

The Collector Treasurer

A publication of the Massachusetts Collectors and Treasurers Association

Volume 27

Winter 2017

No.4

Start Planning Now For 2017 June Conference and Annual School

The winter holidays are barely past and the cold weather is now upon us, but spring and summer are just around the corner and it is not too early to be making plans to attend the 67th Annual MCTA Conference on Local Taxation and Finance at the Resort & Conference Center Hotel in Hyannis, June 18th to June 21st. Hotel reservation forms will be posted on the MCTA website in February.

Information as to the agenda and registration forms for the conference will be forthcoming early in the Spring. Your Education Committee and Association staffs are working to provide you with top quality subject matter and presenters. We will have lots of interesting educational sessions all three days, and some terrific entertainment after dinner both nights. We look forward to another great June Conference. **Look forward to seeing you!**

MCTA 47th Annual School At University of Mass. Amherst, August 15 - 18

Orientation and a preliminary examination review will be on Tuesday. General Assembly and Review of New Legislation Course 201 will be on Wednesday, with the Certified Track on Tuesday and Wednesday. **Examinations will be held on Friday, August 18th.**

Newly Certified Treasurers:

Pamela Avitabile, Treasurer/Collector., Town of Scituate,
Leslie Davidson, Treasurer/Collector, Town of Wenham, **Joseph DiVito**, Treasurer/Collector, Town of Watertown, **Erica Flemming**, Treasurer, Town of East Bridgewater, **Linda Hawkes**, Treasurer/Collector of the Town of Mendon, **Allan Kidston**, Treasurer, Town of Goshen, **Margaret McWherter**, Treasurer, Town of Chesterfield, **Paula Nute**, Treasurer/Collector, Town of Carver, **Jacqueline Rivero**, Treasurer/Collector, Town of Bridgewater, **Nathan Rosewarne**, Treasurer, Town of Williamsburg, **Linda St. Onge**, Treasurer, Town of Palmer, **Catherine Van Dyne**, Treasurer/Collector, Town of Norton.

Newly Certified Collectors:

Carrie Arnaud, Treasurer/Collector, Town of Rockport, **Ken Bilodeau**, Collector, Town of Becket, **Calvin Brooks**, Collector/Treasurer, City of Fitchburg, **James Dunbar**, Treasurer/Collector, Town of Princeton

Continued on Page 4.

A Great Time Was Had By All Who Attended the 2016 Holiday Meeting

The Pleasant Valley Country Club in Sutton, MA was the location for the combined MCTA Fall/Holiday Meeting with 280 members attending.

At a Joint Session of the Membership the program opened with Sean Cronin, Sr. Dep. Comm, Dept of Revenue and Atty. Patricia Hunt, Bureau of Municipal Law, DOR, provided an update of the impact of the Municipal Modernization Legislation

That was followed by a panel presentation on Borrowing, Debt and Legal Components of the Municipal Modernization Legislation from Atty. Rich Manley of LockeLord Law Firm and Atty. Lauren Goldberg of KP Law.

Next to address the members was MCTA Legislative Chair, Kevin Merz and MCTA Legislative Agent, Atty. Steve Roche on an update of the MCTA Legislative package.

MCTA acknowledges and thanks Associate Member, Easthampton Savings Bank for their sponsorship of the Continental Breakfast and the Coffee Break. Former MCTA President, Paul Mokrzecki is a Senior Vice President.

After lunch, MCTA President Barbara Auger, 1st VP, Kevin Merz, 2nd VP John Clark and 3rd Steve Lonergan awarded Certificates to Newly Certified and Re-Certified Collectors & Treasurers.

The President's Page

By

Barbara Auger
Collector & Treasurer
City of Taunton

President's Report
Winter 2016 – 2017

Happy New Year to all and welcome 2017. I hope everyone enjoyed their holiday break, and have returned refreshed and ready to tackle accelerated W-2 requirements, ACA Reporting and another mailing of Real Estate Tax bills. We can all focus on the busy quarter that lies ahead.

We had a great turnout at Pleasant Valley Country Club for the Association's Fall/Holiday meeting. Our guest speakers shared the latest information on the Governor's Modernization Act and touched upon future initiatives. The venue was enjoyable thanks to the efforts of Mike Hanlon, Diane O'Donnell and members of the Education Committee that organized another successful program; and a special thank you to our Associate Members who provided generous and plentiful door prizes. I would also like to acknowledge and congratulate the newly certified Treasurers, Collectors, and Assistants on successfully passing the Exam.

Association Calendar
2017

- April 12, 2017 Spring Meeting
Sterling National CC
Sterling
- May 3, 2017 New Coll/Treas Day
Dudley Municipal Bld
Dudley
- May 17, 2017 State House Day
- Jun 18 -21, 2017 68th Annual Cape
Conf @ Hyannis
Resort & Conf. Hotel
- Aug 15-18, 2017 47th Annual School
University of Mass.
Amherst
- Sept 13 & 27, '17 Annual Staff School
Dudley Municipal Bld
- Nov 15, 2017 Fall/Holiday Meeting
Pleasant Valley CC
Sutton

being part of what the Association has to offer. Congratulations also go out to all of our re-certified members; a true testament to their commitment in maintaining their professional development.

Under the leadership of Kevin Merz Chair and John Clark Vice-Chair and with the guidance of Attorney Steve Roche Legislative Counsel, our Legislative Committee has been hard at work pushing to pass two legislative proposals before the end of the 2015-2016 session. The committee is also seeking sponsors for the MCTA Legislative package as this January begins the new two year legislative session of the House and Senate. You may recall our Legislative Committee has refined our legislative package to 6 bills that were approved at our November meeting. Shortly, members will receive emails asking them to contact their legislators for support and sponsorship of our proposed bills.

I am requesting everyone, and cannot emphasize this enough, send an email to your State Senator or Representative and introduce yourself if you haven't already done so. Tell them that you are part of the MCTA and seek their support of our legislative proposals explain how passage of our proposals help to improve the financial stability of all our cities and towns. Each of our bills, in order to be filed, needs sponsors and without us working with our legislators to secure enough sponsorship, we jeopardize our bills viability. Finally, our bi-annual trip to Beason Hill for State House Day has been scheduled on May 17th. This is another great opportunity for you to meet with your legislators and ask for their continued support of our legislative package.

Chair Steve Lonergan and members of the Education Committee are currently updating the Treasurer's and Collector's manuals to incorporate changes resulting from the enactment of the Modernization Act and other legislation since our last update, while

members of the Executive Board are updating the exams. The Education Committee is also finalizing our programs for the remainder of the year and updating class materials for our Annual School. Our spring meeting at the Sterling Country Club is scheduled on April 13th and New Collector Treasurer Day is on May 4th at the Dudley Municipal Building for our newly elected and appointed Collectors and Treasurers. Additional information on these programs will be posted on the MCTA website www.masscta.com.

Also coming soon! We will post the registration information for our Annual Conference on Finance and Taxation to be held at the Resort and Conference Center in Hyannis on June 18th -21st. The Education Committee is working on the conference program and it looks to be very informative and entertaining. Our faculty and guest speakers are experts in their field. Make your reservations early! Victor Garofalo and Mike Hanlon are working on an interface to our professional development software that will expedite the update of each member's records. We are hoping to test this process at our Cape Conference!

*Wishing all of our members a
Happy & Healthy New Year.*

The Collector-Treasurer

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It is hard to believe that my term as president will end in June. It's been an extremely busy year, but a very productive year, and I would like to thank the Executive Board members and all our various committee members for their time and dedication. Our job is also made easier when we have our membership helping us with suggestions for topics and speakers. Please do not hesitate to send your thoughts and ideas to Mike Hanlon at masscta@gmail.com. Thank you to our long-term members for sharing their knowledge. Our List Serve continues to provide great feedback from all your questions, especially for those new to the job. It really benefits all of us.

Enjoy the rest of the winter. See you in Sterling in the spring.

Go Pats!

Barbara

Education Committee Report

*By Third V-P Steve Lonergan
Treasurer & Collector of the City of Springfield*

Happy New Year everyone! Hopefully everyone had a happy, safe holiday season. As we get back into our normal routines (i.e. setting tax rates, sending out tax bills, 1099's etc.), I hope everyone is looking forward to what the New Year will bring. The Education Committee has already been hard at work with some exciting events and programs for 2017.

For all our members planning on taking a certification exam in August, the PACT Application will be posted on the MCTA website shortly. Please complete the application and submit by May 31, 2017. If there are any questions regarding courses needed or taken, please refer to your account on the website.

The MCTA Spring Meeting will be held on April 12, 2017 at the Sterling

Country Club in Sterling, Ma. This year, we are welcoming Bill Arrigal and Mary Jane Handy, Director of Accounts, from the Department of Revenue as our guest speakers. Bill and MJ will be speaking about short term borrowing, and the time schedule needed to be followed to ensure everything goes smoothly. If any members have questions that they would like to ask Bill, please submit them to Mike Hanlon as soon as possible. Additionally, we will be receiving an update from Steve Roche regarding our legislative agenda. Complete agenda and registration information will be available on the MCTA website shortly.

New Collectors and Treasurers Day will be held on May 3rd at the Dudley Municipal Complex located in Dudley. All newly elected or appointed Treasurers and Collectors are encouraged to attend. This meeting is a great chance to meet fellow Collectors/Treasurers as well as review municipal finance laws, and get an overview of the duties and responsibilities of the position(s).

The MCTA Annual Cape Conference, also known as the Annual Conference on Local Taxation and Finance, will be held from June 18th through June 21st at the Resort and Conference Center at Hyannis. Registration for the conference is on Sunday June 18th from 3:00pm to 6:00pm. Dinner is not provided on Sunday, but members are encouraged to meet at the social gathering in the evening for music and fun. The conference begins on Monday morning with the Annual Meeting. This meeting includes taking care of some administrative issues, such as electing Officers, voting on any by-law changes being proposed, and hears the reports of committees. The remainder of the conference is dedicated to having a variety of classes covering topics important to our members. Also please note that any of the courses offered will count towards recertification requirements. Stay tuned to the MCTA website and your email for Conference registration information.

The month of May will bring on County State House Day. This year the local county associations will be scheduling a day to meet with the state legislators from the particular county. This is a new approach, and we feel that it will be beneficial to be able to meet and talk with the legislators representing our member's specific counties.

August is once again time for the MCTA Annual School, being held from August 15th to August 18th at UMass Amherst. The school allows members to get information on subjects and issues they face every day from a wide selection of experts, including the Department of Revenue, bankers, and past Treasurers and Collectors, each giving a unique and experienced perspective. All members working towards certification and those working towards recertification will find all the information helpful in understanding and performing their duties.

When fall descends upon us, we are planning Staff School, which will be held again at the Dudley Municipal Complex in Dudley on September 13th and September 27th. The September 13th session is an introductory program, while the session on the 27th is an advanced program. This program is an excellent way to allow your staff to gain knowledge and network with other communities and has proven to be a success to those who attend. I encourage everyone to offer one of the sessions to your staff. The Fall/Holiday Meeting will be scheduled for November 15th. Details will be sent to everyone as they become finalized.

As you can see the Education Committee is very busy trying to bring the best speakers and topics affecting our members! In addition to all these items, committee members are reviewing the Collector/Treasurer manuals to modify them to reflect the Municipal Modernization Act that was passed by the state this past year. I would like to thank all the members of the committee, for all the time, effort and commitment they put into providing the best educational programs possible. I would like to

thank Michelle Hill, Treasurer/Collector of Southwick, who is leaving the committee to take a position on the Executive Board, for all her hard work and assistance. I would also like to thank the committee, Joanne Savignac, Treasurer/Collector of Westborough, Marilyn Thompson, Treasurer/Collector of Walpole, Paula Linhares, Treasurer/Collector of Cohasset, Jim Dacey, Treasurer/Collector of Franklin, and Jackie Boudreau, Treasurer/Collector of Mansfield for their continued dedication and hard work. Additionally, I would like to welcome four new members, Lisa Sinkus, Treasurer/Collector of Foxborough, Kathy O'Brien Moore, Treasurer/Collector of West Springfield, Cathy Van Dyne, Treasurer/Collector of Norton, and John Sousa Treasurer/Collector of Chelmsford to the committee. We owe these members a debt of gratitude for volunteering their time to provide our Association with the best in educational programs.

I would like to request the assistance of all members of the MCTA to assist in maintaining our high level of programs by letting me, Mike Hanlon or any member of the Education Committee know of any areas of interest or presentations that might be useful to the members. We will do everything possible to address the topics. Have a great winter and I look forward seeing all of you April 12th in Sterling for the Spring Meeting!

Best Regards

Steve

Continued -from page 1 – Holiday Meeting

To close out the Holiday Meeting, President Barbara Auger, 1st VP, Kevin Merz, 2nd VP, John Clark and 3rd VP, Steve Lonergan awarded the door prizes that had been so generously

donated by a number of our Associate Members.

REMINDER: PACT Applications are now available on the MCTA website at, masscta.com. If you are eligible to take the exam in August, please download and fill out the application, along with all supporting documentation and mail the package to the MCTA office as soon as possible. Remember, applications must be **postmarked by May 31st** in order to be considered for the exam in August.

Continued from Page One

Newly Certified Collectors, con't

Karen Fink, Treasurer/Collector, Town of Great Barrington, **Jessica Gomes**, Treasurer/Collector, Town of Grafton, **Craig Mayen**, Treasurer/Collector, Town of Mashpee, **Diane Murphy**, Collector, Town of Brookfield, **Brenda Parish**, Collector, Town of Brookfield, **Kerry Schmidt**, Collector, Town of Warren, **Carol Winters**, Treasurer/Collector, 'town of Bellingham.

Newly Certified Assistant Treasurer

Linda Cole, Assistant Treasurer, Town of Halifax, **Alex DiZio**, Assistant Treasurer, City of Woburn, **Kathryn Foley**, Assistant Treasurer, Town of Westwood, **Diane Hendrickson**, Assistant Treasurer, Town of Hopkinton, **Paula Maloney**, Assistant Treasurer/Collector, Town of Foxborough, **Paulianne Martins-Teixeira**, Assistant Treasurer, City of Fall River, **Sarah Misiun**, Assistant Treasurer/Collector, Town of Deerfield, **Belinda Young**, Assistant Treasurer/Collector, Town of Middleton.

Newly Certified Assistant Collectors

Deborah Castell, Assistant Treasurer/Collector, Town of Oxford, **Bethany Couture**, Assistant Collector, City of Brockton, **Lynn Kane**, Assistant Treasurer/Collector, Town of Conway, **Lynda Mierz**, Assistant Treasurer/Collector, Town of Rockport, **Susan Rogers**, Assistant Treasurer/Collector, Town of Grafton.

Treasurers & Collectors Renewals

Lisa Banner, T&C, Town of Belchertown, **Barbara Barry**, Fin. Dir, T&C, Town of Sturbridge, **Melanie Becker**, Treas, Town of Chilmark, **Elizabeth Brown**, Coll, Town of Nantucket, **Rick Carmignani**, T&C, Town of Dudley, **Angela Chandler**, Trust Manager, City of Boston, **Donna Cornoni**, T&C, Town of Amesbury, **Cheri Cox**, T&C, Town of Boylston, **Cheryl Cudnik**, T&C, Town of Longmeadow, **Christine DeFontes**, T&C, Town of Seekonk, **Denise Demboski**, F.D. T&C, Town of Groveland, **Roxanne Donovan**, Ex. Dir. Bristol Cty Ret. System, **John Duggan**, T&C, Town of West Bridgewater, **Krystal Elder**, T&C, Town of Lincoln, **John Foster**, F.D. T&C, Town of Wareham, **David Genereux**, Town Manager, Town of Uxbridge, **Ken Glowacki**, T&C, Town of Upton, **Susan Glowatsky**, Coll, Town of Hadley, **Cheryl Gouveia**, T&C, Town of Rehoboth, **Michael Hartnett**, T&C, Town of Groton, **Wendy Hatch**, T&C, Town of Saugus, **Rebecca Herzog**, T&C, Towns of Cheshire and Windsor, **Dory Huard**, V.P., Bartholomew & Company, **June Hubbard-Ward**, T&C, Town of Northborough, **Paul Keating**, T&C, Town of Ashland, **Susan Kelley**, V.P. UniBank, **Eric Kinsharf**, CPA, **Richard Kleiner**, Treas, F.D. Town of Adams, **Melissa Kuehne**, Coll, Town of Edgartown, **Gerard Lane**, T&C,

Town of Dover, **David LaPlante**, T&C, City of Leominster, **David Leary**, Treas, Whitman-Hanson RSD, **Donna Madden**, T&C/HR Dir, Town of Bolton, **Christine McCarthy**, Treas, North Chelmsford Water District, **Sheryl McMahon**, Treas, Dennis Water District, **Jean Montgomery**, T&C, Town of Hingham, **James Murgin**, Fin. Dir., Town of Canton, **Paula Nute**, T&C, Town of Carver, **Kelly Odams**, T&C, Town of Tewksbury, **Charles Patterson**, Sr. V.P., Bartholomew & Company, **Jean Richard**, T&C, Town of Randolph, **Bonnie Boberge**, Coll., Town of Williamsburg, **Janet Saddler**, F.D. T&C, Town of Williamstown, **Joanne Savignac**, T&C, Town of Westborough, **Beth Ann Scheid**, Coll., Town of Ashby, **Mary Shemowat**, Retired, **Cynthia Slade**, T&C, Town of Truro, **Melody Smith**, T&C, Town of Westminster, **John Sousa**, T&C, Town of Chelmsford, **Judith Sprague**, Treas. COMM Fire District, **Kate Stacym** Treas., Town of Ashby, **Susan Warriner**, T&C, Town of Sunderland, **Deborah Weiner**, Treas., Town of Nantucket, **Caryn Wendling**, T&C, Town of Peru, **Donna Whiteley**, T&C, Town of Southampton, **Eva Wiseman**, Coll., Town of Hampton.

Assistant Treasurer and Assistant Collectors Renewals

Cheryl Abrantes, Assistant Treasurer, Town of Dartmouth, **Barbara Guilbault**, Assistant Treasurer/Collector, Town of Mansfield, **Peter Sygnator**, Assistant Collector, City of Springfield.

Congratulations to our members for continuing their education and professional development

Holiday Meeting Door Prizes

The following is a list of the Door Prizes generously donated by some of our Associate Members.

We thank our Associate Members for their contribution and participation.

First Southwest Company – Holiday Gift Basket, **Bristol County Savings Bank** – Holiday Gift Basket, **Citizens Bank** – Holiday Gift Basket, **Eastern Bank** – Holiday Gift Card, **Cape Cod Five Cents Savings Bank** – Holiday Gift Basket, **Bartholomew & Company** – Holiday Gift Basket, **United Bank** – Holiday Gift Card, **Century Bank** – Holiday Gift Basket, **UniBank** – Holiday Gift Basket, **Easthampton Saving Bank** – Atkins Holiday Fruit Basket, **Rockland Trust** – Yankee Candle Gift Basket, **Greenfield Co-operative Bank** – Holiday Gift Basket, **Belmont Saving Bank** – Holiday Gift Basket, **TD Bank** – Holiday Gift Basket, **Globe Direct** – Gift Cards, **Kelley & Ryan Associates & City Hall Systems** – Holiday Gift Basket, **Webster Bank** – Holiday Gift Basket, **Invoice Cloud** – IPOD Shuffle, **MA Smart Plan** – Holiday Gift Basket, **Santander Bank** – Gift Basket, **East Boston Savings Bank** – Two Gift Basket. **Tallage, LLC** – L’Occitane Gift Basket, **MMDT** – Gift Basket, **Harbor One Bank** – Gift Card. **Federated Investors** – Holiday Gift Card. **City Hall Systems** – Holiday Gift Basket, **Arthur P. Jones & Assoc.** - Holiday Gift Basket, **Bank of America** – Holiday Gift Basket, **Blue Hills Bank** – Holiday Gift Basket, **Commerce Bank** – Holiday Gift Basket, **Hill Law** – 2 Holiday Gift Baskets, **Mansfield Bank** – Holiday Gift Basket, **NUVO Merchants Bank** – Holiday Gift Basket, **Patriot Properties, Inc.** – Holiday Gift Basket, **People’s United Bank** – Holiday Gift Basket, **PeoplesBank** – Holiday Gift Basket, **Point Software** – Holiday Gift Basket, **Superior Press** – 2 Holiday Gift Baskets, **The Cooperative Bank of Cape Cod** – Holiday Gift Basket, **Vadar Systems** – Holiday Gift Basket,

KP Law – Holiday Gift Basket, **Hingham Savings Bank** – Holiday Gift Basket, **Municipal Collections & Software** – Holiday Gift Basket.

Many thanks to our Associate Members for their generous contribution and holiday greetings...

**Comings - - - - -
And Goings - - - - -**

(This feature in *The Collector-Treasurer* is intended to help our members keep abreast of changes taking place within our professional community. With your help in sending us late-breaking changes by fax or e-mail, we will be able to keep current on the whereabouts of our members and friends.)

Fall/Winter 2016-17

Gail Tierney, is the new Collector/Treasurer in the Town of North Andover, replacing Brian Conway.

Valarie Aparo, is the new Treasurer in the Town of Monroe, replacing Jane Thoreson.

Lesliann Furcht, is the new Collector in the Town of Washington, replacing James Lovejoy.

Lorena Prokop is the new Treasurer in the Town of Warren, replacing William Schlosstein.

Paula Downer is the new Treasurer in the Town of Lenox, replacing Andrea Wadsworth.

Jessica Thomas is the new Treasurer/Collector in the Town of Freetown, replacing Jeff Cannon.

Melissa Zawadzki is the new Treasurer/Collector in the City of Easthampton replacing Elizabeth Gendron.

Peter Forcellese is the new Treasurer/Collector for the Town of Weston, replacing Sarah Johnson.

Kerry Lafleur is the new Treasurer/Collector in the Town of Concord, replacing Anthony Logalbo, who retired.

Karen Fink is the new Treasurer/Collector in the Town of Great Barrington, replacing Sandra Larkin

Michelle Barry, is the new Collector in the Town of Merrimac, replacing Geraldine Gozycki.

Linda Blackmer is the new Treasurer/Collector in the Town of Buckland, replacing Linda Marcotte, who retired.

Patrick DeloRusso, is the Treasurer/Collector in the Town of Marshfield, replacing David Leary.

Tracy Sicbaldi, is the new Treasurer in the Town of Monson, replacing Cristina Pedro.

Linda Hawkes is the new Treasurer/Collector in the Town of Easton, replacing Eric Kinsherb.

Jackie Cuomo is the new Treasurer/Collector in the City of Methuen, replacing Ann Guastaferro, who retired.

Eileen Seymour is the new Treasurer/Collector in the Town of Montague, replacing Patricia Dion, who retired.

Please note that the requirements for renewal of certification were changed in 2011 as follows:

“A Certified Individual must attend the Annual School and/or Annual Cape Meeting of the MCTA, during the same calendar year, a minimum of three years of the five years following original Certification or Certification Renewal. Failure to meet this requirement may render an individual ineligible for renewal.

In each of the three years of attending the annual school and/or annual Cape

meeting during that five year interval, a Certified Individual must take Course #201-Review of New Legislation, and **take four (4) additional courses of your choice**, in the same calendar year, for a minimum of three (3) out of the five (5) calendar years”.

Legislative Committee Report

By Kevin Merz, 1st VP and Collector and Treasurer of the Town of Ipswich

Recently, Barbara Walls, the Treasurer/Collector for the Town of Braintree has been appointed to the Legislative Committee for a three year term. I look forward to working with Barbara and feel that she will be a great fit with the rest of the committee members. I want to thank Ellen McKay, Collector for the Town of Shutesbury, for her 6 years of service on the Legislative Committee. You will be missed!

It was great to see so many members attend our Fall/Holiday meeting in November. At that meeting we presented our Legislative Package for the upcoming 2017-2018 Legislative cycle. Thanks to all of the Legislative Committee members for their hard work preparing these proposals for the meeting. The vote was unanimous to move forward with the following bills.

An Act Relative to Compensation for Assistants:

State law currently provides a stipend for municipal collectors and treasurers who obtain and maintain certification by the MCTA for their offices. These officials go through extensive training and education particular to their responsibilities and must **pass a written examination**. The stipend, which is subject to local acceptance, is 10% of the officers' compensation, up to \$1,000. This proposal would provide the same type of financial incentive for assistant collectors and/or assistant treasurers. Again, the payment of any such stipend would be

subject to local acceptance. A stipend of 5% of compensation, up to \$500, is proposed for assistant collectors and/or assistant treasurers who obtain and maintain MCTA certification.

An Act Relative to Municipal Use of the Prudent Investor Standards:

Upon acceptance a city, town, or district may manage trust funds held in its custody as a combined investment pool and may invest said funds in accordance with the provisions of the Massachusetts Prudent Investor Act (General Laws Chapter 203C).

An Act Relative to Contracts for Certain Town Officers:

This proposal modifies Section 108N of chapter 41 of the General Laws by adding, in lines 10 and 21, after the words “town accountant” the following: - “finance directors, treasurers, collectors,”

An Act Relative to Tax Title Expense:

This proposal allows Cities and Towns to recoup expenses related to redemption, foreclosure and land of low value for tax title accounts by modifying language in following sections as described below:

Section 62: After ‘all such charges,’ add the phrase ‘including legal fees incurred to date,’

Section 65: Strike the last sentence and replace it with ‘A City or Town may add legal fees to the tax title account of the land to which the right of redemption is being foreclosed.’

Section 79: Strike reference to \$50 and replace with ‘\$500 or actual cost whichever is lessor’

An Act Relative to Personal Property Taxes:

Amend Chapter 60 of the General Laws by inserting a new section which allows cities and towns to secure a lien on taxable personal property.

An Act Relative to Charges associated with condominiums in Tax Title:

This proposal will seek to modify Chapter 60 of the general laws to permit cities and towns to add to a tax title account any amounts the city or town is required to pay to a homeowners’ or condominium association for common expense charges and/or special assessments.

All of our Legislative proposals are on our website at www.masscta.com. You can also use the “State Legislators” link on the left side of the website to find your local Representative and Senator.

Kevin

MCTA’s Legislative Update Winter 2016-17 By Legislative Agent, Atty. Steve Roche.
sroche@thevictorygroup.org

Hello & Happy New Year.

Let’s start with the good news, passage of House 1832. As you know, the MCTA Legislative Committee and I have been working to move this bill and Senate 1063 through the legislative process and onto the Governor’s Desk before the end of the 2015-2016 session at Midnight on January 2, 2017.

As I explained at the MCTA Holiday Conference on November 16th, we had House 1832 approved by the House on October 27th and sent to the Senate a few days later. This only happened because of the hard work and assistance of Rep. Paul Donato (D-Medford), the lead sponsor of the bill. Of course, we were excited to have the bill move to the Senate with 2 months left in the 2015-2016 legislative session to secure passage in the Senate. Everything seemed in order as I worked with Senate staff to move the bill forward. Initially, I was very optimistic as I made the rounds on the Senate side, trying to have the Senate Committee on Bills in Third Reading sign off on the bill and move it onto the Senate Floor.

Then, I received a call from the Committee’s legal counsel advising me that there was a problem, that the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) had concerns with the bill’s language and would oppose further action on the bill unless the language was changed to address its concerns. The changes were not substantial and we agreed to the changes.

Signing off on the changes made all the difference and the Senate approved the revised bill on December 27th ... just 6 days left in the session which was set to expire at Midnight on January 3, 2017.¹

Next stop, the House – the bill was sent back to the House with different language than it left there.

We needed to have the House “concur” with the Senate changes. The session continued to wind down with hundreds of bills floating between the branches. Finally, on the last day of the session, the House accepted the Senate changes and moved it to final action – Enactment – in both chambers.

¹ The new session began on January 3 with the swearing in of House and Senate members. We’re now in the 190th Session which runs 2017-2018.

Obviously, it was very stressful during the last 2 days of the session and I called on numerous House and Senate members to ensure that it got done. I had a Senate staffer tell me that House 1832 was actually referred to as “Steve Roche’s bill” as the Senate enacted the bill at 11:20 pm on the last night. That made me laugh but I was texting several senators the entire evening and they promised that they would make sure it got final approval that night and was sent to the Governor.

I appreciate the assistance of MCTA members who contacted their state legislators during crunch time – it made a difference!

House 1832 is now before the Governor for his review. We’ve been in communication with his legislative staff and MCTA Legislative Chair Kevin Merz sent a letter of support to Governor Baker.

We’re hopeful the Governor will approve our bill.

Our experience with Senate 1063 was not very encouraging. We worked hard with Senator Vinny deMacedo to move the bill out of the Senate Ways & Means Committee. The bill was approved by the Municipalities & Regional Government Committee in March of this year and was referred to the Senate budget committee in April. Unfortunately, we were unable to secure the release of the bill from that committee, notwithstanding the lack of opposition and no fiscal impact on the Commonwealth or municipalities. We met with committee staff and contacted the committee’s leadership but to no avail. We will refile the bill in the new session.

As mentioned earlier, a new legislative session began on January 3, 2017. It’s an exciting day for legislators and their families.

The first order of business was the election of the Legislature’s leaders. Here are the results:

House Speaker Robert deLeo (D-Winthrop)
Senate President Stanley Rosenberg (D-Amherst)

House Minority Leader Bradley Jones
(R-Reading)

Senate Minority Leader Bruce Tarr (R-
Gloucester)

No surprises here. In terms of who will lead committees and serve in other leadership roles, it will be a while before we see those appointments by the Speaker and the Senate President. In the meantime, I'm working with the MCTA Legislative Committee to prepare the 2017-2018 Legislative Agenda. Our bills must be filed by January 20, 2017; for each bill, we need to secure a Lead Sponsor and we can add cosponsors into early February.

As you know, the MCTA membership voted a few months ago to file/refile the following bills:

House 2354 An Act Relative to Compensation for Assistants

House 2501 An Act Relative to Charges associated with condominiums in Tax Title*

Senate 1063 An Act Relative to Municipal Use of the Prudent Investor Standards

House 2594 An Act Relative to Personal Property Taxes*

House 1832 An Act Relative to Contracts for Certain Town Officers

House 3495 An Act Relative to Tax Title Expense

Bills with an * have been redrafted.

Of course, we hope the Governor will approve House 1832, eliminating the need for refiling.

In addition to the bills, the Legislative Committee will be reviewing several versions of the FY2018 state budget along with dozens of other bills that may impact MCTA members.

We expect a busy session.

**PS – MCTA DAY ON THE HILL –
May 17, 2017**

If you have any questions regarding the MCTA Legislative Package, please contact me or the MCTA Office. We also would appreciate your support at the State House with the MCTA Legislative Package. Thank you for your cooperation.

Best wishes for a Happy New Year!

Steve