7:00 - 8:00													Kelly	

Charts and graphs were extremely useful during arbitration. This example of an exhibit showed arbitrators that Delaware, Ohio, had determined how the 12-hour schedule would work.

If you graphically represent the numbers, they will be easier to grasp and more memorable. Pie charts worked well for us (see Figures 3, 4). Instead of weighing competing sets of numbers, our arbitrator only had to remember, "The grey part was much bigger than the red part."

The charts showed we received more calls and more concurrent calls during the peak period. We were able to show that most fatalities occurred during the peak period. We were also able to show that most fire-loss incidents occurred during the peak period.

No one else operates in a 12-hour shift—a 12-hour shift isn't suitable for anyone to work. The union argued that there was something

FIGURE 3. INCIDENT COVERAGE DURING A 12-HOUR COVERAGE PERIOD.

72.14 percent of the incidents occurred during the 12-hour-plan coverage period.

12 HOUR PLAN OUTSIDE PLAN

FIGURE 4. CONCURRENT CALL VOLUME DURING A 12-HOUR COVERAGE PERIOD.

79.82 percent of the concurrent incidents occurred during the 12-hour-plan coverage period.

12 HOUR PLAN OUTSIDE PLAN

inherently flawed with a 12-hour shift because people can't work that length of time, and it would result in sleep-deprived employees. We were able to show, however, that such other professions as nursing routinely use 12-hour shifts.

By providing examples, we showed that there is nothing cruel and unusual about working that shift. We were able to take this argument even further by finding examples of 12-hour shifts in the fire and EMS context. While we found no IAFF departments working 12-hour shifts, we found other fire and EMS in the central Ohio area that used 12-hour shifts in non-union settings. This showed that the shift does work for provision of fire and EMS service.

The city proposal isn't well-thought-out and is missing details. The union argued that Delaware had not planned out its 12-hour shift and therefore should negotiate it in a later contract. The union representative asked where the people would go, what they'd do, and other specific questions to make it look like we didn't have a concrete plan in place.

To make it clear to the arbitrator, we provided color maps showing where each firefighter would report, what vehicles they would drive, and how they would be deployed. We layered this map over the data we collected on call locations (see Figure 1).

The city is trying to reduce 24-hour service. The union argued that hiring more people in the peak period would reduce coverage at night. We again used our maps that showed where every firefighter would report and what vehicle they would use. In addition to showing we had a well-thought-out plan, these maps provided an easy-to-understand visualization of how we were providing additional coverage to residents during the peak period, without removing a single 24-hour firefighter at night.

Scheduling will be too difficult. Firefighter scheduling can be a complex task. Without a sample of how the schedule would work over a pay period, it is hard for the arbitrator and fact finder to grasp how the schedule will work. To remedy this, we provided a sample timecard showing exactly how a schedule would work for a 12-hour shift firefighter.

The city can get more hours for the same cost by hiring 24-hour firefighters instead of 12-hour firefighters. One argument that seemed reasonable on its face was, "Why would you pay the same for 12-hour firefighters when you can get a 24-hour firefighter for the same amount? You're getting 12 more hours free."

We countered this argument by reminding the arbitrator that most calls were happening during the city's peak-demand period. Therefore, it is not a huge logical leap to argue that we would want more man hours during those peak times. We then showed a chart comparing the hours worked during the peak-demand period and to the hours worked if we hired the same number of traditional 24-hour shift firefighters.

This chart showed that we got significantly more peak hours of service using the 12-hour shift. So, while we could indeed get more total hours worked by using a 24-hour shift, this was a less efficient use of our resources because those extra hours were at times where the need for service was less and because some of those hours were sleeping hours. The Fair Labor Standards Act allows firefighters to work additional hours without overtime due to periods of rests during a 24-hour shift.

A Can-Do Conclusion

Implementation of a schedule change or supplemental shift in fire service can be accomplished, even in the face of opposition. Analysis of the community's needs, using data to identify efficiencies and effectiveness, and open communication can lead to better service and improved use of emergency service resources. PM

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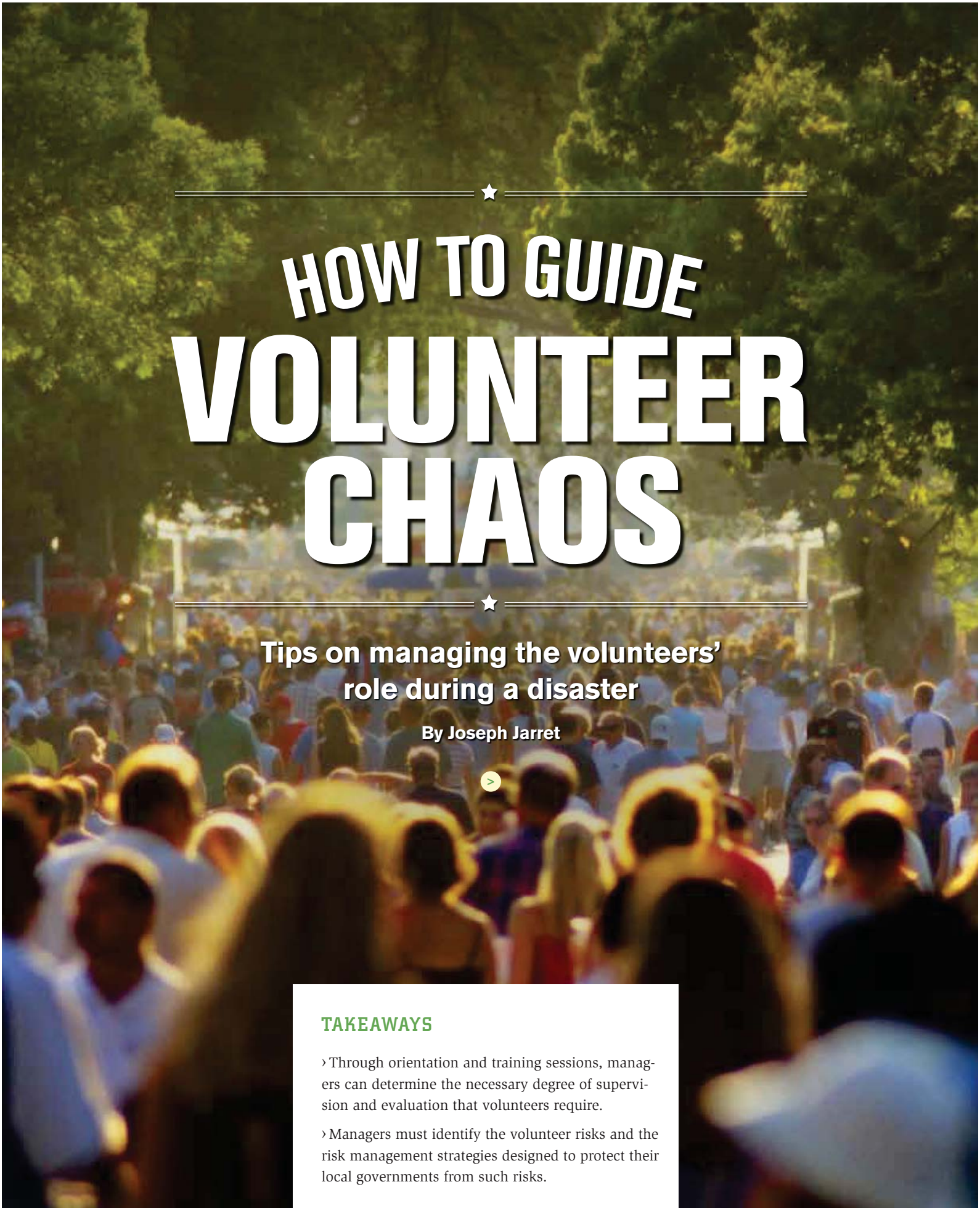

HOW TO GUIDE VOLUNTEER CHAOS

Tips on managing the volunteers' role during a disaster

By Joseph Jarret

TAKEAWAYS

› Through orientation and training sessions, managers can determine the necessary degree of supervision and evaluation that volunteers require.

› Managers must identify the volunteer risks and the risk management strategies designed to protect their local governments from such risks.

DURING THE COURSE OF CONDUCTING AFTER-ACTIONS REPORTS FOLLOWING THE TERRORIST ATTACKS OF SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, AND HURRICANE KATRINA IN 2005, THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA)[1] NOTICED A COMMON THEME: UNPRECEDENTED NUMBERS OF SPONTANEOUS VOLUNTEERS STREAMED INTO DISASTER-STRICKEN AREAS, MOST OF WHOM WERE NOT AFFILIATED WITH AN ESTABLISHED VOLUNTEER AGENCY.

The abrupt, often unanticipated, presence of such volunteers caused complex management, control, and logistical challenges for professional emergency responders and public managers. Although a significant number of volunteers who converge upon disaster scenes come from outside an area, region, or state, this article is primarily concerned with volunteers who live in close proximity to a disaster-affected area.

When a local government is operating in normal mode, it isn't unusual for it to experience a shortage of people willing to volunteer their time. This is especially true if a local government does not make a concerted effort to encourage volunteers.

Author Lee Mizell, in her article "From the Heart: Managing and Valuing Volunteers,"[2] noted that two out of every five volunteers reach out to the organizations they ultimately serve. Consequently, many public entities make concerted efforts to attract, select, develop, motivate, and retain volunteers. Such is not the case, however, once disaster strikes.

A Mixed Blessing

Volunteers will most probably appear whether you encourage them or not and in larger numbers than anticipated. Internationally-recognized trainer, researcher, and consultant Jayne Cravens recommends that managers should presume that most volunteers who spontaneously appear will be unfamiliar with the concepts of situation assessments, incident management, and chain of command.[3]

Familiarity on the part of volunteers with these three fundamental skills is essential in disaster situations in case their presence exacerbates rather than ameliorates the challenges at hand. This is not to suggest that volunteers should be summarily escorted from the scene (although some just may merit eviction) merely because they are unaffiliated with an established relief agency.

In fact, as noted by FEMA, the presence of volunteers has shown to positively impact the morale of disaster victims by reducing feelings of hopelessness and isolation.[4] Further, volunteers who possess knowledge gained by working and living close to a disaster-affected area are invaluable to recovery efforts due to their ability to augment emergency staff with basic skills and support activities. This allows responders to focus their efforts on specialized work.

Author Lauren Fernandez, who recommends the implementation of a "systems-based approach to planning for spontaneous volunteer management in disasters,"[5] noted that volunteers, especially those who come from the immediate area, possess valuable insight in regard to local needs, and that such volunteers can prove to be an economic source of talented and skilled labor. Still, an influx of large numbers of people into a disaster-stricken area can be unnerving for emergency personnel in the throes of attempting to establish some semblance of order.

As noted by authors K. J. Tierney, M. K. Lindell, and R. W. Perry in their comprehensive work *Facing the Unexpected: Disaster Preparedness and Response in the United States,*[6] a considerable number of public managers, when confronted by large numbers of unanticipated volunteers, quickly found themselves pondering such questions as:

- "How many will come and when?
- Will any of them have the skills we really need?
- What happens if somebody gets hurt?
- Where will they stay?
- Who will feed them and how?
- How will they know where to go and what to do?

- Will they be self-equipped/supporting?
- Who will manage and supervise them?"

Janette Nagy, a contributing author to *the website* "The Community Tool Box,"[7] a public service of the University of Kansas, suggests that these questions can be answered by hiring a volunteer coordinator whose position includes these responsibilities:

- Recruiting volunteers.
- Communicating with different departments and program coordinators to find out what needs to be done and how much volunteer time is needed to do it.
- Educating staff on the roles and responsibilities of volunteers.
- Interviewing and screening potential volunteers.
- Taking charge of volunteer orientation and training.
- Expressing volunteer opinions and ideas to other staff members, and facilitating collaboration between volunteers and paid staff members.

The presence of volunteers has shown to positively impact the morale of disaster victims by reducing feelings of hopelessness and isolation.

Take a Whole Community Approach

While all of these suggestions have merit, managers operating in disaster mode often do not have the luxury of time to assess the strengths and weaknesses of well-meaning people who enter disaster areas intent on being useful to the professionals in their midst. Such managers often find themselves performing a sort of sidewalk triage in an effort to determine what skills people possess and where those skills can best be put to use within the recovery matrix.

In order to minimize the stress associated with managing volunteers of the type described here, FEMA[8] suggests that managers take a "whole community approach" to emergency management. This approach calls on public sector managers recognizing the importance of ensuring that community volunteers are assimilated into recovery plans and operations before disaster strikes.

This can best be accomplished by crafting disaster-response plans that:

- **Understand and meet the actual needs of the whole community.** Community engagement can lead to a deeper understanding of the unique and diverse needs of a population, including its demographics, values, norms, community structures, networks, and relationships.
- **Engage and empower all parts of the community.** Engaging the whole community and empowering local action will better position stakeholders to plan for and meet the actual needs of a community and strengthen the local capacity to deal with the consequences of all threats and hazards. This requires all members of the community to be part of the emergency management team.
- **Incorporate emergency planning discussions into the existing format of community meetings.** Multipurpose meetings help increase participation, especially in communities where residents must travel long distances to attend such meetings.
- **Develop recovery plans** with full participation and partnership within the full fabric of the community.
- **Use the power of social media applications** to disseminate messages, create two-way information exchanges, and understand and follow-up on communication that is already happening within the community.

If it can be said that there is one positive aspect to a disaster, it would be that such tragedies have a way of instilling in volunteers a sense of community, as well as identification with and empathy for disaster victims. By providing its residents with meaningful and constructive opportunities to assist professional responders with preparing for, responding to, and recovering from disaster, the local government manager can go a long way in creating and nurturing the most vital of public-private partnerships. PM

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BY PAUL GRIMES

THE GROWING CHALLENGE OF SHRINKING BIRTHRATES

Supporting Older Ages

As local government managers, it is not often that we are asked to give much thought to regional, national, or global demography. After all, those are the ways of economists or social scientists, and our job is to focus on the numerous local tasks at hand—or so goes conventional wisdom.

The United States and to a greater extent some of our peers among developed Western nations, however, are about to be overcome by a demographic tsunami that will greatly alter the way we do business. No, we're not talking about the now-quaint Malthusian fears of overpopulation from an incoming wave of people.

Rather, by the early 2020s, we will experience, metaphorically, the wave's retreat into the sea, drawing with it millions of older workers from a relatively younger, able-bodied, productive, and taxpaying workforce.

Authors Richard Jackson and Neil Howe, from the Center for Strategic and International Studies, best frame this transition in their 2008 book, *The Graying of the Great Powers*.

The Numbers

To best understand the drivers of this transition to an aging society, Figure 1 illustrates the projected shift over time. In 2005, the old-age dependency ratio was 21 elders for every 100 working-age adults. By 2050, it is projected to increase to 37 per 100. That means more load for each working-age adult to support elderly benefits.

If this sounds like a challenge, and it is, we can be buoyed by comparisons with other countries. By 2050, Western Europe's elderly dependency ratio is projected at 59, and for Japan, an astonishing 81.

As Figure 1 demonstrates, while the U.S. population is projected to continue to grow, the nature of that growth is what is telling. Growth is clearly tilted toward the aged category, while the percentage of the young, working-age population declines.

With a bulge in the older population, one can expect to see commensurate increase in pension and health care entitlement spending. Jackson and Howe have projected the increase in public benefits from 2005 to 2050 (See Figure 2). It should be noted that this projection predates the massive new Congressional Budget Office-estimated $1.6 trillion health care entitlement contemplated by the Affordable Care Act in just its first decade (Congressional Budget Office, February 2013).

FIGURE 1. U.S. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE PROJECTIONS.

United States

	2005	2030	2050
Fertility rate	2.0	2.0	2.0
Life expectancy	77.4	80.7	83.1
Total population (millions)	300	371	419
Working-age population (millions)	179	205	230
Median age	36.0	38.6	39.6
Youth-bulge share	18.0%	16.0%	15.5%
Elderly share	12.3%	19.1%	20.2%
Total dependency ratio	68	81	82
Youth dependency. ratio	47	47	46
Old-age dependency ratio	21	35	37

Source: *The Graying of the Great Powers*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2008.

Implications for Communities

There are indeed profound national and international security implications beyond the scope of this article that merit our close attention. But at the domestic level, we have our own challenges on which to focus. The challenges are manifold and reach far beyond just the most obvious mathematical calculations.

According to some scholars, our business culture will be impacted by having a relatively older population less interested in taking risks or fostering creativity. That means less innovation over the long run.

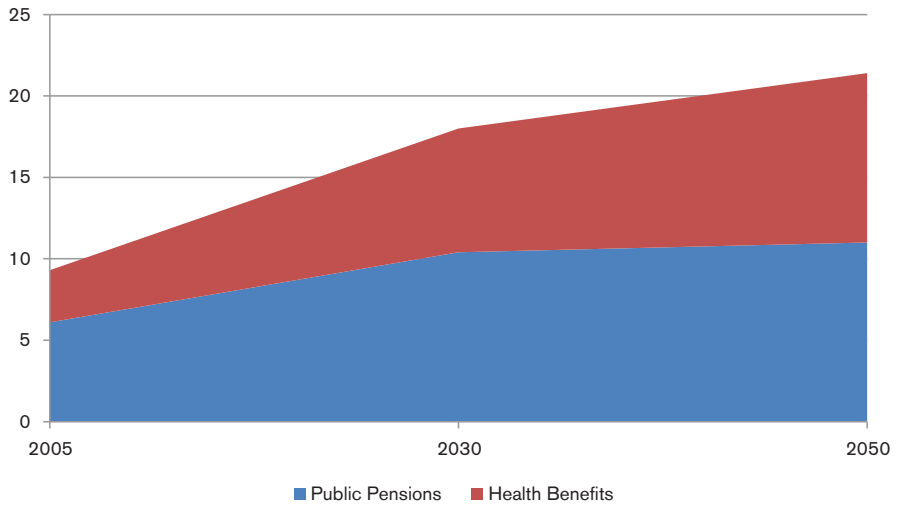
Our family structure will change and could lead to a shift to greater reliance on government as the traditional family support network weakens. Yet there will be limited resources for the government to take on any new roles.

For local government, our economic development strategies of chasing after the next great smartphone application developer or high-tech manufacturer will give way to investing in senior housing, home health care, and longevity initiatives. We may see certain dividends from aging. For one, older, wiser people commit less crime and tend to lead more stable lives. >>

On the other hand, the country's long-held enthusiasm for creative destruction of a dynamic capitalist economy may be tested as the appetite for risk gives way to perceived stability.

At the local level, the demand for investing in infrastructure for youth sports and recreation facilities will slowly make way for demand for investing in infrastructure for senior sports and recreation facilities. Investing in general will begin to make way for more consumption and spending, as seniors begin to spend down their savings in retirement.

FIGURE 2. U.S. GOVERNMENT OLD-AGE BENEFITS, AS A PERCENT OF GDP, 2005–2050.



Source: *The Graying of the Great Powers*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2008.

Investing in Children

There is an upside for the young, of course, and for those able to exploit the ensuing business niches. Fewer children means each is relatively more dear to us than, say, just as recently as the 70s and 80s. For those of us old enough to remember, "Eight Is Enough" was more than just a television show; it was a rather commonly held expression. Hand-me-downs were a way of life.

Contrast that with today and tomorrow, where middle-class children in a society with our current fertility rate of about 1.9 will be more invested with greater resources and with more ease than children in previous generations. From competitive sports, travel leagues, and musical and artistic training, to private tutoring and hyper-competitive test preparation, value-added activities will be standard fare for many middle-class children. These expenditures will not be considered optional, and parents will spend the money on ensuring that the investment is made.

Private investment in children will be welcomed, for the pressure at the publicly funded community level will gradually begin to turn away from investment in youth-centered activities. That is because the relative increase of investment per child won't offset the momentum of the generational steam train of the aging baby boomers, or those people born roughly from 1946 to1961, and the impact on local communities' collective decision making.

One observation noted by Jackson and Howe is this: "Although parents may become more protective of scarce children, that very scarcity means that society will be more adult focused." With fewer children to care for during adult life, people will have more time to pursue their own interests and goals.

Dilemma Posed by Scarce Resources

Our collective decision making for even scarcer resources will face a sharp dilemma: how to reallocate resources with a growing bulge in our older generation and a relatively smaller cohort of youngsters. This may pose challenges to lower income communities, as the appetite for additional public spending on education will likely fade.

Even if the desire remains, the ability to pay will be shackled due to the exploding entitlement spending from the boomer pension and health care obligations, thereby crowding out the ability to pay for other public spending initiatives.

Pension discussions will accelerate from merely common public policy topics to become the public policy challenge of our time. Generation X'ers (born 1962 to 1981), Millennials (1982 to 2000), and the Pluralist Generation or Plurals (2001 to 2020)[1] will be tasked with learning to live with less (i.e., later retirements, fewer or less generous benefits, and higher taxes to pay for them) and existing within a prolonged state of fiscal crisis. Or what is more likely, hopscotching from one predicament to another in a series of fiscal crises.

Short of importing tens of millions of child-carrying immigrants, which is an unlikely scenario, we can't change the slow turn of history. Nor can we talk our way out of the changes, or convince the public to start having more children—the effects of which wouldn't be felt for decades anyway. In cases in which tax incentives or child care subsidies are used to nudge the fertility rate upward, the results have shown only a minor tick and are quite costly.

Generational Pressure Builds

Howe warns of trouble ahead beginning in the early 2020s, when Western nations begin to experience the most generational pressure as the full transition of baby boomers into retirement takes shape—around the same time that developing nations that have been willing to finance the pensions and benefits of the West begin to turn to their own

aging obligations and begin to cash out their investments in Western nations.

Ethnic group immigrants will gain stature on the political and, ultimately, the public policy stage. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, residents of Hispanic origin as a share of population is projected to grow from 17.8 percent in 2015 to 27.9 percent in 2050, nearly doubling in number. Similar trends are projected for Europe's Muslim communities. As a result, local communities will have to become more adept in dealing with the growing influence from traditional ethnic minorities.

The demand for services for the advanced in age and a smaller pay-as-you-go working-age population to pay for those services also will challenge local government managers to maximize efficiencies in delivering those services. The fault lines between public sector labor and the need to maximize efficiency will come into fuller relief in the next decade. Given that public sector union membership is highest among the 55 to 64 age group, and lowest among younger workers, as those older workers begin retiring in the next decade, public sector labor membership will likely face enormous pressure.

Residents transitioning into their golden years will demand that services change too. The single biggest voting bloc in U.S. history is the current baby boomer generation. While they may indeed be from the "hip" generation, some things are unavoidable—and retirement is one of them.

Even the gradual, nearly imperceptible demographic aging swings are enough to shape voting implications and the associated shift to meet the needs of the aging. Much of this shift in pay-as-you-go public goods will be at the expense of the younger taxpayers who will be caught in a sort of public goods squeeze, having to pay and provide for them. As a result, demands for efficient government will reach a fever pitch and will place incredible strains on public services.

Economist Laurence Kotlikoff notes in *The Clash of Generations* (MIT Press, 2012) that history does not demonstrate that older generations necessarily make decisions with the younger in mind. No mathematical model, no matter how hard we try, will be devised to avoid this inevitable transition. Rather, political models to guide the way will have to be fashioned from the cauldron of tough public policy choices.

Model Going Forward

For our purposes, it is pointless to dwell on the upsides or downsides of an aging population. As managers, we will have to live with it, adjust to it, and work with our communities to prepare and endure this inevitable demographic storm. We will need to:

Build on existing research. We need to pay more than lip service to the work of important studies on this subject: We need to pay attention. The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) established the Global Aging Initiative and does fine work in tracking and studying this phenomenon. It is one of a number of good places to start examining the impact on local communities. State and local government policy arms should expand on this important work.

Encourage local laboratories. We can explore multiple public policy laboratories at the state and local levels and find out what works. Drawing from the research of the above-noted institutions, local governments should factor aging quotients into their strategic and long-term planning.

State governments should encourage local policy innovation on steps to balance the generational interests. Pension reform efforts are an obvious start, as the current pension leviathan is not only unsustainable but can lead to social unrest for future generations. If unchecked, class warfare could give way to generational warfare.

The federal government can assist with smart tax policies and fostering research and efforts at the state and local levels to deal with these challenges. It would be a mistake, however, to try to nationalize this issue beyond the obvious federal programs currently offered. It will be our state and local governments who will find, through trial and error, those policy solutions toward sustainability. Those states that don't will find themselves left behind and saddled, and, in time, will have little alternative but to adjust to those solutions that work.

Alas, the record thus far is spotty at best. In the case of my state, Illinois, for example, the inability thus far to meaningfully address its massive pension issues in advance of the coming storm does not augur well for the extraordinary demands that lay ahead. Each year lost to political stasis will only add to the challenge and, quite literally, mathematically subtract from the options available in the coming decades.

Think generationally. Beyond including an aging discussion into aforementioned planning efforts, local policy leaders should continue to include this topic in public conversations wherever and as often as possible. A helpful test for local and state governments in evaluating public expenditures also may be to ask not how we will pay for it, but how will today's grammar school children pay for it.

Those state and local governments that are better prepared to answer these questions will be better prepared to withstand the approaching storm—even if the storm clouds aren't yet visible. PM

ENDNOTES

1 Bruce Horovitz (5/4/2012). "After Gen X, Millennials, What Should Next Generation Be?" *USA Today*. Retrieved November 24, 2012.

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BY MIKE CONDUFF, ICMA-CM

NEXT-GEN ELECTED LEADERSHIP

What to do when elected officials are younger than you

My good friend, the deputy city manager, said, "Mike, we have some new councilmembers. It looks like they won't have significant policy or direction changes, but organizationally we are trying to cope with a 40-year age swing with two of them. We have gone from councilmembers in their 60s to those in their 20s. What can you suggest for the manager and me?"

His question reminded me of the poignant transition in my own life from when I was the youngest around the council dais to the time when I was perhaps the oldest.

My first city manager job was at age 27. When I was hired in Manhattan, Kansas, at age 32, the mayor introduced me at a press conference as "being young enough to be my son." All of the councilmembers were older than I was.

When I accepted my 30-year service award from ICMA (two towns later), that could no longer be said.

Governing Styles

Fortunately, I had been blessed to work with a number of assistants who helped me understand and embrace the governing style change of these talented next-generation elected officials.

First, some observations and a disclaimer. While these are generalizations and therefore subject to individual variations, from my experience they hold reasonably true to form.

Young "quick risers" who take on an elected role generally work at a pretty fast pace. They are adept at juggling many balls and often chafe under a system that works slowly and carefully with long time horizons. Asking them to wait three months for a report or white paper to be developed on a particular topic is likely to be interpreted as the administration being obstructionist.

Because they have many things going on in their lives, including family, career, fitness, and fun, they want to provide a true value-add to their civic endeavors. They are not place holders or card punchers and are easily annoyed by being seen as a cog in a wheel. Give them important stuff to work on or risk being seen as patronizing.

Authority is not something that is automatically accepted. Consequently, "Because I said so" or "That is what the procedure is" simply becomes an opportunity for them to challenge and push back a bit.

Multiple lines of quick communication are second nature to them. Technology that may be a bit uncomfortable to baby-boomer managers is simply environmental to next-generation elected officials. Often a timely group text is much preferred to a delayed landline call. Never let them be surprised by information if at all possible.

Ongoing education and learning is coveted. They want to be better at what they do next year than they are now. Be sure to provide exposure to these opportunities and demonstrate the importance of continuous learning in your own career.

Take Time to Understand

What I advise chief administrators to do is first use Stephen Covey's fifth maxim: "Seek first to understand." Using multiple approaches, find out what young elected officials' desired outcomes are for their service on the governing body.

How and when do they like to be communicated with? What are turnoffs for them? What values do they hold dear? Is there a specific educational interest? Do they want to serve on a state league or an association committee or provide leadership beyond the local level? How much time do they want to invest?

A technique I often use in team building that works equally well for the administrator/elected officials getting-acquainted sessions is asking newly elected officials to develop a "political legacy statement." This is similar to the exercise of writing your own obituary. Instead of looking back on your life and articulating those important things, the legacy statement looks back on an elected time frame and articulates the highlights.

I explain it this way: At the local level, depending on term lengths and limits and re-election opportunities, most elected officials have between two and 12 years to make a difference. What are the truly important issues you would like to have a hand in influencing?

A Key Perspective

Remember, at the end of an official's term no one is really going to care about the color of the police cars or fire trucks, the traffic-control mechanisms at a particular intersection, or even, to some degree, the tax rate. What they will care about is quality of life, community safety, employment opportunities, and adequate infrastructure.

Most of the younger elected officials I work with are quick to grasp this perspective. Once they understand the reality of the need to focus on a small handful of important things, while dealing effectively and efficiently with the rest of their governance responsibilities, they are willing to embrace mechanisms that allow them to do this.

Finally, if you are an older manager, reflect back on your own optimism, desire to serve, and enthusiasm from when you were a young manger. Remember the awe and wonder you felt at the ability to impact a community? They are now where you were then. PM

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BY GARY GRANT AND MIKE POHL

MAXIMIZE SAVINGS IN FLEET FUEL COSTS

Take the time to perform a thorough review of fuel practices

In recent years, fuel has replaced depreciation as the greatest component of most fleets' operating budgets. It is also the most unpredictable component. Prices change on the whim of speculation and world events, making budgeting difficult. Painful as it may be, most fleet owners accept the fact that they need fuel and their options are few. They just keep paying.

Organizations trying to keep fuel costs in check typically focus on the obvious. Looking for opportunities to reduce the cost-per-gallon, they shop for the lowest priced source. After all, a penny saved is in fact a penny earned. And considering the profit margin at the pump is commonly 1 to 2 percent of the total retail price, we are literally talking pennies. While price must be evaluated, the areas of greatest fuel-related savings frequently go unnoticed or are just too onerous for management to tackle.

Here are three tips that will help ensure maximum results in efforts to reduce fuel costs.

1 Analyze the data. There is no truer statement than "You can't manage what you can't measure" when it comes to motor fuel. Having reliable data is the most critical piece of a good, long-term fuel management program.

Insist that your fuel suppliers can provide information on who made purchases or dispensed fuel, how many miles were on the vehicle when the purchase was made, how many gallons were needed, what the price was, and where and when the transaction took place. If buying in bulk, consider adding equipment that allows you to track the fuel inventory as it is dispensed.

Understand every purchase or dispensing at the transaction level. The secrets are buried in the details, and a complete understanding of the where, why, how, and what of the day-to-day transactions will uncover plenty of opportunity to save. With good data, you can establish rules for exceptions.

Most of the fleet fuel credit card companies can help set this up and relay the data to you. Exceptions include multiple transactions in a day; purchases that exceed fuel-tank capacity; purchases over a defined cost threshold; purchases made outside of normal business hours or locations; purchase of fuel types that are not consistent with vehicle requirements; and sharp reductions in miles per gallon (MPG).

Be certain to maintain vigilance over fuel cards. Collect cards and deactivate PIN numbers immediately upon termination of employment. Deactivate lost or stolen cards immediately.

2 Negotiate price. If bulk or mobile fueling purchases are part of your fleet requirements, compare the benefits of one or multiple contract strategies versus spot purchasing. Understand the markups in relation to such a relevant index as *Oil Price Information Service* (OPIS) (www.opisnet.com).

Can a smaller markup than your specific pricing history shows be negotiated? Be aware of any additional delivery or service charges. If fueling on the road or local filling stations, fuel cards designed for fleets provide various forms of discounts and rebates. Discounts can be extended on a discount-per-gallon and a rebate-on-total-volume structure.

It is important to match the card to your needs. Don't be confused by at-the-pump discount claims by branded cards. A five-cent discount is of no value if the posted price is seven cents higher than the market. Include in the evaluation any such costs of the program as card or transaction fees.

3 Improve efficiency. There is no argument that the best way to save money is not to spend money. It goes without saying that newer, more fuel-efficient vehicles will have better MPG ratings, but don't ignore what can be done to improve the efficiency of the existing fleet:

- Track fleet MPG by vehicle and driver.
- Improve driver behaviors—for example, smoother starts and stops, reduced speeding—as they can impact vehicle efficiency by up to 33 percent.
- Stay current with maintenance. A properly maintained vehicle will use less fuel (and reduce long-term maintenance costs).
- Keep tires properly inflated.
- Eliminate unnecessary cargo (weight).
- Investigate available technology that can improve vehicle MPG; for example, telematics, speed governors, idle reducers, and idle shut-off.

The bottom line is that organizations can reduce fuel costs if they are willing to commit the resources to perform a thorough review of fuel practices. Start by analyzing fuel purchases and look for areas of waste, fraud, and abuse. Then, benchmark your current fuel pricing and discounts against other fleets, looking for incremental savings that might be available to you.

Finally, create a culture of continually improving your fleet efficiency or MPG. Approaching fuel expenditure this way will deliver unexpected cost improvements. PM

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BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

INCONVENIENT TRUTHS ABOUT COLLABORATION

This dynamic process requires a special skill set

Solutions to local problems often intersect program, policy, and institutional lines requiring collaboration to make progress. As a result, local government managers are often asked to collaborate with neighborhoods, multiple agencies, and jurisdictions.

Collaborative work can be a challenging work environment for managers. Arguably, being successful at collaboration requires different skills than management within a traditional government organization.

To lower the negative impacts of college students' binge drinking, for example, might require collaboration among local government policymakers, code enforcement officers, law enforcement officers, students, neighborhood groups, bar owners, college administrators, program managers, courts, and area health care workers. These groups will likely have differing missions, governance, leadership, constituencies, allegiances, and levels of power.

To make matters even more complex, managers must continue to operate within their traditional organizational structure while dedicating time and resources to the collaborative effort. The manager must first be true to organizational mission and policymakers, while also upholding the collaboration's mission and purpose. The manager must also be sure that the collaboration will provide public value that could not be created by one institution alone, or the effort will be a waste of time.

Collaboration requires a shared purpose for mutual benefit in an atmosphere of trust, interdependence, and shared resources and responsibilities. How can managers prepare for and succeed in collaborative relationships?

Consider collaboration as a dynamic, human process complicated by such factors as goals, trust, value, communication, power, conflict, administrative support, and leadership. These tips will help guide managers as they work with their partners in a collaborative effort.

Establish a common vision and goals. When a collaborative effort begins, there must be agreement on common goals. These goals can be lofty and general, but must be compatible to each member organization.

Foster trust. Beginning collaboration with individuals and organizations that already have trusting relationships is more likely to succeed. Trust can also be built with a series of small wins, creating confidence between members in the collaboration.

Provide value for everyone. Partners in a collaborative effort must find support or measurable results that support their distinct missions. The collaborative, for example, might provide a service that otherwise would be the responsibility of individual members. Using the example of reducing binge drinking, the university might help law enforcement organize underage compliance checks on bars, or the police department might provide speakers at freshman orientation classes.

Communicate. Communication is important for building trust and common vision. Meetings, therefore, are often the most important media of collaboration. Regular meetings should also be inclusive by allowing space and time for anyone to make their issues and ideas known to the group. With good relationships, the communication atmosphere can become safe, allowing openness and honesty aimed at solving problems.

Recognize power and conflict. Common vision and goals, trust, and healthy communications will reduce the negative impacts of power struggles and conflict. There are a number of points of power to recognize, including size, resources, funding, access to media, access to administrators and policy makers, and power to withdraw (everyone has the power to withdraw).

As long as the conflict is not about the purpose and goals, the participants can use conflict to focus the discussion, clarify actions, and spur improvement. Participants in a thriving collaboration reported few conflicts. When conflict did arise, however, it was managed with courtesy and fairness.

Create structure and administrative support. Administrative support is critical for success. Administrators for collaborations provide a structure for

PARTNERS IN A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT MUST FIND SUPPORT OR MEASURABLE RESULTS THAT SUPPORT THEIR DISTINCT MISSIONS.

inclusiveness and communications; keep members informed; organize functions and meetings; coordinate services; communicate with the public; and manage agendas, minutes, leadership structure, and other governance issues. Formal bylaws, rules, guidelines, roles, and organizational structure can also help foster success.

Provide the medium for leadership. A collaborative composed of individual organizations temporarily linked by common goals requires leadership gifted with the ability to build consensus, reduce conflict, and juggle varying expectations.

Collaborative leaders need to make use of administrative support, open communications, and other means to accomplish harmony. Leaders blend facilitating and guiding skills with effective process and administrative structure to get results. In successful collaborations, leadership is often dispersed and unrecognizable.

Local government managers cannot always advocate for one best solution on their own because the solutions to complex problems require collaboration with a wide array of organizations. Managers facilitating collaboration or participating in it need to depend on a slightly different range of skills to be successful.

The distinction between managing within a manager's organization and facilitating within a collaboration requires managers to be more sensitive to other organizations' needs and missions. The tips provided here are relevant to many professional relationships but are absolutely critical for collaboration success. PM

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BY BOB PATNAUDE

IN AN EMERGENCY

Leading notification practices rely on communications technology and behavioral research

Until fairly recently, emergency alerting and notification was limited to radio and television broadcasts; sirens for outdoor warning; and bells, horns, and strobe lights for such large indoor facilities as schools, factories, hospitals, and shopping malls.

The introduction of new communications technology, however, has dramatically expanded the number and scope of resources available for notifying the public in an emergency. These tools now encompass everything from cellphones and text messaging; to IP-based technologies including e-mail, instant messaging, and social media networks; to global positioning technology.

To everyone's advantage, each subsequent disaster—particularly starting with the 9/11 terrorist attack—has resulted in improved practices to better safeguard the public. New lessons are constantly being adapted for emergency warning and notification communications.

Independent of lessons from past disasters is the substantial behavioral research gathered by various government, university, and industry research organizations. The National Weather Service (NWS), for example, has conducted comprehensive service assessments in the wake of such disasters as the Joplin, Missouri, tornado (May 2011), the "Mother's Day" tornadoes in Oklahoma and Missouri (May 2008), and the "Super Tuesday" tornado outbreak (February 2008). NWS is a component of the U.S. Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Emergency Descriptions Matter

Among the notable steps now considered among leading practices is the use of more descriptive language to counter the public's complacency—if not outright apathy—towards severe-weather alerts.

After post-event NWS surveys consistently cited examples where people failed to take protective action after being notified of a potential tornado strike, it was determined that more descriptive warnings were needed to convey a greater sense of urgency. This led to such words and phrases as "catastrophic" and "mass devastation" being incorporated into NWS warnings and subsequently broadcast over local media.

Other NWS recommendations include improving the public's response and decision-making abilities, while mitigating residents' complacency to warnings through the development of a simple, impact-based, and tiered information structure. Composed of multiple layers of communications ranging from outdoor sirens, broadcast radio and television, and cellphones and landlines to IP-based technology, including e-mail and social networking sites, this structure strengthens warning credibility while empowering residents to quickly make decisions when faced with severe and potentially life-threatening weather conditions.

Researchers at the University at Buffalo (UB), School of Management have similarly made important contributions to counter widespread complacency to emergency warnings. Though focused primarily on educational institutions, much of the university's research readily applies to local, hospital, industrial, and other applications.

Interviews and focus groups revealed students are more likely to comply with emergency instructions—shelter in place or evacuate the building—when they trust the source of the warning. Without that trust, students felt compelled to verify information with either peers or known official sources before complying with instructions.

In the words of Dr. Raj Sharman, UB associate professor, ". . . . if students believe the information is coming from a trustworthy source, including a close friend, parent, professor, or administrator like the campus police chief, they are more likely to follow the directions given in the emergency alerts."

In addition to demonstrating that campus alert notifications are the best way for students to find out about an incident and what they should do, UB researchers emphasize the need to use a variety of communication channels, focusing heav-

> ". . . . IF STUDENTS BELIEVE THE INFORMATION IS COMING FROM A TRUSTWORTHY SOURCE, INCLUDING A CLOSE FRIEND, PARENT, PROFESSOR, OR ADMINISTRATOR LIKE THE CAMPUS POLICE CHIEF, THEY ARE MORE LIKELY TO FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS GIVEN IN THE EMERGENCY ALERTS."

– Dr. Raj Sharman, University of Buffalo, associate professor

ily on those that students not only trust but are most comfortable with, including texting, e-mail, and social media.

Once again, deploying multiple communication layers surfaces as an integral component of any effective emergency notification strategy, a point emphasized by University of Buffalo researcher Dr. H. Raghav Rao, SUNY distinguished service professor. He cites the importance for campus safety officials to have a Twitter presence and "that [Twitter] should become a trusted source for such emergency information. The number of followers for such a Twitter account would increase enormously during a rapidly unfolding crisis situation, and allow for trusted word-of-mouth dissemination."

Global Positioning to the Rescue

Professor Hugh Gladwin, Florida International University, asserts that while emergency warnings necessarily cover large geographic areas, this often makes it difficult to convey local risk to the public. "In the case of hurricanes, storm surge is the most serious life-threatening risk," he says. "However, these surges can be highly localized, affecting only a small area within the boundaries of the total area of the emergency alert."

Gladwin notes that this concern is being addressed through systems employing global positioning technology. Equipped with a Graphic Information System (GIS) tracking app, a network-based, multidevice communications software platform is much better for effectively defining precise geographic parameters for alerts.

Industry studies support government and university research, including that conducted by Federal Signal Corporation. In addition to the white paper *Addressing the Issue of Public Complacency to Emergency Warnings*, Federal Signal makes available its annual public safety study that surveys residents nationwide for their views on issues regarding emergency preparedness and communication.

The most recent survey released in July 2012, *Revealing Americans' Awareness and Preparedness Surrounding Emergency Situations*, focuses on emotional reactions of residents to disaster and emergency scenarios. The survey also evaluates the disturbing levels of indifference and apathy with which too many residents view public safety in general, and, more specifically, emergency alerts and notifications.

For more information on these and other resources, visit the website at www.alertnotification.com. PM

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BY JOAN MCCALLEN

RETIREMENT PLAN DESIGN TRENDS

Retirement preparation begins with thoughtful plan design

As economic factors and market conditions continue to improve, public sector employers are exploring ways to create retirement plan solutions that will help employees better prepare for retirement. How you design your plan and educate public employees who participate in the plan are important factors in retirement planning and retirement readiness.

Plan sponsors are taking several approaches to assist participants, including adopting automatic enrollment and escalation plan features, simplified investment offerings, guaranteed lifetime income options, and targeted educational resources.

Automatic enrollment and automatic escalation. The auto-enrollment feature, in which a new employee is provided notice and then enrolled into the retirement plan (but can later opt out), provides a springboard into the routine of saving regularly for new employees who may need an impetus to get started saving for retirement.

While a typical target auto-enrollment savings rate is 3 percent,[1] employers can choose an initial rate that is higher or lower. The auto-escalation feature allows participants to select a percentage or amount by which they would like to periodically increase their retirement contribution deferral and have their contribution deferral increased automatically over time.

Combined, the auto-enrollment and auto-escalation features may help better position employees to accumulate savings to complement their pension plan or replace a portion of their pre-retirement salaries.

Investment options and services. Studies have shown that too many investment choices may discourage participants from enrolling, delay enrollment, or have under- or over-diversified investment portfolios.

In addition to offering a manageable number of funds, plan sponsors can further simplify the process of enrolling and selecting investments by making target-date funds[2]—which incorporate a diversified asset mix,[3] automatic rebalancing, and a shift toward a more conservative asset allocation as the participant grows older—as part of their investment offerings.

Additionally, investment advisory services, such as managed accounts, offer participants the option to turn over the decision-making to a third-party investment professional.

Lifetime income. Yet another investment option, which may be particularly appropriate for participants nearing or entering retirement, is a lifetime income fund. These funds are typically structured as a balanced mix of underlying equity and fixed income funds, with an insurance company guarantee (for which an additional fee is charged) that provides for lifetime retirement income.

The lifetime retirement income payment is typically established as a percentage of a participant's income base or high-water mark, which is based on participant contributions and fund performance that is valued each year on a specific date (i.e., birthday). These funds allow participants to invest in a diversified portfolio with downside income protection and upside income potential, while mitigating longevity risk by providing a guaranteed income stream over life expectancy.

Targeted educational resources. A targeted education program for participants is key to building retirement security and should focus on specific savings goals throughout various career stages. This can be achieved by making available educational resources that are relevant and targeted to the different learning styles of participants through such multiple channels and effective tools as group meetings, webinars, brochures, calculators, and checklists. These tools and resources should be easy to understand and have themes or ideas that resonate with participants.

It's important for plan sponsors to continually evaluate and evolve their retirement plans to meet the changing economy and the savings needs of their participants. In order to realize success, effort is required on both the part of the plan sponsor and the participant and will likely require a combination of approaches, from automated programs to simplified investment options, to targeted and innovative education. PM

ENDNOTES

1 Deloitte. "Annual 401(k) Benchmarking Survey Exploring New Channels for Engaging and Educating Employees on Saving for Retirement and Improving Overall Retirement Readiness." (2012): Print.

2 Target-date funds are not a complete solution for all of your retirement savings needs. An investment in the target-date funds includes the risk of loss, including near, at, or after the target date of the fund. There is no guarantee that the fund will provide adequate income at and through an investor's retirement. Selecting the fund does not guarantee that you will have adequate savings for retirement.

3 Diversification does not protect an investor from market risks and does not assure a profit. Investors must consider the risk associated with all mutual funds used to diversify assets.

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THE POWER OF "ASSOCIATION"

A network provides steadfast support through the years

When I started working in local government in 1986, I served three small communities as a circuit-rider manager. A few years later, I was ready to move to a larger community and started attending state municipal manager association meetings and then joined ICMA and attended its annual conferences.

In the beginning, I didn't know anyone at the monthly manager meetings that were attended mainly by experienced managers, mostly men, from larger communities than my own. It could have been intimidating enough to make me walk away and never go back, but I was warmly welcomed by them. A few managers went a bit further and offered their help and advice as I began my local government career, and I've never forgotten their kindness and generosity.

Little did I know that during the next 28 years this group of individuals would become my second family, offering help, support, guidance, and even sending flowers when my children were born. For a short time, I left the profession to work at a local university and what I missed most during that period was the camaraderie of my peers and the support network that was always there for me.

Standing True

My association colleagues are always ready to answer a question or provide resources on something that may be completely new to me. Need a good technology-use policy? One query and I have seven examples. Need a job description for a facilities manager? Five are in my e-mail in a day or two. Need someone to serve on an assessment center for the chief of police? Any number of folks I can call upon.

Before moving to my current position in Scituate, Massachusetts, in 2009, I had had some challenging years in the community I previously served. A great working relationship with the board of selectmen changed and things deteriorated. It was a stressful time, but my longtime friends in the association were always there to console and encourage me.

With my move to Scituate, I became town administrator in a community that is located 147 miles from where my family is located. I drive to the community on Monday and return on Friday. When I started, the weeks were long as I went "home" to a rental each evening and tried to adjust to being away from my family and living in an unfamiliar part of the commonwealth.

But I was not lonely or alone, as my management colleagues invited me to dinner with their families, took me to lunch, and generally tried to make my transition a little easier. One manager even allowed me to live on his boat slip during the summer when I was between residences. It was comforting to know that my friends in the profession were just that: friends who would go the extra mile.

Each year at the Massachusetts Municipal Association Annual Conference, we acknowledge retiring managers. In 2012, there were four, and each one was honored by another manager, talking about the retiree's professional accomplishments and contributions. The underlying theme throughout the presentations was how much the retiring manager had helped and supported his or her peer.

Of course, that professional network has also proved critical in stressful times. Scituate is a coastal community 26 miles south of Boston. In my short tenure, there have been six major coastal events, including two hurricanes, and Scituate has borne the brunt of nature's fury.

More often than I thought possible, I've been a regular fixture on the news as the town contended with flooding, prolonged power outages, fires, and seawall breaches. And each time, I've received e-mails and calls from my associates asking how they could help, telling me I was doing a great job, and just being there when I needed a backstop.

Together No Matter What

But all this paled in comparison to the past year. Last October, we learned that a long-time, respected colleague had a terminal illness. While the news devastated us, it was particularly upsetting personally as we were close. Like me, our state association and ICMA were an important part of her life.

The state association, despite our sadness, rallied and raised funds for cancer research by participating in a walk. We coordinated cards, letters, gift bags, visits, and even a video of us singing holiday carols. And we stood together at her wake and funeral in February. As it always has in the past, our second family was there, and this time provided the shoulder to cry on.

In our profession, job security can be illusive. In Massachusetts, we get few out-of-state managers for vacancies so there is a constant cycle of managers moving to new jobs and creating openings elsewhere. I may retire from Scituate or have two more new jobs with new surroundings and unfamiliar elected officials.

But no matter what, I know that wherever I go in our commonwealth, there will be one constant: I will always have the support and assistance of colleagues. While I endeavor to give back as much as I receive, in truth, what I have gained is so much more. That is the power of "association." PM

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