

Municipal Clerks' Association of New Jersey
Annual Meeting Minutes
December 12, 2012 – Holiday Inn (East Windsor, NJ)
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CALL TO ORDER

President Andrew Pavlica called the meeting to order at 11 A.M.

ROLL CALL

Present: President Andrew Pavlica
1st Vice President Nancy Saffos
2nd Vice President John Mitch
Treasurer Keith Kazmark
Secretary Denise Szabo
Immediate Past President Joanne Kwasniewski
Administrative Consultant Joel Popkin

Legal Counsel Richard Lustgarten Esq. was also present.

FLAG SALUTE AND MOMENT OF SILENCE

Executive Director Joel Popkin led the attendees in the flag salute.

INVOCATION

The invocation was delivered by Christopher Saffos, son of Nancy Saffos.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Elaine Kennedy, Eagleswood Township, second by Joan Moreland, Haddon Heights Borough, and unanimously agreed to approve the November 16, 2011 minutes.

EDUCATION SESSIONS

Immediate Kwasniewski gave a legislative update. Szabo gave a presentation on the Open Public Meetings Act and Transparency in Government.

INTRODUCTION OF CANDIDATES FOR 2013 MCANJ SECRETARY

Szabo introduced MCANJ Secretary Candidates for 2013; Ann Marie McCarthy, Municipal Clerk Franklin Township (Somerset); and Dina Zawadski, Municipal Clerk, Depford Township.

Both candidates introduced themselves to the membership.

EXPLANATION OF VOTING PROCEDURE AND COMMENCEMENT OF ELECTION FOR 2013 MCANJ SECRETARY

Vincent Buttiglieri, Chairman of the MCANJ Credential Committee, Municipal Clerk, Ocean Township (Monmouth) explained the procedure for voting to the membership, and voting commenced.

RECESS

The meeting temporarily adjourned for lunch.

REPORT OF OFFICERS

Treasurer's Report by Keith Kazmark:

Checking/Savings (as of 11/30/12)	\$103,638.99
MCANJ Raffles (as of 11/30/12)	\$24,608.84
CD (as of 10/31/12)	\$102,885.29
Scholarship Funds (as of 11/30/12)	\$14,431.50
AC in 2013 (as of 11/30/12)	\$28,538.41
Total	\$274,103.03

The Legal Defense Fund account balances as of 11/15/12 were reported as follows:

Central Jersey Bank CD	\$66,315.00
Central Jersey Bank Money Market	\$54,724.57
Total	\$121,039.57

Kazmark provided an updated 2012 Budget Summary. He also presented the following membership summary:

Municipal Clerks	509
Deputy Municipal Clerks	232
Acting Municipal Clerks	11
Assistant Municipal Clerks	18
County Clerks	11
Deputy County Clerks	6
Clerk to Freeholder Board	5
Affiliate Members	26
TOTAL	818

He noted that Passaic, Somerset and Union Counties had 100% paid membership. Of the 566 municipalities, 91.87% of the Municipals Clerk's are members.

A motion was made by Elaine Kennedy, Eagleswood Township, seconded by Kelley Rhode, Ringwood Borough, and unanimously agreed to approve the Treasurer's report.

LEGAL UPDATE

Richard Lustgarten Esq. updated the membership on proposed amendments to OPRA, OPMA, Elections, and protective status statutes.

PROPOSED CONSTITUTION AND BYLAW AMENDMENTS

Pavlica announced that there are proposed amendments to the constitution and by-laws. Harold Weiner, Irvington Township, briefly commented on those amendments. Motion by Betty Mastropasqua, Beachwood Borough, seconded by Kelley Rhode, Ringwood Borough, and unanimously agreed to approve the amendments as proposed. (*Exhibit A - Copy attached to minutes*)

RECOGNITION OF 2012 COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Pavlica named the following committees and chairpersons and asked that the chairpersons present be recognized for their hard work and commitment to MCANJ: (*Exhibit B - Copy attached to minutes*)

- Constitution and Bylaws: Harold Wiener, Chair, Municipal Clerk, Irvington Township
- Education: Heather Mailander, Chair, Municipal Clerk, Ridgewood Village
- Education Conference: Sharon Brienza, Co-Chair, Municipal Clerk, Branchburg Township and Heather Mailander, Co-Chair, Municipal Clerk, Ridgewood Village
- Elections: Jane Williams-Warren, Chair, Municipal Clerk, Paterson City
- Fundraising: Doreen Cali, Co-Chair, Municipal Clerk, Roselle Park Borough and Addie Hanna, Co-Chair, Municipal Clerk, Midland Park Borough
- Information Technology/Web Page: Daina Dale, Chair, Municipal Clerk, Harvey Cedars Borough
- Legal Defense Fund: Sharon Brienza, Chair, Municipal Clerk, Branchburg Township
- Legislative Committee for Laws Pertaining to The Municipal Clerk's Profession: Kim-Marie White, Chair, Municipal Clerk, Eastampton Township
- Legislative Review: Dwayne Harris, Chair, Municipal Clerk, Atlantic Highlands Borough
- Manual Review, Joel Popkin, Coordinator; Deanna Bennett, Editor, Municipal Clerk, Haddonfield Borough
- Membership North: Sally Bleeker, Chair, Municipal Clerk, Franklin Lakes Borough
- Membership Central: Cecilia Covino, Chair, Municipal Clerk, Clinton Town
- Membership South: Cynthia Dalessio, Chair, Municipal Clerk, Woodstown Borough
- Past Presidents' Council: Joan Moreland, Chair, Municipal Clerk, Retired
- Professional Development and Mini Conference:
 - North: Susan Witkowski, Municipal Clerk, Hillsdale Borough and Amy Lobban, Municipal Clerk, Sandyston Township
 - Central: Diane Pflugfelder, Municipal Clerk, Liberty Township and Ann Marie Mccarthy, Municipal Clerk, Franklin Township (Somerset)
 - South: Patricia Frontino, Municipal Clerk, Glassboro Borough and Dina Zawadski, Municipal Clerk, Deptford Township
- Public Relations – MCANJ Booth: Cecilia Covino, Chair, Municipal Clerk, Clinton Town
- Quill: James Doherty, Editor, Municipal Clerk, Wantage Township
- Raffles: Yancy Wazirmas, Chair, Municipal Clerk, Parsippany-Troy Hills Township
- Records: Elaine B. Kennedy, Chair, Municipal Clerk, Eagleswood Township
- Resolutions: Sandra Bohinski, Co-Chair, Municipal Clerk, Helmetta Borough and Marie Elena Macari, Co-Chair, Municipal Clerk, Saddle River Borough
- Scholarship: Karen Hughes, Chair, Municipal Clerk, Westwood Borough)

ANNOUNCEMENT OF SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Mitch on behalf of Karen Hughes, Westwood Borough, announced the scholarship winners as follows:

1. RMC Scholarship – Jeanne Hitcher, Deputy Clerk, Township of Commercial
2. Peter H. Maclearier CMC Scholarship - Christine Demiris, Administrator/Borough Clerk, Borough of New Milford
3. MMC Scholarship – Kim-Marie White, Municipal Clerk, Eastampton Township.

TRIBUTE TO RETIRED MEMBERS

Marie Elena Macari, Saddle River, read the following Resolution:

WHEREAS, service to others is the best work of life; and

WHEREAS, continued, unselfish service is the backbone of our society and is to be commended and exemplified; and

WHEREAS, as a Municipal Clerk, knowing that you have shared in the growth and success of your community and this organization is a purpose fulfilled.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Municipal Clerk's Association of New Jersey, Inc., that we commend your dedication to the residents of your community and organization, and point to it as an example to be exemplified and emulated; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Honorary membership is bestowed upon the below-named retired Municipal Clerks in accordance with Article II, Section 1.D of the Municipal Clerks' Association of New Jersey, Inc., Constitution and By Laws; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we extend to you, upon the occasion of your retirement, our gratitude and best wishes for good health, success and prosperity for many years to come to those Municipal Clerks named herein:

Bergen County

Fran Lehmann, Leonia Borough
Bob Sandt, Hillsdale Borough
Carole Chamberlain-Berman, Bergenfield Borough
Toni Falato, Paramus Borough

Camden County

Barbara Lewis, Brooklawn Borough

Cape May County

Claudia Kammer, Lower Township
Wanda Gaglione, Upper Township

Cumberland County

J. Roy Oliver, Maurice River Township
Elaine Hancock, Greenwich Township
Richard DeVillasanta, Downe Township

Essex County

Jeanne McEnroe, Verona Township
Joanne M. Monarque, Millburn Township

Benedict F. Martorana, West Caldwell Township

Gloucester County

Carolyn Toy, Franklin Township

Hunterdon County

Diane Schottman, Flemington Borough

Mercer County

Andrea Lea Quinty, Princeton Borough

Middlesex County

Rose Marie Saracino, Old Bridge Township

Morris County

Dolores Dalessandro, Netcong Borough
Annette "Penny" Maida-Smith, Lincoln Park Borough

Union County

Jean D. Kuc, Rahway City

Motion by Jane Williams-Warren, Municipal Clerk, Paterson City, second by Nanette Perry, Municipal Clerk, East Brunswick, and unanimously agreed to approve the Resolution.

TRIBUTE TO DECEASED MEMBERS

Sandra Bohinski, Helmetta, read the following Resolution:

WHEREAS, the strength and spirit of a community are often reflected in the activities and successes of its employees; and

WHEREAS, throughout their tenure, Municipal Clerks serve their communities with complete professionalism and at all times demonstrate an extraordinary dedication, enthusiasm and community spirit; and

WHEREAS, although dearly departed many Municipal Clerks will always be in thought a part of their municipality.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Municipal Clerks Association of New Jersey, Inc., that we commend their dedication to the residents of their respective communities and this organization, and point to it as an example to be exemplified and emulated; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we extend to these individuals a moment of silence dedicated to the memories of those who have left us for a greater service.

Bergen County

Susan McGinley Spohn, Borough of Englewood Cliffs
Jack Drakeford, City of Englewood (retired)
Marie Koehler, Borough of Old Tappan (retired)

Camden County

Janet Betley, Boroughs of Haddonfield & Tavistock (retired)
Eleanor O'Donnell, Borough of Somerdale (retired)

Essex County

Carole Mollineaux, Deputy Clerk, City of Livingston
Jeanne McEnroe, Township of Verona
Nancy O'Hara, City of West Orange
Constance B. Arnott, Township of Montclair (retired)

Benedict F. Martorana, Township of West Caldwell (retired)

Hunterdon County

Mary Elizabeth Sheppard, City of Lambertville (retired)

Middlesex County

Claire Reilly, City of South Amboy (retired)

Somerset County

Charlotte Kellam, Township of Branchburg (retired)
Adele Widin, Borough of Watchung (retired)

Warren County

Michelle Broubalow, Town of Phillipsburg

May they rest in peace.

Motion by Elaine Kennedy, Eagleswood Township, second by Kathy Anello, Middlesex Borough, and unanimously agreed to approve the resolution.

PRESENTATION OF FRIEND OF THE MUNICIPAL CLERK AWARD, AND L. MANUEL HIRSHBLOND DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Pavlica announced the recipient of the Friends of the Municipal Clerks' Award for 2012: Greg Hart, Esq., Borough Administrator of Franklin Lakes, and former Municipal Clerk. Greg was a tremendous asset to the association by utilizing his expertise and analytical skills to draft position papers for the MCANJ, in regard to the Common Sense Shared Services Act and other pieces of proposed legislation, as well as advising strategies in response to different pieces of legislation affecting the position of the municipal clerk.

Pavlica announced the recipient of the Manuel Hirshblond Distinguished Service Award for 2012: Vinny Buttiglieri, Municipal Clerk and Deputy Tax Collector of Ocean Township (Monmouth). Vinny Buttiglieri never says "No". He is an extremely hard worker, who always pitches in, and because of his strong sense of duty, he will often volunteer to come to the aid of a Clerk in need. He has provided New Jersey with competent, caring and effective leadership, representing us well, as a Region II Director for the International Institute of Municipal Clerks. Vinny has also provided leadership and sage advice as part of an informal Ad Hoc Committee made up of Jim Doherty, Harold Wiener, Greg Hart and others, reviewing proposed OPRA and OPMA Legislation, during the past year. Vinny agreeing to serve as Credentials Committee Chairman for the Election of the 2013 MCANJ Secretary is another example of his willingness to help.

STATE OF ASSOCIATION ADDRESS

Pavlica delivered the following comments:

Thank you all for coming, today, to the Annual Business Meeting of the MCANJ, which was postponed from November 14th.

Thanks to Super Storm Sandy, which hit our Shores on October 29th, for the first time, in 97 years, the New Jersey State League of Municipalities Conference was cancelled, which is why we are here today.

We have had a unique and fascinating year. It was, also, a year of many firsts.

With, or without, the first-time ever cancellation of the League Conference, this year was going to be, and is, the first time-ever, that we are receiving CEU's, at our Annual Meeting.

The Executive Board, this year, has worked very hard to act in everyone's best interests, and to remain vigilant, and on top of the issues, especially in regard to pending Legislation, whether it be, the Common Sense Shared Services Act, tenure related issues, proposed amendments to the Open Public Records Act, the Open Public Meetings Act, and other pieces of Legislation.

On a positive note, Assembly Bill No. 1857, which would place the MCANJ President, or designee, on the Government Records Council, passed the State Assembly on December 3rd, with a vote of 76-0-0.

We have reached out for a Senate Sponsor for this Bill, and we believe it has an excellent chance of passage, and of reaching the Governor's desk, in the coming year.

I'd like to applaud Past-Presidents Joanne Kwasniewski, Vinny Buttiglieri, and other Past-Presidents, and congratulate them, on seeing the seeds of their hard work, come to fruition.

In other good, and positive, occurrences during the year, on October 21st, we had an Editorial, written by the MCANJ President, published on the front page of the Opinion Section of one of the State's Major Newspapers --- the Bergen Record.

The Editorial was entitled, "For a Responsible Application of OPRA". It was a rare opportunity given to us to present our point of view and to extol our positions to a wide audience. Hopefully, it opened a lot of eyes to our concerns.

We had a highly successful Education Conference, in March, at the Taj Mahal Hotel, in Atlantic City, according to the high grades given in the evaluations by the attendees.

During the Conference, we celebrated the 85th Birthday of the MCANJ at the Conference Banquet.

We had a parade of MCANJ Presidents, remarks of remembrance from various Past-Presidents, a special cake, old photos and laughter, and a special gift cup was given to commemorate this milestone Anniversary.

The theme chosen for this year's Conference was, "New Jersey Municipal Clerks - Leading the World in Education". The theme, not only highlighted our professionalism and continuing education, but also foreshadowed when New Jersey will host the World, this coming May, when the International Institute of Municipal Clerks Conference is held, right here, in our home State, at the Taj Mahal Hotel, in Atlantic City.

Municipal Officials from all across our great nation, and from around the World, will be joining us, in the Garden State, to network, exchange ideas, and be educated.

It is proof positive that, we have, not only Jersey Roots, but we also have Global Reach. We should ALL be very proud of that.

As I said earlier, this year, was a year, of several Firsts!

The Digital Age is upon us, and we made several advances electronically, during 2012:

On June 22nd, we successfully conducted, our first-ever, experimental Conference Call Advisory Board Meeting, at the Woodland Park Municipal Building. This type of meeting will, most likely, become more common-place, in the future, and, hopefully, will lead to greater participation, and greater dissemination of information to our membership.

Speaking of dissemination of information, this year, Jim Doherty, and I, with a lot of help from my wife, Joan, created the first-ever Facebook Page for the MCANJ. Please check it out, and click on the "Like Button", to stay connected with your colleagues. And when you have meetings or seminars, please take photos and send them to us, so we can post pictures, and pertinent information, of what's happening in your County.

It is important to note that the Internet was one of the few things that remained up during the Hurricane. So, communication tools, such as Facebook, are invaluable to us to stay connected with each other.

Also, noteworthy during 2012: for the first-time ever, we were required to scan and submit Financial Disclosure Statements electronically to the State Local Finance Board.

In other digital advances, the Executive Board of the MCANJ is considering implementing an online membership renewal program, as we enter 2013. We'll provide more information, in the coming weeks, as that idea progresses and we work out the logistics.

Also, on the digital horizon, the MCANJ Education Committee, partnering with Rutgers University, is planning to implement a Hybrid Course, which combines "in person education", with "online training". It will be incorporated into one of the five core courses required by the State of New Jersey to be successfully completed before a person may sit for the RMC license exam.

It IS kind of ironic, that all these digital advances would be happening during my year as President.

I am not very computer savvy. My Office is filled with lots of papers. Of course, I have computers, but there also are typewriters, pencil sharpeners, and I still use a Rolodex, to look up telephone numbers.

One day, I was helping a bunch of college kids, and they were amazed with my office, and I felt proud.

Until one of them said, "You know something, Mister? Your Office is kinda like a Working Historical Museum!"

That's a true story.

As I wind down my year as President, I want to publicly recognize, and thank, those officers, with whom, I have worked the closest.

I'd like to thank our Legal Counsel, Richard Lustgarten, for his wise counsel and personable service.

Our Executive Director Joel Popkin, who taught me the importance of keeping good lists, and without whom, my year, would not have been, nearly as successful.

In regard to the Executive Board, if more is better, and some certainly think it is, than we had it pretty good this year, in regard to the Secretary's Position, because we had two this year, instead of one.

I'd like to recognize Patty Hunt, who did an admirable job, as Secretary, until she had to resign mid-year; and also to her successor, as Secretary, Denise Szabo, who brings a new and different outlook to the Board, especially in regard to technology.

Our Treasurer, the Honorable Mayor Keith Kazmark, is competent, to the point and direct, and he uses few words. He can multi-task with the best of them, and I'm so glad, that we talked, and he decided, a couple of years ago, to add MCANJ Executive Board, to his multiple tasks, jobs and responsibilities.

Our Second Vice-President John Mitch, is one of my favorite people. He is first rate, personable and friendly, he's efficient and dependable and gets the job done. It's a pleasure to work with him.

Joanne Kwasniewski is a Clerk's Clerk. She is Old School and doesn't suffer fools gladly. Why she is friends with me, I don't know. But she is a great asset, and her contributions will be missed immensely, as she steps down from the Executive Board, come January 1st.

At this point, I want to talk about Nancy, and me.

On a personal note, I know most everyone in this room. And I consider you all to be my friends. And I never wanted to let you down.

Whatever my shortcomings, I want you to know, that I put my heart and soul into this year. And gave a lot of thoughtful effort to everything that came before the Executive Board.

Because I knew that if the Leadership of this Association succeeded, then you succeeded. Whether it was issues involving Legislation, Education, assistance in performing your duties, or anything else that mattered to you, YOU succeeded, if WE succeeded.

And if I can ask a favor, of all of you, as this year draws to a close, it is to be there, next year, and support Nancy, as President, in 2013.

The issues facing us today, are much more challenging than in the past. And we cannot succeed, if we do not have your support. We thrive as a group, and we fall as a group. This Association will not succeed, if Nancy does not succeed. The stakes are too high.

And that is my parting request.

As I conclude, I just want to share some thoughts in regard to Super Storm Sandy.

As we know, Sandy unleashed her full fury on New Jersey, and the Jersey Shore in particular. Many of us were shocked by the force of Mother Nature.

Homes were flooded, torn off their foundations and littered highways. Some washed away into the Ocean and other waterways.

Boardwalks and businesses were destroyed. Trees and power lines were down in every corner of the State, leaving millions without power, for days. The lack of electricity, and lack of cleared transportation routes, caused a shortage of gasoline and diesel fuel, prohibiting us from travel.

Many Fire Houses and Municipal Buildings suffered severe damage. The devastation, and loss of life, and property, from wind and water, made it the worst storm, to hit New Jersey, perhaps, ever. The damage was unprecedented.

Many towns will never be the same.

As MCANJ President, on November 1st, I sent an email blast message to the Membership, posted it on our Website and on Facebook, offering assistance, expertise or other help.

I did further outreach by telephoning our Advisory Board Reps, especially in Ocean, Monmouth and Atlantic Counties.

I have personally spoken to Municipal Clerks in hard hit towns.

I have learned, that one of the most important things to do, is to let people know, you care, and I encourage, everyone, to call your fellow Municipal Clerks, and ask them, how you can help.

Let them know, that your thoughts and prayers, are with them, in these very difficult times. That they are not alone. That their cares are our cares. Ask them if there is a local food pantry, or other worthwhile organization, that is providing much needed assistance, to which you can donate. They will probably tell you their story.

As heartbreaking as some of these stories are, some are heartwarming and reassuring.

Stories of people fortunate enough to still have power, opening their doors, and inviting, those suffering without power, to charge their cell phones, so they can have a communication lifeline, to concerned family and friends.

It's Neil Grant of Fort Lee, reaching out to able bodied Clerks of his County, to personally help flooded out Clerks in Little Ferry, and other surrounding towns, with assistance in moving personal furniture, and belongings, in their damaged homes.

It's Bette Mastropasqua of Beachwood, giving me an update every few days on the status of those Clerks affected by the Storm in her County.

It's Cathy Reese of Alexandria, and Kim Marie White of Eastampton, being so concerned, with those who have been impacted by Sandy, that they extend themselves, asking what they can do, offering to help out our fellow Clerks, in the hardest hit areas, to help get them re-organized, whether it be help with FEMA paperwork and inspections, or in other ways, to help them function.

It's Daina Dale of Harvey Cedars, sharing hugs with the Governor.

There are so many shining examples of what we as an Association are all about. During the darkness of the storm, we saw what's brightest in our group.

There is a natural desire to cradle those who hurt, and nurture the bond that tie us together.

A Hurricane can run over New Jersey, but it cannot run over the human spirit, the capacity for kindness, the will to help our fellow human being, provide assistance, hope, love. We rise to the occasion. We are Jersey strong. You can dampen our surroundings, but you cannot dampen our, indelible spirit.

If you believe that God is the author of every good gift, and this story, is not yet, fully written, then you have to have faith, that better days lie ahead of us.

After all, let's not forget, this IS the Season of Perpetual Hope.

It has been an honor, a privilege and a pleasure being a small part of something that is bigger than myself. I thank you for this opportunity to serve, each and every, one of you. It has meant a lot to me. I enjoyed being President. It was a rewarding experience. I believe I am a better person for it, and I hope the Association is better for it, too. I have done my best.

I wish you and yours, a very Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, and Happy New Year, or whatever Holiday you hold dear and celebrate.

Thank you very much.

RECOGNITION OF 2012 CMC (CERTIFIED MUNICIPAL CLERK) AND MMC (MASTER MUNICIPAL CLERK) AWARD

Vincent Buttiglieri Region II Director, Municipal Clerk, Ocean Township (Monmouth) announced the names of the recipients:

CMC

Eileen Birch, Township of Union (Union County)
Reyna Harris, Borough of Raritan
Christine Helder, Borough of Westwood

MMC

Keith Kazmark, Borough of Elmwood Park
Anne Mare McCarthy, Township of Franklin (Somerset County).

RECOGNITION OF INSTRUCTORS OF MUNICIPAL CLERK COURSES

Pamela Morley-Chappelle of Rutgers University announced the instructors of RMC courses and thanked them for all their hard work and dedication:

Barbara Bascom, Retired
Jennica Bileci, Borough of Pine Hill
Sharon Brienza, Township of Branchburg
Katherine Coletta, Township of Mahway
James Doherty, Township of Wantage
Elaine B. Kennedy, Township of Eagleswood

Mary P. Madonna, Borough of Surf City
Vita Mekovetz, Township of Readington
Joel Popkin, Retired
Lucy Samuelson, City of Somerset Point
Linda S. Wanat, Township of Montclair
Kevin Yecco, Borough of Wildwood Crest

ANNOUNCEMENT OF 2012/2013 REGISTERED MUNICIPAL CLERKS CERTIFICATION RECIPIENTS

Diane Pflugfelder, Municipal Clerk, Liberty Township, announced those who attained the RMC certification:

Affuso, Gina
Bass, Judith
Bergh, Mary Lou
Bistriz, Ann
Bovera, Melissa
Brennan, Maryellen
Buontempo, Anthony
Burke, Christine
Convertini, Joy
Corvelli, Arlene
Cupit, Kelly
Frischia, Anne
Giberson, Jeanette
Giles, Ryan
Golisano, Jean
Jackson, Deborah

Leso, Amy
Macaluso, Patricia
Martucci, Jason
Meyer, Cynthia
Miller, Michele
Parkinson, Deneen
Picard, Julie
Potter, Kathy
Preteroti, Regina
Romano, Shannon
Sherwood, Stephanie
Tocci, Patricia
Vazquez-Gallipoli, Ileana

PRESENTATION OF THE 2012 MUNICIPAL CLERK OF THE YEAR AWARD

James Doherty, 2012 Municipal Clerk of the Year, read a biography of the 2012 recipient and presented Elaine Kennedy, Eagleswood Township, with the award.

Ms. Kennedy is currently the president of the Ocean County Municipal Clerks' Association, an instructor for registered municipal clerk Courses offered through Rutgers University. She has been an MCANJ education conference co-chair. In several ways, she is a pioneer for our Association in regard to education. She has graciously agreed to be the first instructor of a hybrid course for municipal clerks, combining "in-person education" and "online training", in 2013. When she was president of the MCANJ, despite the doubters, she had the courage to be the first to attempt our own MCANJ education conference, without the assistance and guidance of Rutgers University. The MCANJ mini-conference concept was first instituted for the North, Central and Southern regions of the State of New Jersey, during her presidency, allowing Municipal Clerks, unable to attend the annual education conference, with affordable, alternative opportunities, to secure CEU's for their RMC Licenses. Under her leadership, the finances of the MCANJ were vastly improved and the Association has been on sound financial footing from her presidency forward, giving the MCANJ the resources to better serve our members. She has chaired and served on several MCANJ Committees, including serving as chair of the Records Committee.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF ELECTION RESULTS FOR 2013 MCANJ SECRETARY

Dina Zawadski, Municipal Clerk, Depford Township was announced the winner of the election.

MOTION TO CAST BALLOT FOR SLATE OF OFFICERS:

Szabo announced the slate of officers for 2013 as follows:

President NANCY L. SAFFOS, Cherry Hill Township
1st Vice President JOHN M. MITCH, Woodbridge Township
2nd Vice President KEITH KAZMARK, Elmwood Park Borough
Treasurer DENISE SZABO, Bernards Township
Secretary, DINA ZAWADSKI, Depford Township
Immediate Past President: ANDREW J. PAVLICA, City of Garfield

Szabo made a motion to cast the ballot for the slate of offices, seconded by Jane Warren-Williams, Municipal Clerk, Paterson City. Motion carried unanimously.

ADMINISTRATION OF OATH OF OFFICE

The Honorable Charles M. Cahn, Mayor, Cherry Hill Township installed the 2013 slate of officers.

INTRODUCTION OF PRESIDENT'S GUESTS

Pavlica introduced his guests and thanked them for their support.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS TO PRESIDENT KWASNIEWSKI

Saffos presented President Pavlica with a plaque and gifts for serving as President.

REMARKS BY PRESIDENT-ELECT

Saffos delivered the following comments:

I am honored to stand here, as President Elect of the Municipal Clerks' Association of New Jersey; truly honored. I recognize that having this meeting rescheduled was not easy for anyone. Having to rearrange and juggle your busy schedules is no small feat and to see so many of you today is really wonderful. It truly is a privilege to stand before you. Thank you all for being here.

To those clerks whose towns were adversely affected by hurricane Sandy; those who are here and those who were not able to attend, I know I can speak for my colleagues when I say that our thoughts and prayers have been with you and we are here to help in any way we are able. Please let us know if we can do anything for you.

There's been a lot going on in local government these past few years; a lot of changes and we, as government employees, have been affected, whether directly or indirectly, by all of them. Reductions and more reductions; reductions in state aid to our towns, which has resulted in frozen salaries, reduced staffing, mandated payroll deductions for medical benefits and the list goes on and on. You certainly don't need me to remind you.

Once long ago, a government job was considered one of those "piece of cake" jobs. The salaries were low, but the perks and the benefits were terrific and generally speaking, they weren't such demanding or terribly hard jobs. Today, working in government is more challenging than it's ever been. While it may be true that salaries have gotten better (not great—just better), no longer are the perks terrific and certainly the benefits aren't. In fact, the rising percentage of our payroll deductions for contributions to our health care benefit costs coupled with salary freezes or minimal salary increases has actually resulted in pay decreases for many of us!

A few years back with the onset of cutbacks, layoffs and furloughs, we began to be challenged and we kept hearing and being asked to "do more with less." We heard that phrase over and over, so much so that I remember one of our past presidents saying if she heard that phrase one more time she wouldn't be responsible for her actions! We, as municipal clerks did what we were asked to do. We have continued to do what is required of us by statute, and have continued to serve our governing bodies and the citizens of our towns, trying never to miss a beat. Today, we're not being asked to "do more with less", we're simply being asked to "do more" - period. Some of the changes

that have been made over recent years have been difficult and have added yet another dimension to our role as the municipal clerk, which is already multi-dimensional, to say the least. Very few positions or people, if any, in local government are as talented the jugglers we are or wear as many hats as we do, as municipal clerks.

When we think of the statutory mandates of OPRA alone (an unfunded mandate, I might add!) the effects, costs and implications that OPRA has had on our many other duties, as the municipal clerk, which are also mandated, by state statute, are at times debilitating and has had many of us frustrated. Being the municipal clerk today is certainly not "a piece of cake" job!

We continue to witness and experience more and more changes. Change, it's been said, is the only constant. We're certainly witnessing that. OPRA, OPMA & the introduction of the Common Sense Shared Services Legislation has caused a tremendous amount of concern. Be assured that your Executive Board has been committed to following the legislation, working relentlessly and continuing our interactive dialogues with the NJLOM and the key players in the legislature and in the assembly.

Our efforts have been to influence changes to legislation that make sense and will promote good government. We have made a difference, perhaps not entirely as we would like, however our efforts have been successful and there have been changes made to both the Common Sense Shared Services and the OPRA legislation. We will continue with that commitment, as we follow all legislation that affects our roles in municipal government, which in turn will be beneficial to the citizens, while promoting the integrity of our office and of our profession, as municipal clerks.

Things will change – that is life. Because "we've always done it that way," or because "this is the way we do it" no longer means that it won't, can't or shouldn't change. Change is inevitable. Changes will happen. Some changes we can have an effect on and many are out of our control. A part of our job is to know the difference.

What is always in our control is our attitude. A long time ago, someone told me, "If you don't like something then do what you can to change it; if you can't change it, then change your attitude about it!" We need to work every day to protect the integrity of our profession and of our office. We know that we are making impressions with everything we do and say and with how we do and say things. Our office is often referred to as the hub of local government; the living room of town hall.

In these ever changing times we must remember that and remember why we are the municipal clerk; what our purpose is and why we signed up for this position. I would like to think that the common string between all of us who are municipal clerks is that we are people who are inclined to help, and who want to help in some way or another in our everyday lives and so becoming the municipal clerk, in our towns, was a natural fit for people like us.

We must continue to work with and for our elected officials and for the public. We must remain professional and we must remember that we cannot allow ourselves to get stuck whether it's in old habits or in negative or complacent attitudes. We may not like all of the changes. We need to get involved in making a positive difference in the things we can influence and realize that there will be things that are out of our control and in those instances we simply need to comply with the changes. When we are reviewing that 20th OPRA request of the day – we must remember that we have a responsibility to follow the rules and to comply with all of the rules! We must set the example for the people we work with. We can't criticize anyone when we aren't doing what we're supposed to be doing.

Let us not be fooled by thinking that because we may have tenure in our position we don't have to continue to work to a standard of professional efficiency and that we shouldn't provide the service our office is charged with by the state statutes, willingly and with a positive and pleasant attitude.

It's important for us to remember that tenure was established in municipal government in order to maintain continuity in government, to prevent interruption of services and to protect the public, the citizens, and the municipal employees who are charged with performing statutory duties professionally, ethically, efficiently and correctly, from the adverse effects of politics. It was not designed to guarantee any of us a job; you get to keep your job when you continue to do a good job! We are in a service oriented business. We are all customer service representatives and we are in charge of keeping our jobs. We need to maintain all of the standards our position calls for and never allow our principles to be compromised. Complacency and/or negative attitudes have no place in our offices. John F. Kennedy said, "Change is the law of life. Those who only look to the past or present are certain to miss the future." We are municipal clerks; we can either embrace the changes before us or we can be left behind.

I invite, welcome and encourage all of you to get involved with our association. Everyone has something to offer and your involvement will make us stronger and more successful, as an organization. Please send me an e-mail or give me a call and get involved! Getting involved will not only help our entire association, it will give you a sense of satisfaction as well.

Princess Diana once said "Everyone has the potential to give back something." Let this year be your turn! As we move forward into 2013, my intention is to continue with President Pavlica's idea of Advisory Board Meetings by conference calls. We were successful when we tried in 2012 and I am optimistic that we will have greater participation moving forward.

Remember, as an Advisory Board Representative, both the clerks in your county and the association are depending on you to relay information, so please, if you cannot attend in person, please send your alternate representative or call in and be a part of our meetings. They are your meetings and the only way we can better serve and inform all

of our members is with your participation and commitment. We will try to make the meetings as brief as possible so that you are not taken away from your duties in your offices, any longer than necessary.

This year our Annual Education Conference will be a part of the International Institute of Municipal Clerks' (IIMC) Annual Conference, which MCANJ will be hosting in Atlantic City beginning May 19th. For those of you who have never been to an IIMC Education Conference, this is a wonderful opportunity for you to experience one. You will be able to obtain your continuing education units for your New Jersey RMC re-certification, as well as education points towards international certifications. You'll get to meet clerks from all over the world! As an incentive to New Jersey clerks who would like to attend the conference, MCANJ will be offering a scholarship to each clerk who registers, which will be in addition to the other discounts offered by IIMC, to its members. We will need many volunteers to be successful and there will be an added reduction to your conference fees, if you volunteer. Chris Wilder and Allan Susen, our conference co-chairs, along with many others, including Sharon Brienza and Heather Mailander, who have been our "Steady Eddie" conference co-chairs through the past several years, Joel Popkin, our Executive Director and many others, who have been working for quite a few years to win the bid to host the conference, here in New Jersey and now it's here! We need everyone's help and support. Please keep your eyes on our website and our new Facebook page and look to the Quill, for the updates and details about the conference and the incentives. If you have specific questions about the conference, please call Chris, Allan or any of us on the conference committee or the executive board. We're here to help and we're excited about this conference and want you to be excited too!

There are many people to whom I am grateful for many things, among them love, friendship, encouragement and guidance. So, let me simply say to my family, friends, colleagues and mentors I thank you all for all these things I've noted, in addition to all those that simply cannot be enumerated. You are all amazing people and I am one lucky woman to have you all in my life. There just aren't enough words. For my son Christopher and to my sons Stelios and Giuseppe and my daughter Natalie, who couldn't be here today, I thank God. To my fellow municipal clerks, I thank you for allowing me the opportunity to be part of and to serve our association. It is my privilege to be your President. I am both honored and excited. None of you want to hear a list of promises and rhetoric that working in the environments we work in, we've become all too familiar with.

I will make you one promise. I will work hard and I will do my very best. We should all be working to make government better. We should all be working together for that common goal, for the best interests of all of the people we serve. Thank you all very much.

INTRODUCTION OF PRESIDENT-ELECT'S GUESTS

Saffos introduced her guests.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS TO PRESIDENT-ELECT NANCY SAFFOS AND IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT ANDREW PAVLICA

Acknowledgements and token gifts were presented to both Saffos and Pavlica.

DRAWING OF RAFFLES

Raffle winners were drawn and announced by Vincent Buttiglieri:

Super 50/50 Raffle: First Prize - Ticket # 057 - Stella Ward \$6,600.00, Second Prize - Ticket #062 - Joan Preztunik \$3,400.00

Merchandise Raffle #1 (2013 IIMC Conference Registration and 5-night hotel): Joanne Kwasniewski, Borough of Fair Lawn

Merchandise Raffle #2 (2013 IIMC Conference Registration and 5-night hotel): Teresa Hudson - Milford, Delaware

ADJOURNMENT

By unanimous consent, the meeting adjourned at 2:54 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Szabo, Secretary