League Honors Mayors with E.A. Mosher Award

The League honored two Kansas Mayors this year by announcing the E.A. Mosher Excellence in Local Government award winners at the League Annual Conference this past weekend. Overland Park Mayor Carl Gerlach and Edwardsville Mayor John "Tiny" McTaggart were honored for 2021. This award is presented annually to an elected official who has demonstrated outstanding service to their city and has a proven commitment to local government and service to the League of Kansas Municipalities.

Carl was first elected to the City Council in April 1995, after building relationships with the Overland Park Chamber of Commerce and the City’s business community. Gerlach was elected Mayor in April 2005, following Ed Eilert, who served 24 years as Overland Park Mayor. Gerlach was re-elected three times. Mayor Gerlach will retire from local government in December.

Mayor McTaggart began serving on the Edwardsville City Council in 1990. He ran for Mayor and served as Mayor from 1993 to 1997 and again from 2009 until 2021. He is not running for re-election and will end his term as Mayor in the coming months.

Both Mayors have served as President of the League’s Governing Body. You can read the full press releases for the awards or watch the videos created for the award announcements.

League Selects New Governing Body Leaders

At the League of Kansas Municipalities Annual Conference this past weekend, the Convention of Voting Delegates elected the 2021-2022 Governing Body officers and directors. The delegates elected Hesston City Council President Jason Jones as President and Ellis Mayor David McDaniel as Vice President.

“I am honored to lead the League Governing Body over the next year. Cities play a vital role in our state's economy and their success is critical to Kansas’ future,” said Jones. “The League is an integral partner in statewide conversation on economic issues, taxation and finance, infrastructure, and public safety, federal issues.”

Convention Delegates also selected two Governing Body members to continue their director positions for an additional, three-year term: Mark Govea, City of Osawatomie and Roy Cessna, Mayor of Garden City. Two new Governing Body members were selected for three-year terms: Ty Lasher, City Manager with the City of Bel Aire and Christy Pyatt, City Clerk/Treasurer for the City of Greensburg.
**EPA Grant Opportunity for Communities**

EPA’s Office of Community Revitalization, the USDA Forest Service, and the Northern Border Regional Commission are accepting applications for *Recreation Economy for Rural Communities* (RERC) planning assistance. This program provides opportunities for communities to work with a planning team to identify strategies to grow local outdoor recreation economies, strengthen downtowns, as well as for conservation and sustainability of natural assets.

RERC Projects receiving assistance previously have included:
- ensuring that residents and visitors from all backgrounds can access and benefit from outdoor recreation opportunities;
- expanding lodging and other services for visitors;
- improving access to trails and nearby natural attractions;
- promoting outdoor-oriented businesses; and
- supporting economic growth and amenities in downtowns.

An informational webinar about the program and how to apply will be held on October 27 and the application deadline is November 22, 2021. Click here to find out more information about the RERC program, sign up for the informational webinar, or to apply.

**Intergovernmental Award Winner Announced**

The League is pleased to award the 2021 Intergovernmental Award to House Speaker Pro Tem Blaine Finch. Representative Finch, from the 59th District, was instrumental in drafting and putting into motion the extraordinary legislative efforts it took to pass Senate Bill 88, the City Utility Low-Interest Loan Program, in response to the unprecedented arctic cold snap in February 2021.

Representative Finch has been a long-time supporter of cities and home rule through his work as the City Attorney for the City of Ottawa. Blaine Finch has served in the Kansas Legislature since 2013, and represents Ottawa, Pomona, Williamsburg, Lyndon, and Vassar. In addition to serving in the Kansas House, Speaker Pro Tem Finch is also an attorney in private practice. Read the full release and watch the video presentation.
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