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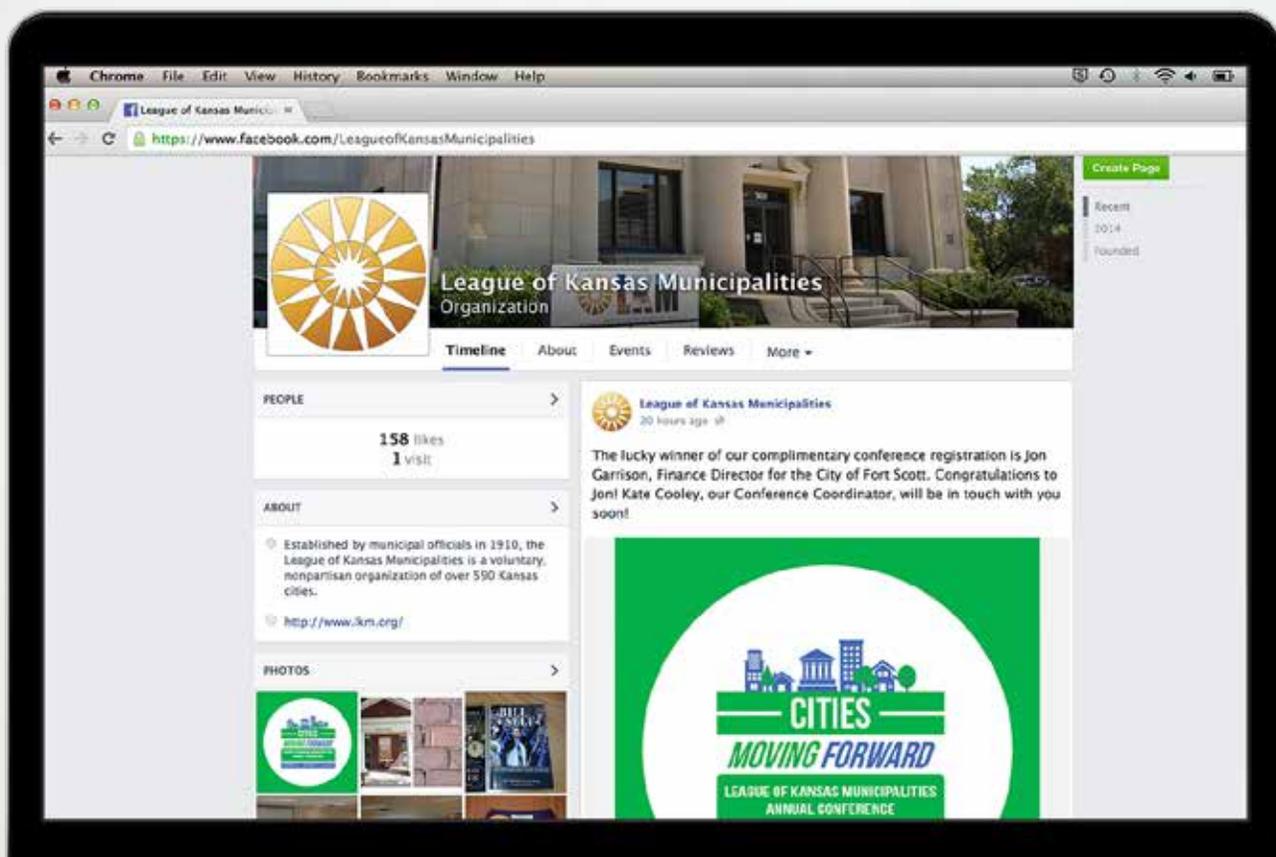
SEPTEMBER 2014

Inside:
Concordia Playground Project
Johnson County Revamps Its Communication Resources
Crisis City



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263



266



274



278

Contents

Volume 100 • Number 9 • September 2014

Features

- 263 Concordia Playground Project
- 266 Contemplating Collaboration
- 271 Rep. Joe Edwards Obituary
- 274 2014 Annual Conference Preview
- 276 Johnson County Revamps Its Communication Resources
- 278 Crisis City: Kansas's Own First Responder Training Facility

Departments

- 261 Director's Foreword
- 262 Mainstreet News
- 272 Legal Forum
- 273 State Scene
- 281 Best Practices
- 282 Classified Advertising
- 284 Professional Services
- 286 KGJ: A Look Back



About the Cover:
 The cover shows the completed playground project in Concordia. View the article on page 263. Photo provided by Stacy Crum.

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The mission of the League shall be to strengthen and advocate for the interests of Kansas municipalities to advance the general welfare and promote the quality of life of the people who live within our cities.

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September

- 01 - LKM Holiday: Labor Day
- 05 - Governing Body Meeting, Hutchinson
- 12 - MLA: The Power of Leadership, Salina
- 19 - MLA: The Power of Leadership, Lawrence

October

- 11-13 - Annual Conference, Wichita
- 12 - LKM Governing Body Meeting, Wichita
- 21 - Regional Supper, Hill City
- 22 - Regional Supper, Garden City
- 29 - Regional Supper, Clay Center
- 30 - Regional Supper, Maize

November

- 06 - Regional Supper, Independence
- 12 - Regional Supper, Ottawa
- 14 - MLA: Personnel Management, Hays
- 15 - MLA: Personnel Management, Hiawatha
- 21 - MLA: Personnel Management, Mulvane
- 27-28 - LKM Holiday: Thanksgiving

Obituaries

George G. Brown, 78, died August 7, 2014.

Mr. Brown was born October 25, 1935, to Howard and Velma (Moon) Brown in Rocky Ford, Colorado. Mr. Brown worked many years as an aircraft design engineer. He became mayor of Derby, Kansas, in 1970.

James H. Eisenbarth, 86, died on August 2, 2014.

Mr. Eisenbarth was born September 22, 1927, in Kelly, Kansas, to Lawrence M. and Viola P. (Clark) Eisenbarth. He graduated from Corning High School in 1945. He was a member of the United States Army from 1946-1947, before starting a career as a carpenter. Mr. Eisenbarth served on the Wetmore city council and as city clerk.

Vincent W. Weston Sr., 68, died July 23, 2014.

Mr. Weston was born on January 17, 1946, in San Antonio, Texas. He spent the majority of his childhood in Kansas City, Missouri, and later served for 26 years in the United States Army. He received two bronze stars for two tours in Vietnam. Mr. Weston served as a police officer and police chief for the city of Basehor and was a member of the Kickapoo Township Fire Department. Basehor City employees remember Mr. Weston as a stern, structured civil servant with a friendly smile. He retired in 2006 with a combined total of 60 years of public service.

Director's Foreword

by Erik Sartorius



Back to school we go! I find it difficult to believe how quickly summer has gone - though I suspect my disbelief is exceeded by that of many a gradeschooler.

The return to school may have less of an impact on us as we get older, but I know the winding down of summer means different things to city officials. For most of you, this time of the year is marked with the adoption

of a budget, a process that was begun several months ago. Parks and Recreation staff begin to shut down swimming pools, and public safety workers look to see that drivers respect crosswalks and school zones for students' safety. Meanwhile, public works is looking for that final push to wrap up the major projects begun in the spring, hoping there's no fall surprise of early, inclement weather.

For us at the League, this time of year brings the realization that your annual conference is just around the corner. I hope you have had an opportunity to look at the speakers and sessions that you will find in Wichita, October 11-13. One of our features for this month is a broader look at what you will see at the conference (see page 274). I think you will find the general session on Monday morning illuminating, as we have worked with the Kansas Health Foundation to frame a discussion around the deterioration of overall health in Kansas. Sounds a little scary, maybe even a bit depressing, doesn't it? Well, after visiting with one of our speakers, Mark Fenton, I can tell you there is only one word to describe him: exuberant. (Fearing I chose the wrong word, so I looked up the definition: "effusively and almost uninhibitedly enthusiastic." I chose the perfect word.)

We are just now finishing up four great meetings with city volunteers to formulate the League's *Statement of Municipal Policy*. This statement will guide our advocacy efforts with legislators in the 2015 legislative session, along with our conversations with our federal representatives. Ground-up participation is vitally important to the League accurately representing the priorities of cities.

If you were unable to come to Topeka to participate on a committee, or did not submit an issue before the meetings, it is not too late! The Legislative Policy Committee will be meeting during the conference in Wichita from 2-3 p.m. on Saturday, October 11. All city officials are invited to participate in this meeting. Following discussion and any amendments, the LKM Governing Body will conduct a final review of the *Statement* and then forward it to the Convention of Voting Delegates for consideration at the business meeting the Monday of conference.

Our policy committee meetings and the preparation beforehand kept me pretty much locked up in Topeka in August. The steady stream of new faces coming to the policy committees, however, made me not feel like quite so much of a shut-in. We also had the pleasure of a visit from Mike King, the Kansas Secretary of Transportation, who was walking back to the Eisenhower Building from a cabinet meeting and decided to stop by. We had a nice, introductory visit. He described several ways KDOT has changed their operations to produce budget savings. We also talked about the challenges faced by T-WORKS, the state's transportation plan, and how important it was to cities across Kansas that the state honor the program that was passed in 2010. While Secretary King will not be the sole voice in deciding

the funding of the comprehensive transportation plan, I appreciate his interest in seeing projects completed.

Toward the end of July, before I got shuttered away, I hit the road to visit with more members. At this point, I'm not sure which is more energizing: being invited to regional meetings where I get to meet many of you at one time, or dropping in on an unsuspecting town to say, "Hi." Randy Riggs, city manager of Newton, invited me to a luncheon with Wichita area managers and administrators. Bob Conger was kind enough to host the group at the Kechi Community Room - a great facility! I appreciated getting to talk a bit about the League and answer questions. Thanks to Kent Brown (Clearwater), Bill Buchanan (Sedgwick County), Austin Gilley (Medicine Lodge, now Rose Hill), Jim Heinicke (then as interim administrator in Rose Hill), Mac Manning (ICMA Range Rider), Randy Oliver (Cheney), Al Roder (Harper County), Kathy Sexton (Derby) and Jack Whitson (Park City)! (And a special thanks to Corinne Bannon from the Hugo Wall School at Wichita State for coordinating everything.)

Kate Cooley with the League accompanied me to Kechi, and we made the most of the afternoon seeking out members. We stopped in Walton, and though the city office was closed for the day, we both agreed the planter out front would leave any visitor with a good impression. We had a nice visit with city clerk Stephanie Ax in Peabody, who was hard at work on next year's budget. The City of Florence wowed us with their water tower (look for a picture!), and City Clerk Janet Robinson and Dana Gayle were super friendly. (Janet was also our first prize winner on Facebook!) City Clerk Tiffany Bohnen and Debbie Bower were equally welcoming in Cottonwood Falls. And, I must admit, my ability to locate Strong City's office was woeful. I'll be back!

A week later, I headed to Pittsburg at the invitation of City Manager Daron Hall. Again, what a great way to have a quick introduction. Thank you to Gary Bradley (Coffeyville), Jay Byers (Pittsburg), Melody Cherry (council member, Girard), Allen Dinkel (Neodesha), Jon Garrison (Fort Scott), Travis Goedken (Cherryvale), Cole Herder (Humboldt), Flip Hutfles (Fredonia), David Martin (Ft. Scott), and Carl Slaugh (Iola)!

We continue to make incremental changes to our way of doing business, and I hope you are pleased with what you are seeing. One new feature is a "Lawyer of the Day." We know that being able to speak to a legal expert at the League is a critical feature for many of you. Each day, we have made the primary responsibility for one of our attorneys answering your questions; completion of other work is secondary. Conversely, this affords the other attorneys the ability to work in a more sustained manner, which is frequently required for the more in-depth legal questions brought to our office. Calls to the staff members who are not "Lawyer of the Day" will almost always be returned the same day.

Our use of social media continues to grow, as do those of you tuning in. We've nearly doubled the number of people "liking" our Facebook page since my column last month - we're just a shade over 150. Help us keep growing! Our following on twitter is also growing. We are concentrating on providing you frequent content via these communication channels.

As always, please let me know if you have questions or comments - esartorius@lkm.org or 785-354-9565.



Counties Recieve Law Enforcement Grant

The State of Kansas recently received a block grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), which selected 10 Regional Prevention Centers across the state to receive funding. The grant will be used to educate the public and influence their attitude towards the use of alcohol and drugs.

The Kansas City, Kansas Police Department and the Wyandotte County Sheriff will use the grant funds to continue a series of

saturation patrols. The grant has been beneficial to the police and sheriff departments, and they plan to continue to use it for educating members of the community.

Source: (2014, August 14). KCKPD, WYCO Sheriff Receive Grant Money through District Attorney's Project Safe Celebrate. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/notes/kansas-city-kansas-unified-government/kckpd-wyco-sheriff-receive-grant-money-through-district-attorneys-project-safe-c/944535612238746>.

Roughly \$640,000 Awarded to Educate Topeka Inmates

The State of Kansas expects to receive around \$640,000 worth of federal funds to educate members housed in correctional facilities. The Second Chance grant, awarded to the Kansas Department of Commerce by the United States Department of Justice, will provide training to Topeka's female inmates.

The Topeka Correctional Facility inmates must complete an assessment before receiving admission into the Certified Production Training program sponsored by the Washburn Institute

of Technology. Training courses provide an opportunity for the inmates to enhance job skills and vitality concepts so they are better prepared after confinement. The Commerce Department will continue to work with the State Department of Corrections and Washburn University in administering the grant.

Source: "Nearly \$640K for Topeka Inmate Education." <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2014/aug/1/nearly-640k-for-topeka-inmate-education/>. The Washington Times, n.d. Web.

Lyons Proclaims September 2014 as National Preparedness Month

The City of Lyons - The City of Lyons, Kansas, has adopted an ordinance that proclaims September 2014, as National Preparedness Month. The proclamation is part of an initiative to encourage all citizens and businesses to develop their own emergency preparedness plan, to work together toward creating a more prepared community, and to ask all smartphone owners to turn the technology in their purses and pockets into a life-saving tool during and after an emergency or disaster.

The initiative is called the America's PrepareAthon!, which

establishes four universal building blocks of emergency preparedness: Be informed, Make a Plan, Build a Kit, and Get Involved. America's PrepareAthon! builds on this foundation by encouraging millions of Americans to focus on a simple, specific activity that will increase preparedness. It also focuses on increasing emergency preparedness through hazard-specific drills, group discussions and exercises. National PrepareAthon! days are held every spring and fall.

City of Anthony Restores Downtown Area

The City of Anthony recently began a restoration process on a city block destroyed by a fire five years ago. Multiple businesses were demolished by a gas explosion and raging fire that took hours for emergency response officials to control. The fire began after a truck in an alley accidentally broke through pavement, severing a gas line and causing an explosion. A year after the accident the city cleared the area where the accident took place and a special sales tax was levied in the downtown area to fund reconstruction.

A groundbreaking ceremony will launch the \$3.5 million redevelopment project. The City project will consist of a two-

story, 41,000-square-foot shell with nearly a dozen storefronts. The design will retain the historic look of downtown area, and property owners will have access to loans to finish out the spaces. Community members are looking forward to new retail and office spaces, as well as potential loft apartments.

Source: (2014, August 14). KCKPD, WYCO Sheriff Receive Grant Money through District Attorney's Project Safe Celebrate. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/notes/kansas-city-kansas-unified-government/kckpd-wyco-sheriff-receive-grant-money-through-district-attorneys-project-safe-c/944535612238746>.



Kids wait in anticipation for the ribbon to be cut so they can enjoy the new playground. Photos provided by Stacy Crum.

In March 2013, the City of Concordia received news that they would not be awarded funding from a local grant pool to purchase new playground equipment for the City Park. Disappointed but not defeated, two community members teamed up and decided to scrap the idea of purchasing equipment and introduce the community to the idea of a community-build playground. And just like that, the Concordia Community Park Project was born.

A larger committee formed a couple weeks later to interview potential design companies. The group agreed to hire Play by Design out of Ithaca, New York. They told the committee it would

take five days to build, three shifts of volunteers per day, and 100 volunteers per shift. It would be the committee's job to find the volunteers, raise the funds, arrange for child care, feed the workers, order the materials, etc. The designers tasked the group to form committees. The Public Relations Committee would be charged with communicating the committee's actions with the public. The Food Committee would solicit volunteers and vendors to supply meals, snacks, and drinks for around 200 people per day for the five day build. The Youth Committee created ways for kids to be involved with the project. After all, if they helped to build it and had some sweat in the project, they might be less likely to tolerate



Volunteers help put together the playground.

vandalism in the future. The Child Care Committee was tasked with organizing babysitters in one central location to provide childcare while parents were building. The Materials Committee purchased and organized the materials. The Fundraising Committee developed a plan to raise the money. The Volunteer Committee solicited every group and organization for volunteers in addition to finding EMS to be on site and organizing check-ins. The Tools Committee was tasked with finding tools and convincing people to let volunteers use their machinery. The Site Committee was made up of the City Roads and City Utilities directors who helped prepare the site for the big day, moved water lines, and were general liaisons between the committee and the City of Concordia. The Art Committee was charged with integrating art into the project, and the Special Needs Committee was formed to ensure accessibility compliance and advocacy. Too many cooks in the kitchen? Just the opposite. What was assembled was a team of citizens from all walks of life ready to do the most extraordinary project of their generation.

Play by Design came to Concordia in June 2013 for Design Day. They visited extensively with the committee and we gave them their budget: \$150,000. They met with a couple hundred children and asked them to help design the park. There were calls for rocket ships, combines, airplanes, giant climbing structures, club houses, more swings, etc. The kids even drew some photos to help the

designers. The designers worked through the afternoon on Design Day and held a public meeting in the evening where they unveiled the picture of the new park.

The next task was to raise the money. The committee applied for grants and held a few fundraisers, but the bulk of the funds were raised by individual and business solicitations. The committee was able to complete fundraising by December 2013, something Play by Design had never seen happen.

The Build was scheduled for April, 2014. From January through April, the committee worked to assemble all the parts needed for their week of building. On April 23, volunteers joined together to build the park. With well over \$180,000 raised and 900 volunteers, the park was completed.

At the ribbon-cutting on April 27, a sea of children waited behind a red ribbon to be among the first to play in the park. Volunteers layered with sweat and dirt from five hard days of labor were instantly energized by the squeals and giggles of children enjoying their new park. Concordia obtained a new playground in less than a year, but ultimately achieved a greater sense of community.

 *Stacy Crum is the City Clerk for the City of Concordia. She can be reached at cityclerk@concordiaaks.org or (785) 243-2670.*



Fifth-grade volunteers work on spreading the ground cover.

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Contemplating Collaboration

By David Swindell and Cheryl Hilvert

To address today's challenges of decreased budgets and increased workloads, both local government managers and elected officials are embracing the concept of collaboration in new and innovative ways. Collaboration has proven to be an effective tool for jurisdictions to join with others—including other local governments, private sector organizations, and nonprofits—to achieve goals and deliver services that they may not have been able to accomplish on their own.

While there has been a general push by residents, elected officials, consultants, and academics toward the use of collaboration as a key solution to governments' problems, these proponents sometimes fail to recognize that collaborations do not always achieve the goals for which they were established.

While collaboration is appropriately viewed as an option for local governments, the real issue surrounding collaboration is that often the costs and benefits associated with it are not fully realized, nor are strategies effectively evaluated that will motivate the collaborative effort.

The concepts to do so can be complex and confusing, and there have been few tools that give managers the ability to fully "talk through" a collaboration concept and ask such fundamental questions as: Should we engage in a collaboration? If so, what form of collaboration will have the highest likelihood of success?

Defining the Concept

Collaboration is "the linking or sharing of information, resources, activities, and capabilities by organizations to achieve an outcome that could not be achieved by the organizations separately."¹ Collaboration refers to arrangements in which all partners to the arrangement incur costs and share benefits related to their efforts.

These efforts are different from outsourcing or contracting where a separate entity handles certain aspects of service delivery.

Because of resident/stakeholder expectations and interactions, local governments may find that those service delivery options in which they create a "partnership" allow an alternative approach to service delivery, yet maintain a level of responsibility between the local government and its constituents.

Is Collaboration Right for Us?

Working through a unique collaboration of its own, ICMA's Center for Management Strategies has teamed up with the Alliance for Innovation (AFI) and Arizona State University's (ASU) Center for Urban Innovation (ICMA-AFI-ASU) to determine the factors associated with both successful and unsuccessful collaborations.

Its findings suggest that having a discussion with all stakeholders as to the costs and benefits expected from collaboration—beyond finances alone—as well as a thorough understanding of the environment within which the collaboration will be situated, will do much to contribute to a successful evaluation of a collaboration opportunity.

These conversations can help to identify the "soft costs and benefits" that might be realized in a collaboration. Soft costs include the governance and the monitoring costs. If a collaboration might lead to reduced cost but involve staff cuts, there may be morale and political costs that must be explicitly evaluated as part of a cost-benefit approach.

ICMA's recent survey of more than 1,000 managers highlights some of the most important soft benefits associated with collaborations.² Bringing staff from your unit together with those from other units in a collaborative environment can improve the problem-solving process not only for the problem at hand but also for other problems on which the collaborative could work in the future.

Furthermore, these types of conversations can build relationships as well as trust and credibility in overcoming barriers to working on other issues. While cost savings or revenue enhancements might

also be benefits, these soft costs must also be explicitly identified as part of the determination of whether a jurisdiction should invest the resources in such a collaborative effort.

Begin the Conversation: Know Thy Service

The ICMA-AFI-ASU research project identified a consistent set of factors that tend to be associated with success and others associated with failure in collaborative arrangements. These factors should be part of any conversation about entering a collaboration and fall into two main categories: service-oriented factors and community-oriented factors.

A discussion should begin with a full understanding of exactly what service/project the community is targeting for collaboration. Communities, for example, may want to explore a collaboration on “public safety,” but that encompasses a vast array of specific services.

Is the community interested in sharing building, operating, and maintenance responsibilities of a shared forensics crime lab? Patrol officers? Shared purchasing arrangement for capital equipment like patrol cars? In order to begin the discussion, the community needs to be clear about exactly what service is the focus.

Seven characteristics associated with the service/project type can determine whether or not a collaborative arrangement is likely to help achieve desired goals:

1. Asset specificity. This represents the degree to which the service relies on investment in specialized infrastructure (e.g., fire trucks, water pipes, treatment plants) or technical expertise (e.g., legal, economic, environmental), which can make collaboration difficult due to a lack of suppliers to compete at the quality level needed by the community. In these situations, collaboration opportunities may be limited, but other alternative service delivery options may still be appropriate or viable. Higher asset specificity also suggests that it is difficult to adapt the investments to produce another service.³

2. Contract specification and monitoring. There needs to be clearly specified expectations among the partners as to which costs, benefits, and management services are to be shared and which entity is responsible for which activity. Services that are harder to specify in a contract or agreement, more difficult to supervise, or require greater performance management expertise are less likely to be successfully produced through collaboration.⁴

3. Labor intensity. Generally, services that are more labor intensive in their delivery and that replicate similar services in other jurisdictions represent the best opportunities for collaboration. An example of this concept is seen in a collaborative effort involving 18 municipalities in Cook County and Lake County, Illinois. These local governments, motivated by the national economic downturn, believed that they might realize some cost saving by relying on the practice of bulk purchasing. The effort has led to savings of approximately \$500,000 after the first year for the combined group and involved labor intensive purchasing work that was similarly provided in all of the 18 jurisdictions.

4. Capital intensity. Generally, services that are more capital intensive, yet offer wider benefits than could be realized by a single jurisdiction alone are more amenable to collaborative approaches. In an example of this concept, Westlake, Texas (population 1,065),

and Keller, Texas (population 41,923), were facing water shortages in the late 1990s. To grow both financially and physically, these two communities needed to construct water storage tanks. They began a plan to develop their water system and together constructed an elevated joint-use water tank. The combined tank allows each city to maintain its separate water system operations and represented the first time that a joint-use tank was designed and installed in Texas. Each community shared in the \$3.1 million cost, saving each city more than \$1 million in construction costs. Each also experienced reduced costs for maintenance through an interlocal agreement for maintenance of the tank while maintaining their independent control over their share of the joint tank.

5. Costs. Service/project costs can drive the interest in collaboration by a local government. Costs can also limit the pool of potential partner organizations that may be able to participate in the delivery of more expensive services. When considering available partners, managers must be cognizant of the other participants’ financial position, as each must be able to contribute meaningfully to the success of the effort.

6. Management competencies. When discussing costs and benefits of potential collaborative arrangements, communities must be sensitive to the expertise—or lack thereof—for managing the various aspects of a service/project. The greater the managerial expertise on staff related to a service, the more likely a collaborative arrangement can achieve success. A lack of expertise will increase the costs of the collaboration perhaps to the point of exceeding the value of the benefits.

7. Administrative stability. The importance of stability among team members should not be underestimated. High staff turnover creates uncertainties, changes in policy directions, and undermines previously established levels of trust. Turnover is to be expected, and managers should be aware of the trend and likelihood of additional changes in the short- and long-term future, and they should ensure that succession planning is addressed in any collaboration plan.

Discussing and understanding these seven characteristics can influence the likelihood of success in achieving goals when a community delivers a service through collaboration. Fully understanding the service, however, is only one aspect of informing a decision. The other involves explicit awareness of the environment within which the community operates.

Understand the Environment

Communities create strategic plans after an environmental scan identifies factors that can impact a community from both an internal and external perspective. Similarly, understanding these environmental context factors can assist a management team in determining if collaboration is even possible, much less destined for success:

1. Possible public partners. Before considering collaboration, a manager should fully understand the number and capacity of potential public partners in the area and identify which can be legitimate partners in a collaborative service delivery effort.

2. Possible private partners. In addition to possible public

sector partners, managers should be aware of private sector firms that may be viable partners. As with potential public sector partners, private partners may be limited to the extent that the community or region is home to enough competent firms to support a competitive marketplace.

3. Possible nonprofit partners. Nonprofit groups are highly capable of partnering in a service delivery collaborative. As with private partners, the size of the local supply of nonprofits will also be driven by the type of service under consideration, as well as the size of the region in which the community is located.

4. Political environment. Managers should recognize the support or obstacles that exist among elected officials of the community. Elected officials may be supportive of the concept generally but cautious or even opposed to collaboration on a specific service.

5. Fiscal/economic health. The community's fiscal condition may be a motivating factor in wanting to pursue collaboration. Those that are financially challenged may find it more difficult to identify partners with which to collaborate.

Communities in a better fiscal position are more likely to be successful in collaborative arrangements. Decisions on whether to collaborate need to take a community's fiscal health into account, as well as the fiscal condition of any partners, be they public, private, or nonprofit.

6. Employee/labor relations. Different communities face different kinds of labor and employee relationships that can create pressure on collaborative discussions. There may be resistance to any service alternatives that could impact public sector employment levels.

In these situations, the costs of pursuing collaborative service delivery can increase significantly or decision making can be made more difficult. Involving employees in these discussions and seeking their input can be productive.

7. Public interest. Some services are naturally more likely to attract the attention of residents than others. Changes to those services for which residents are particularly connected are more likely to meet resistance. Involving stakeholders in these discussions can help ensure that all points of view are heard and accurate information is shared.

Collaboration Sounds Good, Now What?

If the dialogue described previously identifies supportive information about the service being considered and a receptive environment in which the collaboration could occur, the community will then need to decide which type of arrangement makes the most sense for it. Here are the most common forms of collaborative service delivery:

1. Public-Private Partnerships. The form that has received the most attention in the past decade is collaboration that involves a public agency working with a private firm. In truth, this is not as common as one might be led to believe.

While contracting services out to private firms is common, such contracting is not the same arrangement as collaboration. Public-private partnerships, in which a public jurisdiction and a private firm jointly share in the costs and benefits of a service arrangement, are truly collaborations.

These arrangements can be challenging because without the right partner or clearly defined purpose and responsibilities, different motivations can be pursued by the partners (service versus profit) and can impact the viability of the partnership.

2. Public-nonprofit partnerships. While public-private partnerships receive more attention, local officials should be aware of the potential advantages nonprofit partners might afford for certain kinds of services. One aspect that increases the likelihood of successful collaboration is that, like their public sector counterparts, nonprofits do not work on a profit motive.

On the other hand, while there are a number of potential nonprofits in a community, the number of them capable of being a partner may be more limited, depending on the type of service under consideration.

A nonprofit with the expertise to manage a waste incinerator facility, for example, may be difficult to find, but one that has deep talent at operating a community homeless shelter may be an easily identifiable partner with which to address a community need.

3. Public-public partnerships. Collaboration between units of government is by far the most common form of partnership involving public services. Many may be informal arrangements between abutting local governments, while some are represented by more formalized agreements.

The arrangements involve at least two [Continued on page 270]

Resources from ICMA

ICMA's Center for Management Strategies has partnered with the Alliance for Innovation and Arizona State University's Center for Urban Innovation to develop a program designed to assist local government managers in navigating the complex work of understanding and analyzing the concept of collaboration.

Underwritten with the support of ICMA Strategic Partner CH2M HILL, this work will provide a set of practical assessment tools that will allow managers to engage their staff, elected officials, and community in the dialogue described in this article on whether collaboration is an appropriate approach and what type of collaborative efforts are most likely to be successful.

Also available will be a set of recommended articles and documents designed to enhance knowledge of collaboration; a compilation of case studies on both successful and unsuccessful public uses of collaborative efforts; and, technical assistance to local governments by identified and vetted practice leaders.

For more information or to take advantage of this program beginning this fall, visit www.icma.org/strategies.

Collaboration Success Story: Centennial, CO

Leaders of Centennial, Colorado, incorporated in 2001, envisioned an “intentional” city—lean, efficient, and with an eye toward outsourcing key services whenever possible. In slightly more than a decade, the city of more than 100,000 has emerged as a model of collaborative service delivery.

Centennial delivers services with its 54 employees in certain areas that make the most sense, including finance, accounting, communications, planning, and engineering management. For other services, the city partners with an array of government, nonprofit, and private organizations to deliver efficient, cost-effective services in keeping with its spirit of right-sized, fiscally responsible government.

Centennial’s largest partner is Arapahoe County, which provides a variety of services that include law enforcement, schools, and libraries. For animal services, Centennial partners with the Humane Society of the Pikes’ Peak Region, a nonprofit located in nearby Colorado Springs. Other outsourced functions include legal services, contractor licensing, sales and use tax administration, and audit functions.

PARTNERING FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Arapahoe County initially provided public works services for Centennial. In early 2008, city leaders took a closer look at needs that revealed gaps in service levels and decided to launch the city’s own public works department through a public-private partnership with CH2M HILL, a global consulting and program management firm based in Englewood, Colorado.

CH2MHILL instituted a variety of innovative approaches to service delivery, including updating an old snowplow routing solution, applying updated algorithms, and using consumer-grade GPS units to reduce snowplowing time of city streets by as much as 40 percent.

Within this partnership, even the partner has partners. CH2M HILL collaborates with a number of other private sector companies reaping benefits for Centennial. SAFEbuilt—an ICMA Strategic Partner that offers customized full-service building department programs—introduced process and customer service improvements to the plan review and inspection processes. These include the establishment of two-hour inspection appointment windows, electronic plan review, online permits, and “Rapid Review Thursdays” where customers seeking permits that do not require detailed

zoning review—signs, fences, and simple structures—can receive expedited service.

CH2M HILL also established a consolidated customer service center, which serves as a single point of contact for all resident concerns, not just public works. Residents can call the center 24/7 or submit requests online. Information is entered into a work-order tracking system along with the requesters’ contact information, so a representative can update them on the progress of work through completion.

IT’S WORKING!

“Our public-private partnerships allow us to provide on-demand services at the best value for our taxpayers,” says Centennial’s Mayor Cathy Noon. “We contract for a base level of service, and any time we have a spike in demand, we can bring in extra resources very quickly.”

That flexibility is built into Centennial’s various partnership contracts. A value-based system allows the city to adjust service quantities based on changing priorities and demand. If a mild winter requires less snow plowing, for example, the city might decide to use those dollars for additional road striping.

Pre-determined costs of service allow the city to effectively plan its budget over the contract’s lifetime, while performance standards enable it to control the timing and amount of service performed, and pass the risk of quality and deadline commitments to the contractor.

In 2012, 79 percent of respondents to a National Citizen Survey™ rated the overall quality of public works services as “excellent” or “good.” City leaders also liked the results, voting to extend the public-private partnership with CH2M HILL.

City Manager John Danielson is well acquainted with collaborative service delivery. His 25-year local government management career has included helping create two new cities from their inception, based on the public-private partnership model. He believes the scalability of resources and predictability of costs associated with collaboration can truly benefit local governments.

— **Bill Doughty, APR, communications director, CH2M HILL, Englewood, Colorado (Bill.doughty@ch2m.com).**

units of government, but can include more. The earlier example of the 18 municipalities in Lake and Cook counties highlights one type of public-public arrangement known as a “horizontal partnership” between governments at the same level.

There are also examples of vertical partnerships in which two or more units of government at different levels collaborate. Charlotte and Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, for example, have an extensive system of intergovernmental agreements for a wide range of services.

In the area of public safety, the city police department provides basic patrol services for the city and any other parts of the county not patrolled by another municipal police department. At the same time, the county provides jail services for the entire county, including all jail services for Charlotte.

While much has been written that suggests collaboration is the answer to problems and issues facing local governments today, managers must understand what collaboration is and what it is not. While significantly different from privatization or contracting, collaboration can offer excellent alternatives for service delivery if the service is right and the community environment will support the concept.

Understanding the appropriateness of a collaborative effort as well as the environment in which it will occur, and selecting the right form will help ensure that the effort can be a successful

and viable solution to the issues and challenges facing local governments today.

☀ *David Swindell is director and associate professor, Center for Urban Innovation, Arizona State University, Phoenix, Arizona (david.swindell@asu.edu). Cheryl Hilvert is director, Center for Management Strategies, ICMA, Washington, D.C. (chilvert@icma.org).*

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Rep. Joe Edwards
(R - 40)
1954 - 2014

George “Joe” F. Edwards II, 59, passed away Tuesday, August 19, 2014. Representative Edwards was from Haysville, and represented Kansas House District 93, which included the cities of Cheney, Clearwater, Goddard, Mulvane, Viola and the southeast part of Wichita. His first term in the legislature began in 2013, and he served on the Transportation and Public Safety Committee and the Veterans, Military, and Homeland Security Committee.

Rep. Edwards was born Thursday, September 16, 1954, to George and Vivian (Miller) Edwards in Wichita, Kansas. He would go on to work as an EMT and Firefighter in Concordia. He was also the Undersheriff of Harper and Greenwood Counties, drove a school bus for the Haysville school district, and ran a tow truck in the Wichita area. Rep. Edwards was also a minister of the Gospel.

Rep. Edwards was preceded in death by his mother; and sister, Ellen “Elaine” Johnson. He is survived by his father; wife of nearly 40 years, Sally; children, Stephanie Edwards, Sharlet (Brett) Martinez, Shana (Josh) Parker, and George (Trista) Edwards III; grandchildren, Jerome Edwards-Parker, Caidynce Edwards, and James Edwards; and a large extended family.

Source: www.legacy.com





House Bill 2578: Weapons Regulation Preemption

On July 1, 2014, HB 2578 became law and municipalities began to adjust to the new realities of weapon regulation in the state of Kansas. We have had several inquiries from member cities concerning this new law. Here are a few of those questions and our recommendations.

How does this affect our building(s) that has/have been exempted under K.S.A. 2013 Supp. 75-7c20?

HB 2578 does not affect K.S.A. 2013 Supp. 75-7c20 when it comes to exempting a public building from the adequate security measures for four years. If a municipality exempted a building and is thus prohibiting conceal-carry in a public building, it can continue to do so.¹ In addition, the open carry of firearms is also prohibited in the public building if the four year exemption is in place and proper signage is used.

Can we regulate the use of firearms by our employees?

It is the League's interpretation that under HB 2578, cities can establish personnel policies that:

- Prohibit employees from the open carry of firearms while performing work for the city.
- Prohibit employees from conceal-carry in city vehicles and while working outside of public buildings.
- Require employees who conceal-carry to have the handgun under their control at all times.
- Prohibit employees from conceal-carry in a public building if:
 - (1) The building has a four year exemption pursuant to K.S.A. 75-7c20; or
 - (2) The building has adequate security and the employee does not enter through a door with restricted access.

Can we ask an employee if they have a conceal-carry license?

There is no prohibition against asking; however, the employee is under no obligation to answer that question. A municipality cannot discipline an employee for refusing to answer the question. A municipality cannot maintain any records concerning an employee's conceal-carry status.

Can we prevent a home business that sells firearms?

A municipality cannot enforce an ordinance that restricts the sale of firearms by an individual holding a federal firearms license in areas where other commercial goods are sold. In other words,

Summary of Kansas Attorney General's Opinion No. 2014-14

A person may not openly carry any firearm into a building that is lawfully posted as prohibiting open carry. Under Kansas law, a person may transport a loaded firearm in a vehicle, regardless of whether the person is licensed to carry a concealed handgun, and regardless of whether the loaded firearm is stored in a container or transported in plain view. Effective July 1, 2014, a city or county may not enforce local laws regulating the transportation of a firearm in a vehicle.

Federal law prohibits a person not licensed to carry a concealed handgun from possessing or transporting a loaded firearm in a school zone, except on private property. However, a Kansas concealed carry licensee may not carry a concealed handgun into any school building posted as prohibiting concealed carry.

this business cannot be treated any differently than any other commercial business.

Can a city enforce an ordinance regulating knives?

No. HB 2578 eliminated a city's ability to enforce any ordinance regulating knives. In 2013 the legislature left open the possibility to enforce ordinances that were already adopted by a city but, this new law makes it clear that there can be no enforcement of those prior ordinances. A city governing body also cannot regulate knives within public buildings.²

Can a city prohibit the open carry of firearms in a public building?

The Attorney General has issued temporary rules and regulations and is currently accepting public comment. Under the temporary rules the open carry of firearms can be prohibited in a public building two ways:

- (1) If the building is exempt pursuant to K.S.A. 2013 Supp. 75-7c20, or if adequate security measures are provided,³ the current sign now prohibits conceal-carry and the open carry of firearms.
- (2) If the new sign in the shape of an octagon has the words, "The open carrying of firearms in this building is prohibited," and is properly placed on the entrances to the public building.

It is the recommendation of the League that if a governing body wants to have the no open carry signs placed on public buildings that the decision be made by a motion and majority vote. The rules and regulations concerning proper signs for public and private buildings can be found at <http://ag.ks.gov/docs/default-source/documents/2014-temporary-sign-regulations.pdf?sfvrsn=2>.

The bill also makes it unlawful to possess a firearm "while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or both, to such a degree as to render such person incapable of safely operating a firearm."⁴ This portion of the bill creates a procedure similar to the DUI statutes.⁵ Additionally, a city or county will no longer be able to implement or administer a firearms buyback program and cannot regulate the open carry of firearms other than the exceptions described above.

The reality is that HB 2578 is a law that may affect areas of municipal government that have not even been thought of yet. As local governments move forward, it will be important to educate frontline employees about the changes. If there become issues of concern surrounding this new law, it will be important for local government officials to discuss those concerns with their Representatives and Senators.

 Eric Smith is Legal Counsel for the League of Kansas Municipalities. He can be reached at esmith@lkm.org or (785) 354-9565.

Sources

1. It is also possible to exempt more buildings under K.S.A. 75-7c20. There is not a deadline on filing a four year exemption.
2. This answer does not address any potential control a court may have over a courtroom.
3. Adequate security measures require the use of electronic equipment and personnel.
4. New Section 6 of HB 2578.
5. LKM did not include this crime in the UPOC because of the overall preemption of the bill.



State Scene

Kansas Department of Commerce announces over \$550,000 in Community Development Grants

Kansas Department of Commerce - \$554,649 has been awarded by the Kansas Department of Commerce through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. Under the commercial rehabilitation category, the CDBG program allows the Department to distribute federal funds to Kansas cities and counties to better their communities. The project must benefit low- and moderate-income individuals, remove or prevent slum or blight conditions, or eliminate an urgent need created by a disaster

when local funds are unavailable.

The cities of Council Grove, Dodge City, and Plainville received funding for various commercial rehabilitation programs to improve their downtown districts. Private property owners may receive funding to transform damaged buildings as well. The purpose of the CDBG program is to reverse the cycle of seriously damaged property and encourage other community members to improve the quality of their surroundings.

Private Colleges and Universities Contribute Millions Annually to Kansas Economy

The Kansas Independent College Association (KICA), a group of 18 private Kansas colleges, recently completed a study to evaluate how members of the KICA contribute to the state. According to the study, which analyzed the earnings of people who have a college degree compared to those who don't, the 4,959 individuals who received degrees from the 18 private colleges raised their earnings and productivity annually by \$720 million. Roughly one-fourth of new teachers and nurses in Kansas are products of private institutions.

Studies show that KICA students spent about \$16 million combined on food, gasoline and entertainment. Another \$14 million was contributed by people who visited their campuses annually for sporting and other events. Private institutions do not receive state funding and are excluded from discussions at the state level.

Source: Hart, M. (2014, August 9). Study: Small Kansas colleges have \$980 million impact. CJonline.com. Retrieved from <http://cjonline.com/news/business/2014-08-09/study-small-kansas-colleges-have-980-million-impact>.

Kansas's First Lady Joins State Agencies to Celebrate Kansas Farmers' Market Month

The Kansas Department of Agriculture - Kansas First Lady Mary Brownback, along with several state agencies, recently celebrated Kansas Farmers' Market Month at the Mid-Week Capitol Farmers' Market in Topeka. The Kansas Department of Agriculture (KDA), Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), and the Department for Children and Families (DCF) also joined together in a public showcase of their continued support of farmers' markets across the state.

During the event, Land of Kansas Director Stacy Mayo discussed how the state trademark program not only supports farmers' markets, but also supports farmers by connecting them with markets and retailers. Director of KDHE's Bureau of Health Promotion, Paula Clayton, spoke to the successes, like the Mid-Week Capitol Farmers' Market, that can come from public and private partnerships to establish farmers' markets. As the number of farmers' markets in Kansas grows, so does the acceptance of the Kansas Benefits Card by local market vendors and markets,

explained DCF Secretary, Phyllis Gilmore.

First Lady Brownback encouraged families to visit their local farmers' markets together so children learn nutritional habits early. "Taking your children with you to the farmers' market helps them learn to make healthy food choices that will benefit them for a lifetime," said Brownback.

Farmers' markets play an important role in connecting consumers and producers, in addition to contributing to rural economic growth and the well-being of Kansans. The Farmers' Market Promotion Act, SB 120, enacted in 2013, enables markets to expand and be more successful as Kansans are increasingly taking the opportunity to purchase quality food directly from farmers. There are 128 farmers' markets registered with the Central Registration of Kansas.

To locate farmers' markets or learn how to register a farmers' market, please visit www.fromthelandofkansas.com/ksfms.



League of Kansas Municipalities 2014 ANNUAL CONFERENCE Hyatt Regency Wichita/Century II

Join city officials from across the state at the League's largest training event of the year. Meet, mingle, and network with approximately 700 elected officials and staff, and choose from more than a dozen breakout sessions, 40 roundtables, and other opportunities to learn valuable lessons to take back to your community.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11

Saturday's schedule is full of pre-conference workshop options. For an additional fee, attendees may register for one of our Municipal Leadership Academy offerings and earn credit hours toward completion of your applicable level. Be sure to select one of the following upon registering online: KOMA/KORA, Municipal Finance, or Emergency Planning. In addition, we are pleased to be partnering with Kansas Municipal Utilities and Wichita State's Environmental Finance Center to present the KanCap Workshop. This workshop will include information on increasing the technical, financial, and managerial capacity of your city's water system. The KanCap workshop is free to attend and counts as elective MLA credit, but please register early as seating is limited. You can find more about the MLA courses on our conference page under the Municipal Leadership Academy tab at <http://lkm.org/conference/>.

Attendees on Saturday may also participate in our Legislative Policy Committee meeting, the first session of Municipal Practice Roundtables, and can attend the Host City Social Event kick-off reception with vendors; all included with the regular registration rate.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12

Sunday morning kicks off with a continental breakfast in Expo Hall, followed by the first round of breakout sessions at 10:30 a.m. Then, head back to Expo Hall for a boxed lunch and to visit with vendors.

Our opening general session features Ed McMahon, Senior Resident Fellow, Charles E. Fraser Chair for Sustainable Development and Environmental Policy, Urban Land Institute. McMahon's opening session will explore what's next in real estate and economic development, along with how changing demographics, market trends, new technology, shifting consumer attitudes, and other factors are reshaping our cities, towns, and suburbs. He will also discuss secrets that successful communities use to prosper in our rapidly changing world.

Sunday will also feature the final session of Municipal Practice Roundtables, where attendees can choose from a number of discussions including *Municipal Finance Tips*, *Managing Political Challenges*, *Stress Management*, and *Tourism Strategies for Small Cities*.

The League Social Event scheduled to start at 6:00 p.m. will

CONFERENCE PREVIEW

Convention Center, Oct 11-13

By Kate Cooley

feature Liverpool: “A Tribute to The Beatles.” At this event, you’ll enjoy a magical trip back to the beginning, where it all started... Liverpool. No, it’s not John, Paul, George, and Ringo, but this show is as close as you’ll ever get to a Beatles reunion. From the mop-topped hair to their Cuban-heeled leather boots, no expense has been spared to duplicate the Fab Four’s stage look, sound, and authentic instruments. Liverpool’s performance spans the entire Beatles career; from “Yeah, Yeah, Yeah” to *Abbey Road*. A splendid time is guaranteed for all!

MONDAY, OCTOBER 13

Start Monday morning by enjoying breakfast and a cup of coffee with fellow city officials at our Affiliate Breakfasts. Rooms will be divided by title/positions, so you can network with peers and share ideas.

Following breakfast is the second general session, *Stopping the Slide: Fostering A Healthier Kansas*. Rhonda L. Randall, D.O., the chief medical officer of UnitedHealthcare Employer & Individual Retiree Solutions will discuss America’s Health Rankings, highlight areas where Kansas is falling short, and where we’re getting it right. Dr. Randall will be joined by Mark Fenton, a national public health, planning, and transportation consultant, an adjunct associate professor at Tufts University’s Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, and former host of the “America’s Walking” series on PBS television. Fenton will give practical examples of decisions being made in communities across Kansas, and how these decisions are improving the health of local citizens, and supporting economic development by attracting residents, new businesses, and tourists.

After the general session is the second set of concurrent workshops, followed by the Public Service Awards Luncheon, and then the final section of concurrent workshops. A number of topics will be discussed during these workshops, and there will be a walking tour led by Fenton around downtown Wichita. For up-to-date information on workshops, be sure to visit <http://lkm.org/conference>.

The closing general session will include the League business meeting, where delegates vote on policy resolutions to be implemented in the coming year. By now each city should have received a mailing to determine your city’s voting delegates, and alternate voting delegates who will be present at the conference.

Finally, the League is excited to be implementing an all new mobile conference App for attendees this year. Information on how to download and use this feature will be available to all registered attendees a few weeks prior to the conference.

We look forward to seeing you in Wichita!

☀️ *Kate Cooley is the Conference/Marketing Coordinator for the League of Kansas Municipalities. She can be reached at kcooley@lkm.org or (785) 354-9565.*

Featured Roundtables

Municipal Finance Tips – Learn strategies to maximize your city’s revenue and efficiently deliver high-quality services to your citizens.

Managing Political Challenges – Learn how to remain professional and maintain your organization’s mission in the face of political difficulty.

Becoming More than a Bedroom Community – Hear about one community’s efforts to shed its image as a bedroom community, and create its own distinct identity within a large metropolitan region.

Mayors Creating Economic Growth – Learn how mayors can drive economic growth in their community by tapping into export opportunities abroad.

Regulating DAS (Micro) Cell Towers – Cities across the country are struggling with how to deal with “mini-cell towers.” Learn about the laws that govern these entities and strategies for successfully integrating them into your community.

Tourism Strategies for Small Cities – Learn how small cities in Kansas are successfully marketing their communities and attracting visitors.

Innovative Business Incentives – This roundtable will cover novel strategies your city can implement to attract a variety of businesses.

Featured Workshops

A New Era for KPERS – Along with implementing the new “cash-basis” plan, KPERS is also working to provide cities with data on their respective unfunded liabilities, and transition to a new contractor for their 457 plans. Join this session to learn about these changes and other issues affecting the state retirement system.

Participatory Budgeting – What’s the best citizen engagement strategy? Try cash! Learn how cities across the country are increasing engagement by giving taxpayers direct control of taxpayer dollars.

The Future of Housing in Kansas – Affordable housing remains an issue in many parts of the state. This panel discussion will cover what roles cities can play to address this problem and potential solutions in the future.

Reversing Health Declines in Kansas – In the last decade, Kansans have taken a step back with regard to health. This session will include best practices from communities around the state on how to increase the health and wellness of their residents.

Lean Six Sigma – Salina is one of the first municipalities in the state to use Lean Six Sigma to improve their operational efficiency. Hear how city staff have transformed the organization to increase the quality of public services while reducing costs.

Rural Cities: Attracting Residents and Businesses – Many small cities are struggling with losses in population and assessed valuation. This panel discussion will focus on ways that these communities can leverage their assets to attract more citizens and businesses.

The Governor’s 50 Year Water Vision – Kansas is at a crossroads on how to manage its water resources, and municipalities and their customers will likely be affected by upcoming legislative and regulatory changes. Hear about what those changes may consist of, and how they’ll affect your city.



Johnson County Revamps Its Communication Resources

By Jody Hanson

Sometimes data can give you some valuable insights. A 2014 survey of Johnson County residents revealed that 87 percent of those surveyed were at least “somewhat interested” in keeping informed about the County. While that was a number Johnson County Government’s public information office was happy about, another statistic made us stop and think. Ninety-one percent of those surveyed said they depended on non-County, traditional media to stay informed about the County. That told us we had a captive audience, ready to listen. It was time to talk... not just TO them, but with them.

In some ways, Johnson County Government was talking to residents. Just like any municipality, we had a web site, and plenty of brochures and fliers. Our Board of County Commissioner’s weekly business meetings were broadcast live and streamed online. We sent out press releases when they were warranted. But, as the data told us, we simply needed to do it better. And our communications tools needed to serve as two-way streets... we needed to not just talk, but start conversations. Engage with our residents. Listen to what they had to say.

Launching a new magazine

In the digital world we live in, we were surprised to learn from our survey that many Johnson County residents want to receive printed material from us in their mail. That request became the impetus for the County to catch up with other entities in our area, such as school districts and cities that mail their constituents news on a quarterly

basis. In March 2014, we launched JoCo Magazine. Three times a year, 240,000 households in Johnson County will receive a copy in their mailboxes.

JoCo Magazine, written and art directed by public information office staff, is supported in part by local sponsors who run advertisements. Advertising revenue grew 72 percent between the first and second issues, and the goal is for advertising to pay all printing costs by 2015. The first two issues were built to educate residents on as many services delivered by our 30+ departments and agencies as we could. A mixture of in-depth articles and short briefs keeps the reader engaged. Most importantly, nearly each print article drives the reader online to our web site or social media platforms where they can continue to engage with us.

Combining several web sites into one

Eighteen months ago, nearly every Johnson County government department, agency and office basically operated in separate silos when it came to how they communicated. Most of them had different web sites with completely different looks and feels, as well as navigational patterns. A user could click from the Department of Health and Environment to Public Works to the Johnson County Library and think she was visiting three different entities.

In February 2014, Johnson County Government launched a new web site (www.jocogov.org) based on resident feedback gathered from our Citizen Survey, focus groups and usability testing. Based on resident input, the new web site unifies most of its department

and agency websites into a single platform with a common design and navigation style. Other features of the new web site include:

- Home page links to the most used areas of the site (online payment, online tag renewal, maps, a directory of our parks, and more).
- An intuitive directory listing of more than 400 of the County's most popular services.
- News stories and a Twitter feed that ensure home page content is updated at least once a day.

A site feature very unique to local government is the use of responsive design, which optimizes website performance no matter the screen size: desktop, laptop, tablet or phone. The website was built by County staff on a free, open-source web development platform called Drupal. Various departments and agencies have their own sections of the site where they can manage content, images, forms and more.

Becoming more social

Our organization has taken great strides in improving our social media platforms and has seen big successes over the past year. We've learned a lot along the way, and are happy to share a top ten list for increasing and retaining Facebook fans and Twitter followers:

1. **Understand how to use hashtags.** They are great tools to make your messages searchable.
2. **Tag away.** Tagging the right people in strategic ways can get people with larger audiences to retweet your messages.
3. **Invite people to like you.** Go through your own Facebook friends and invite them to like your page. On your own Twitter accounts, tell your followers why they should follow your city/county page.
4. **Be social.** Interact with other pages and residents. Invite questions and give answers in a timely manner.
5. **Be current.** Show you're in tune with the world around you. Take advantage of current events to promote services you provide residents.

6. **Be helpful.** If a resident shares on social media that they are having an issue with your organization, reach out.
7. **Don't pick sides.** Just give the facts. Getting political may gain you a few followers, but you'll likely lose more than you gain.
8. **Make sure you've got a Facebook Page and not a profile.** Pages are for organizations. Profiles are for people and you run the risk of Facebook closing your profile.
9. **Use scheduling tools.** Scheduling doesn't mean you stop monitoring, but taking time once a week to plan and schedule posts gives you more flexibility - including posts on the weekend.
10. **Have fun!** On Valentine's Day we tweeted "cheesy pickup lines" to our own departments and agencies, other local municipalities and even our Metro area's professional sports teams. This spur of the moment idea resulted in more than 50 retweets and favorites, amusing replies, a recommendation from a local TV station assignment desk editor to start following our Twitter feed, and 30 new followers.

These tips have helped us increase our Facebook fans by 92 percent and our Twitter followers by 94 percent in one year.

There are many other ways to engage with the public, and over the past year we've reached out in a variety of methods. For the first time, our six members of the Board of County Commissioners held public forums in their districts educating their constituents about our budget process. We're improving our presence in summer parades and festivals. We hope to partner with schools during the next school year to get students interested in local government. Our message to Johnson County residents is that we're listening, and we look forward to a continued conversation with them.

 *Jody Hanson is the Senior Public Information Officer for Johnson County. She can be reached at jody.hanson@jocogov.org or (913)715-0423.*



Crisis City: Kansas's Own First Responder Training Facility

By Michael Koss

I was not sure what to expect when I typed in the address for Crisis City and set off for a long drive down I-70. I had read on one website that the facility was close to Salina, on another that it was outside Lindsborg, and I heard from a friend that it was near Smolan. Two hours later, at a dead-end dirt road leading into a cow pasture, Google Maps informed me that I had reached my destination. I decided to give up on GPS. After a couple drives around the section, I finally arrived at my intended destination, the Kansas National Guard's Smoky Hill Range Complex. Once I reached Crisis City headquarters (twenty minutes late), I was welcomed by Joe Pruitt, program consultant and manager of the site, along with my tour-mate for the day, John Sweet, City Administrator of Lyons. After some brief introductions and assurances that I was not the first visitor to end up at a pasture gate, we all jumped into an ATV mule and began a tour of the site.

The Facility

Crisis City is located seven miles southwest of Salina on a former World War II prisoner-of-war camp. It currently covers 45 acres of Smoky Hill countryside, and an expansion to 155 acres is underway. The site opened in October of 2009, the product of \$9 million from the state, \$30 million from the federal government, and some political maneuvering from former governor Kathleen Sebelius and then-Kansas adjutant general Todd Bunting. The three missions of the facility were to provide Kansas first responders with a world class, multi-discipline, multi-agency training environment; act as the alternate State Emergency Operations Center on activation of the State Continuity of Operations / Continuity of Government Plan; and act as the central storage and deployment site for the Kansas Division of Emergency Management's (KDEM) deployable resources. Although the site is on land owned by the U.S. Air Force, and Crisis City is a tenant of the Kansas Army National Guard, the facility itself is under the jurisdiction of the Kansas Adjutant General's Department and operated by KDEM.



Crisis City Headquarters is centrally located and equipped with state of the art communications.



The center of operations is a 7,000 square foot, 1.5 story facility in the middle of the site. It has three classrooms, an observation room, and houses staff offices. However, Crisis City's main attractions are the surrounding training facilities, which make up what Pruitt refers to as an "amusement park for emergency-response instructors." The first venue constructed at the site was a full-size, partially derailed train. The Burlington Northern Santa Fe and Union Pacific Railroads contributed railcars, locomotive, track, transportation, and construction labor for this structure, which is used for HAZMAT first responder training, railway disaster and train stoppage scenarios, joint railroad safety training, and similar operations. The train venue is an important resource for emergency response agencies, which have become increasingly concerned with train safety since the July 2013 train derailment in Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, that killed 47 people.

Southeast of the train scene, you can see a group of plain, two-storied buildings that you could imagine serving as a small military base in some Middle Eastern desert. Pruitt referred to this facility



The “urban village” facility in use. Photos from <http://www.kansastag.gov>.



The technical rescue venue, a five-story facility, is the largest in Crisis City.



The collapsed structure venue simulates a collapsed building for a number of trainings.

as the “urban village.” While walking inside, I noticed paint-ball stains from past exercises. Pruitt informed me that such simulated ammunitions, along with flash-bangs and other non-lethal training tools, were authorized in the complex, but live ammunition was prohibited. The complex is used primarily for first responders to train for situations that might occur within buildings or small urban settings. Some scenarios include search and rescue operations, breaching and shoring operations, law enforcement and military search and extraction, close-quarters small-arms combat operations, and active shooter training.

Our next stop was the technical rescue venue. This five-story structure is the tallest in Crisis City, with ropes and a stairway providing access to the roof. The structure is used to train for high-rise rescue operations, rope rescue, military and law enforcement search and extraction operations, and shoring operations.

We then moved on to Crisis City’s most popular training site, the “Collapsed Structure.” This consists of a large rubble pile with underlying tunnel infrastructure to simulate a collapsed building.

As you approach this mass of metal, wood, and concrete, it is hard not to think about scenes from Oklahoma City and New York City after their respective terrorist attacks. However, the first image that came to my mind was Greensburg after the 2007 tornado, and Pruitt confirmed that the venue is useful for post-tornado simulations. It is also used for search and rescue trainings, K-9 search and cadaver dog operations, and heavy equipment extraction. The rubble and a nearby dog course are especially useful to K-9 units, which often are the first to respond to tornado strikes. “Those piles are invaluable to us as canine handlers, because they’re very relatable to a real-world scenario where you may have a victim underneath the pile and trapped, and you may have diffuse scents coming up from various holes, and that’s really what those piles create for us,” said Heather Swift, a canine handler with the Kansas Search and Rescue Dog Association whose team responded to the aftermath of the Greensburg tornado.

Our final stop was a site with a variety of pipeline infrastructure. Built by the Kansas Pipeline Association, this venue contains buried

and exposed pipeline to practice leak response techniques. The training props consist of an overturned tanker trailer; a drill head; a vehicle accident scene; a confined space trench; and a small house. All of these props are plumbed into the pipeline that can be energized with compressed water and air to simulate gas leaks. Kansas has 77,000 miles of piping running throughout the state, so the venue is a great training resource for potential emergencies that may arise.

Although there are a few other sites in the U.S. like Crisis City, it is definitely one of the nation's top first responder training facilities, and is unique for the range of training scenarios it can accommodate. A variety of organizations from inside and outside of Kansas have used Crisis City during its five-year life, including local, state, and federal responders; Emergency Management professionals; public and private industry safety professionals; the FBI; Secret Service; and military operations in support of civil authorities. Some colleges also train at the site, including Pittsburg State University's construction program, which conducts a hazardous materials exercise. The trainings often involve full-day mock events, where dangerous scenarios are replicated as realistically as possible. That realism can include the noise of jackhammers working to break through debris, the use of real machinery and equipment, and volunteer actors serving as victims or perpetrators. Groups from outside Kansas that train at Crisis City pay a fee to use the center, with daily events costing about \$23,000. However, organizations from Kansas have free access to the facilities, which means every municipality in Kansas can train at Crisis City for no cost.

Conclusion

Although Crisis City has been around for several years, Pruitt said it is not widely known outside public safety circles. As he explains it, "We're the best-kept secret in Kansas." That is a shame, since the emergency response teams for smaller Kansas cities may consist of the mayor, utility superintendent, or even the city attorney. Kansans are fortunate to have this training facility in their backyard, and city officials should not miss an opportunity to take advantage of it.

Michael Koss is Legal Counsel & Membership Services Manager for the League of Kansas Municipalities. He can be reached at mkoss@lkm.org or (785) 354-9565.

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Writing Effective Job Descriptions

A local government needs employees with the right knowledge and abilities to deliver the services desired by its citizens. A helpful tool for finding these workers is job descriptions. Well-written summaries notify potential applicants about the skills and experiences they must possess to qualify for a job. They also help explain the roles of each employee; serve as a basis for performance evaluations and career advancement; and provide a reference point for compensation decisions. This article will cover some tips you can use to draft job descriptions, along with a few legal concerns to keep in mind.

Title

The first part of a job description to formulate is the job title. The title should be based on the main function of the job. If the position is the head of a department, the title could be “Director of _____” or “_____ Manager.” If you are struggling to come up with a title, many local government positions in Kansas are defined in statute, and these can serve as a resource when labeling positions.

Responsibilities

The next step is defining the position’s roles. Although some human resource officers list it separately, it may be advisable to include a position’s purpose within its responsibilities. This gives context to the listed duties that follow. If you have trouble coming up with one purpose, ask yourself why the position exists, or what it takes to successfully perform the job.

When listing a position’s responsibilities, avoid attempting to create an exhaustive list. Most jobs have three to five core duties that substantially describe the position. Trying to list all functions gives undue weight to minor duties and distracts from the essential parts of the job. Plus, jobs are always evolving, and it is often the little tasks that get shuffled from one position to another. Bullets can be used to differentiate each item in the list, and each bullet should start with an action verb like, “produces,” “manages,” “delivers,” or “responsible for.” Finally, in case a position changes or tasks get redistributed, include a phrase like “any other duties as assigned.”

When drafting job responsibilities, you should also consider the American’s with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Kansas Acts Against Discrimination (KAAD) (the ADA applies to employers with fifteen or more employees, and the KAAD applies to employers with four or more employees). Both Acts prohibit discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities who can perform the essential functions of a job, with or without reasonable accommodation. Therefore, for organizations that fall under either Act, any job descriptions should clearly indicate which job duties are essential and which are marginal. A function may be essential if the position exists for performance of that function; a limited number of employees can perform the function and it cannot be reassigned; or the function is specialized and requires certain expertise to perform it. Finally, when defining the essential functions, focus on the required outcome rather than process (for example, the ability to *learn* technical material rather than *read* technical literature).

Qualifications

It is common to list the level of education, along with the duration and type of experience required for a job. Many job descriptions have a number of “must have’s,” but it may be better to convert those to

“desired” qualifications. The best employees are often those that are smart and hard-working, and creating too many degree or experience requirements may scare off great applicants. However, you do want to list any necessary special licenses, like a CDL or water operator certification. Also, if a position has multiple levels (such as Clerk I and Clerk II), listing the years of experience required for the next level can give employees notice of when they are eligible for promotion.

Legal Issues

Job descriptions should also state whether the position is exempt or non-exempt under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Exempt status means an employee is not subject to FLSA’s overtime requirements, and it is a common misconception that all salaried employees are exempt. FLSA status is determined by an employee’s duties, not how they are compensated. Only employees that qualify under a specific exemption (like administrative, executive, or professional) are exempt. The complicated set of tests used to determine which positions qualify for these exemptions can be viewed in the League’s publication, *The Fair Labor Standards Act: A Handbook for Kansas Municipalities*.

If you use the job description in an advertisement, you should be aware of K.S.A. 73-201, *et seq.*, Kansas’s veterans’ preference law. The law does not apply to at-will positions. However, for cities that have created a property interest in the position through personnel policies, union contracts, or other means, the law requires specific notice requirements and that certain language be included in the advertisement. The law has additional, complex requirements, so if you are advertising to fill a position that is not at-will, consider contacting your city attorney or the League.

Conclusion

There are a number of other items you can include in job descriptions. You may want to mention in which department the position works; how many employees the position supervises; whether work on weekends or during evenings will be necessary; if the person will be expected to work in shifts; or whether the job requires substantial overtime. The most important thing to do is frequently review and update your descriptions to make sure they include the information you want them to convey. The League is available to help too - we maintain a database of job descriptions for a variety of local government positions, and offer a contractual service to update your current descriptions or build them from scratch.

☀ *Michael Koss is Legal Counsel & Membership Services Manager for the League of Kansas Municipalities. He can be reached at mkoss@lkm.org or (785) 354-9565.*

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Classified Advertising

Assistant to the City Administrator

The City of Lebanon, Missouri is currently seeking qualified candidates to fill the position of Assistant to the City Administrator.

Under general direction, this position serves as the primary assistant to the City Administrator with responsibilities for providing a variety of specialized complex administrative and management work in support to the City Administrator along with Mayor and City Council.

Minimum qualifications include a Bachelor's Degree specializing in Public/Business Administration or related discipline, plus at least three years professional work experience in government/public sector. A Master's Degree in Public or Business Administration is highly desirable and may be substituted for one year of required work experience.

This is a full-time regular position with an annual salary range of \$36,783.98 - \$44,439.06 and includes an excellent benefit package. Placement within range depends on experience, education, and training. Pre-employment drug testing and completion of a successful background check is required as a condition of employment.

Interested candidates must complete an employment application and submit a résumé to: Maggie Shelton, Human Resources Generalist, P.O. Box 111, Lebanon, Missouri 65536. The deadline for applying is for this position is September 19, 2014. EOE

To view the complete job description, minimum qualifications, and salary range, please visit www.lebanonmissouri.org.

Assistant Director of Utilities

The City of Hays, KS (population approximately 20,000) is located on Interstate 70 midway between Kansas City and Denver, and is a rapidly developing community with tremendous growth potential. Hays, KS is home to Fort Hays State University and prides itself on being the regional trade, health and educational center for North Central Kansas. Visit www.haysusa.net for more information about Hays, KS. We are looking for an energetic, professional Assistant Director of Utilities who would be responsible for assisting in the coordinating of operations for the City's water treatment and distribution and wastewater treatment and collection systems. The ideal candidate will have a strong background in water and sewer utility operations, 5 years experience in a similar or related position in a supervisory role, and excellent organizational, administrative and communication skills. Applicants are required to have a college degree in engineering, business, public administration, utility management or equivalent experience in a related field. Salary range: \$51,720 - \$84,300, placement based on experience. Excellent benefits including KPERs, Paid-Time Off and free family health insurance. Residency within the three-mile planning boundary of the City required within 180 days of employment. Job offers contingent on passing a physical and drug test. Resumes must include a minimum of 3 references, 5 year salary history, and cover letter. Incomplete resumes

will not be reviewed. Resumes can be emailed to djuenemann@haysusa.com or mailed to Human Resources, P.O. Box 490, Hays, KS 67601. Position is opened until filled. Phone: 785-628-7320 Fax: 785-628-7323 EOE

City Clerk

The City of Bonner Springs will accept applications for a full-time City Clerk. Position manages and oversees the daily operation of the City Clerk's Department, the part-time custodial crew and the Tiblow Transit Transportation Service; performs varied and complex administrative duties to ensure compliance with City, State and Federal regulations and resolves citizen concerns. Excellent verbal and written communication skills are required. Must possess organizational, computer application, minimal IT, supervisory, financial and public relations skills. Three years similar experience with at least one year additional supervisory experience and a college degree in Business or Public Information or a related field preferred. Certification from the City Clerk's and Municipal Finance Officers Association of Kansas preferred. Benefits include holidays, vacation, sick leave and retirement. \$26.12 to \$39.19/per hour DOQ. Application & job description at www.bonnerrsprings.org, City Hall, 205 E. Second St., Bonner Springs, KS 66012, or 913-667-1707. Applications accepted until 5:00 p.m., September 26, 2014. EOE

City Manager

City of Scappoose, Oregon
\$95,000 - \$120,000

For complete job description & to apply online, visit Prothman at http://www.prothman.com/Current_Searches/index.aspx.

The City Manager is the administrative head of the city and is responsible for planning, directing, and coordinating all city departments.

First review: October 5, 2014 (open until filled).

Code Compliance Officer City of Merriam

Department: Community Development

Status: Full Time – Non Exempt

Starting Salary: \$37,296 - \$41,026

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Minimum Qualifications: Graduation from HS or GED equivalent and two years experience related to inspection, law enforcement, building inspection, land use, public administration or a related field. Any equivalent combination of education and experience will be considered. Must possess a valid driver's license or have the ability to obtain one prior to employment.

For job description and online application, please visit <http://merriam.org/jobs.aspx>

Director of Convention and Visitor Bureau

The City of Hays, KS (population approximately 20,000) is located on Interstate 70 midway between Kansas City and Denver, and is a rapidly developing community with tremendous growth potential. Hays, KS is home to Fort Hays State University and prides itself on being the regional trade, health and educational center for North Central Kansas. Visit www.haysusa.net for more information about Hays, KS. We are looking for an energetic, professional Director of

Convention and Visitor Bureau with well-developed skills in attracting, selling, overseeing the development, implementation and coordination of all City tourism (sports, conventions, conferences and leisure travel) related activities including marketing, advertising, financial reporting and coordinating and overseeing the budget; with a commitment to best practices and problem-solving in a team-oriented environment. This employee should possess 3-5 years' experience in a similar or related position and excellent organizational, administrative and communication skills. Applicants are required to have a college degree or have equivalent experience in a related field. Full salary range \$52,716 - \$85,932, placement based on experience. Excellent benefits including KPERS, Paid-Time Off and free family health insurance. Residency within Hays city limits required within 180 days of employment. Job offers contingent on passing a physical and drug test. Resumes must include a minimum of 3 references, 5 year salary history, and cover letter. Incomplete resumes will not be reviewed. Resumes can be emailed to djuenemann@haysusa.com or mailed to Human Resources, P.O. Box 490, Hays, KS 67601. Position is open until filled. Phone: 785-628-7320 Fax: 785-628-7323 EOE

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Public Works Director

\$67,371-97,688 Plans, manages and oversees Public Works department including engineering, sanitary sewer, streets, storm water management, vehicle maintenance, buildings and grounds. Bachelor's degree required. Master's preferred. Must have at least 8 years experience in Public Works or related field, including 4 years of administrative and supervisory experience. View job description and download application at www.raytown.mo.us. Submit resume, cover letter and completed application to City of Raytown, Attention: HR, 10000 E. 59th St, Raytown, MO 64133; fax 816/737-6097 or email hr@raytown.mo.us. Applicants are encouraged to apply immediately as first review will be 9/24/14. Open until filled. EOE/ADA



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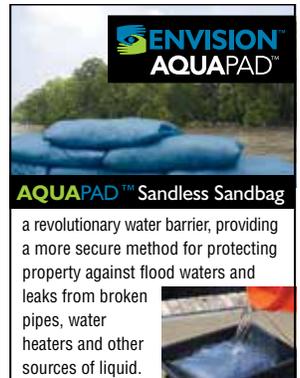
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KGJ: A Look Back

KANSAS GOVERNMENT JOURNAL

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How To Get Started With Microcomputers

Many local officials have heard the rhetoric: "Microcomputers can save your life, they can do this and do that..." Yet, most have dismissed these claims as only applying to larger local governments. The fact is local units, large and small, can benefit from incorporating microcomputers into their organization structure.

The advantages of microcomputers are not limited to only accountants. Anyone who uses information on a regular basis can benefit from the use of a personal computer - a fire or police chief planning shift schedules, a public works director monitoring equipment costs, a personnel director updating job descriptions, a court clerk tracking delinquent parking tickets, or a department head determining year-to-date budget allotments. All of these people within the organization work with information daily and can be more productive in their positions by using a microcomputer.

Ten years ago there were no microcomputers. In 1982, more than one million were sold in the United States. Today several million are installed, with a majority of those being used in business and government.

Myths

Microcomputers can be compared to automobiles. They are similar in price, models and options, and useful life. They are pieces of equipment which perform a useful function, just as a car provides transportation. Yet, if automobiles had advanced as rapidly in the last 30 years as computers have, a Cadillac would cost \$50, travel 700 miles per hour, and go 1,000 miles on a gallon of gasoline.

Although there is nothing mysterious about a car, computers are considered mysterious by many because they do things you cannot see: they "think," "calculate," "remember" and "respond" to the computer user. In reality, computers do none of these things. Microcomputers are capable of storing instructions given to them by people, and executing those instruction through technology.

Micro computers are simply inexpensive, small office machines which can be placed on a desk top of a given work area. The major advantage is that they provide convenient computing power for those public employees who handle information.

The following are some typical myths:

- "I have to take some computer programming classes to know how to use one" False. Fortunately, many extremely smart people have built computers that even elementary school children can learn to use. There are thousands of software programs available on the market designed to meet most user needs. Knowledge of computer programming is not necessary...

 **EDITOR'S NOTE.** This is part of a larger article about Microcomputers in the October, 1987, issue of the **Kansas Government Journal**.

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