

President's column

By Scott Neal, MCMA President, Edina City Manager

When one assumes a leadership role of an organization, it's not unusual for the new leader to come with a set of goals or even, sometimes, a special policy or project. I think the latter is especially common in professional associations, like ours, where the new president ascends into that position after several years of working through ever increasing hierarchical organizational roles.

I have had a number of people ask me what my special policy or project would be during my presidency. When I assumed the MCMA presidency at our spring conference earlier this year, I alluded to the probability that I would not have a special policy or project. But while I don't have anything special planned for my year in the president's saddle, I have an approach to the role that I'd like to share with our members.

I've been a city manager and administrator for my entire 30+ year career. My approach to that role has always been that I am employed to facilitate the decisions of the governing structure of a representative democracy. In short, I'm there to translate the decisions of the duly elected representatives into reality in their community.

I take my cues on governing and decision making from the people that are elected by The People. I do not cede to them my sense of right and wrong, or my personal values. But I do my job every day never forgetting how many votes I got in the last city council election—zero.

I will use this same approach during my year as the president of MCMA. The MCMA Board developed and approved a **strategic plan** during the fall and winter of 2018. The plan is a roadmap endorsed by the board for the future of our organization. The plan has a lot of fingerprints on it. It's legitimate. As your president this year, I will focus my attention on this strategic plan and do my very best to implement every inch of it.

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The other major aspect of my job as a city manager that I will bring to my role as MCMA president is my experience working with staff. MCMA is in the midst of an important staff transition from Kevin Frazell to Heather Corcoran. It's important that we help make this transition successful for Heather, and for our association. I've worked successfully with many different kinds of people in my career. You can count

on me to be a good partner and leader for Heather as she becomes fully climatized to our atmosphere.

I am looking forward to the year ahead as your president. I will always be happy to take your questions and suggestions about the course of our association. If you've got something share, I'm easy to find. ☐

Contact Neal at sneal@edinamn.gov.

Appointments and other professional news

- **Jake Dickson** has been appointed city administrator, West Concord.
- **Kevin Frazell**, League of Minnesota Cities member services director and MCMA secretariat, retired on Aug. 30.
- **Mike Funk**, assistant administrator, Maplewood, has been appointed assistant city manager, Minnetonka.
- **Angela Grafstrom**, administrator-clerk, Hallock, has been appointed city administrator, Braham.
- **Sam Hansen**, city manager, St. James, has been appointed administrator, Brown County.
- **Heather Johnston** has been appointed senior vice president, Strategic Government Resources.
- **Nick Koktavy**, public services deputy director, Carver County, has been appointed assistant manager there.
- **Aaron Reeves**, city administrator, Cloquet, has been appointed city manager, Hudson, Wisconsin.
- **Mike Robertson**, city administrator, North Oaks has announced his retirement.
- **Jared Voto**, executive aide/analyst in Richfield, has been appointed the senior strategic planner, Washington County.
- **Dan Wietecha**, township superintendent, Bath, Michigan, has been appointed City Administrator, Hastings.
- **Michelle Wolfe**, deputy city manager, Aurora, Colorado has been appointed city manager, Blaine.

MCMA Board meetings recap

By Heather Corcoran, MCMA Secretariat

The MCMA Board met on May 1 and July 12. Highlights of those meetings were:

- Discussion with ICMA Midwest Regional Vice President Clint Gridley about potential changes to ICMA membership being considered to increase diversity of members.
- Review of the 2019 annual conference and RFP for conference program development and management services for 2020.
- Discussion of a potential member conduct policy for MCMA events and meetings.
- Appointment of members to 2019-2020 committees.

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Scott Neal, City of Edina

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Dianne Miller, City of Eagan

Second Vice President:

Laurie Hokkanen, City of Plymouth

Secretary-Treasurer:

Geralyn Barone, City of Minnetonka

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Brad Martens, City of Corcoran

Peyton Mastera, City of Dilworth

Jackie Schwerm, City of Waconia

Patrick Antonen, City of Circle Pines

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Immediate Past President:

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Your Senior Advisors are here to help!

ICMA NASHVILLE

SIGN UP by Oct. 1 for Monday night's MCMA dinner



Join MCMA attendees at the ICMA Annual Conference in Nashville for dinner at The Diner on the evening of Monday, Oct. 21 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Sign-up sheet and payment are due by Tuesday, Oct. 1. The cost is \$60 per person. Forms are available on the MCMA homepage: <https://mncma.org>. Guests are welcome. The Diner offers six floors overlooking downtown Nashville with both casual and upscale dining. The Diner is .2 miles (approx. 5-minute walk) from the headquarter hotel (Omni Nashville Hotel) and half a mile from the Music City Center where the conference will be held. MCMA attendees will enjoy food from a pre-selected menu on the private fourth floor (and fifth floor if needed).

If you have questions, contact Heather Corcoran (hcorcoran@lmc.org or (651) 281-1256) or Kate Brenna (kbrenna@lmc.org or (651) 281-1249).

APMP update

By Maria Carrillo Perez, APMP President

One of the best parts about being president of the Association of Public Management Professionals of Minnesota (APMP) is the opportunity to work with a great leadership team. This year we have four new members on the board including Cassandra Tabor, Aurora Yager, Katie O'Connor, and Casey Casella. I would like to extend a warm welcome to our newest board members as well as give a big thank you to past-president Chelsea Petersen for her outstanding leadership throughout the past year. A huge congratulations and thank you to the rest of the board on their appointments and for their continued service:

- Vice President: Jared Voto, Washington County
- Treasurer: Kelly Dumais, Dakota County
- Secretary: Cassandra Tabor, City of Minnetrista
- At-Large: Aurora Yager, City of Howard Lake
- At-Large: Katie O'Connor, City of Eden Prairie
- At-Large: Casey Casella, City of Edina
- Past President: Chelsea Petersen, City of Oakdale

The new board is already hard at work building its 2019-2020 program and annual conference. After receiving feedback from members, APMP has decided to move the monthly meetings to the fourth Thursday of the month from 9 a.m.-11 a.m. Be sure to keep an eye on the APMP section of the MCMA website for an updated list of scheduled topics and meetings.

As a reminder, APMP membership is made up of professionals from several different areas of local government. This year I have challenged the board with bringing new guests and inviting those who haven't attended a meeting in a long time—yes, I am speaking to you!

On behalf of the board, I would like to extend an invitation to all MCMA members to attend our annual conference that will focus on cultural awareness on Friday, Oct. 11 at St. Cloud State University's Plymouth location. Feel free to reach out to any of the board members for additional information, and we hope to see you soon! ☐

Contact Carrillo Perez at mcarrillo-perez@stlouispark.org.

Reaching the MCMA secretariat

For MCMA secretariat services, contact:

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You can also contact Kate Brenna, administrative assistant, at kbrenna@lmc.org. Heather and Kate can be reached by calling (651) 281-1200.

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Be sure to check out MCMA's website:

www.mncma.org

Meet the new MCMA board members



GERALYN BARONE, SECRETARY-TREASURER

Geralyn Barone has served as Minnetonka city manager since 2012. After growing up in Glencoe, Geralyn received her bachelor's in political science from the University of Minnesota and her master's from the Humphrey School of Public Affairs. She interned in the Minnesota House of Representatives and with the city manager of St. Louis Park.

Following grad school, Geralyn worked in an administrative capacity in the Brooklyn Center Police Department before being promoted to personnel coordinator and then assistant city manager. In 1994, Geralyn was hired as Minnetonka's assistant city manager and eventually added administrative services director to her title.

In addition to the MCMA Board, Geralyn serves on the Municipal Legislative Commission's board and chairs its operating committee. Geralyn also chairs the MCMA Women in the Profession Committee and is a regular host of Coffee & Careers for the west metro. She's a past president of MAUMA, now known as the Association of Public Management Professionals (APMP).

Geralyn has been married for 36 years to Michael Barone, Minnetrista's city administrator, and they have two adult children. They're big Gopher fans, with season tickets for football and basketball. Geralyn attributes her ability to collaborate and reach consensus to being the middle child (#6) of 11 and is grateful for the opportunity to use those talents on the MCMA Board.

Contact Barone at gbarone@eminnetonka.com



PEYTON MASTERA, DIRECTOR (1ST TERM)

Born and raised in Murray, Kentucky, Peyton Mastera attended Murray State University for both his undergraduate (political science) and his Master of Public Administration degrees. Peyton began his professional career interning at the City of Murray while finishing his MPA. Upon graduation, Peyton was hired as a planner with the City of Dilworth and five years later was promoted to the role of project administrator, overseeing capital projects and grant programs.

In March 2014, Peyton accepted the city administrator role in Dilworth, where he continues to serve today. Peyton has a passion for local government work and understands its importance in everyday life. Peyton has served on various committees for MCMA, including chairing the 2019 Annual Conference.

Peyton has been married to his wife Sarah for 12 years. They enjoy travelling the globe, working out, experiencing new cultures/flavors, and are self-proclaimed foodies. Peyton has completed four Ironman competitions (two with Sarah) and run 16 marathons in hopes of inspiring others to continually be challenging themselves. If you do not see him out swimming, biking, or running, other leisurely interests of Peyton include being an avid sports fan, crossword puzzles, visiting microbrews, bourbon, cooking, and visiting farmer's markets.

Contact Mastera at peyton.mastera@ci.dilworth.mn.us

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website:
www.mncma.org**

Meet the new MCMA board members *Continued from page 4*



PATRICK ANTONEN, DIRECTOR (1ST TERM)

Patrick Antonen has served since August 2016 as both the city administrator of Circle Pines and the administrator of Centennial Utilities (water, sewer, storm sewer, and natural gas) serving Circle Pines and neighboring communities. Prior to this appointment, he was city administrator in Centerville, Iowa for three years. Patrick attended the University of Minnesota and earned a bachelor's degree in sociology of law. He then continued his graduate work at the University of South Dakota where he received a Master of

Public Administration degree and completed his doctoral work ABD for his PhD in public administration.

Patrick is currently an active member of the Roseville Area Optimist Club, the Chain of Lakes Rotary Club, and multiple leadership groups around the metro area for city managers. Patrick serves on the Metro Area Managers Association Board and has been on the MCMA Conference Planning Committee for the past few years. He follows in the footsteps of his father Jim, who was a city manager for over thirty years and also served on the MCMA Board in 1995-1996 while serving as the city manager of Moorhead.

Patrick grew up in Moorhead. Patrick and his wife, Kerri have an infant son, Jackson. Patrick is an avid sports fan and enjoys attending University of Minnesota Gopher football games, as well as the Vikings, Twins and Wild games. He especially enjoys playing hockey and looks forward to teaching his son to play the great sport. Patrick also enjoys everything outdoors from hunting and fishing to golfing and biking.

Contact Antonen at pantonen@ci.circle-pines.mn.us.



JACKIE SCHWERM, DIRECTOR (1ST TERM)

Jackie has been the assistant city administrator in Waconia for about two and a half years. Prior to Waconia, Jackie served the City of Eden Prairie for five years in a variety of positions. Her education includes bachelor's degrees from Gustavus Adolphus College in honors political science and communication studies, followed by a master's in public administration from the University of Kansas.

Jackie has been involved with the MCMA Conference Planning Committee over the past four years and served two years as conference co-chair. She is also active in APMP, having served as president during the 2017-2018 year. She is excited to continue her involvement with MCMA as part of the board!

Jackie is currently in the process of planning a wedding for May of 2020. When not working, wedding planning, or spending time with her fiancé Derek and his son, Landon, she enjoys reading, travelling, cooking/baking, spending time outside, watching basketball, and enjoying time with her family.

Contact Schwerm at jschwerm@waconia.org.

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A most fond farewell

By Kevin Frazell, Retired Member Services Director, League of Minnesota Cities

It has been almost 20 years since I became your MCMA secretariat officer. With my retirement on Aug. 31, Heather Corcoran, LMC's member engagement manager, will take over that role. Heather has been with LMC since 2010. I know she will serve you exceptionally well. I have often told Heather that she would make a great city manager or administrator!

It has been a delight to serve all of you in this way while staying closely connected to the profession I love. My thanks to LMC executive directors Jim Miller and David Unmacht for their unqualified support. A few highlights have been planning the winter workshops, launching and expanding the senior advisor program, implementing strategies to support managers in transition, maintaining our state affiliate relationship with ICMA, and supporting

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the work of committees like Education and Outreach and, most recently, Women in the Profession. And, of course, enjoying the relationships with all of you.

Regrettably, “life” interfered with me joining you at Grandview in May for my final annual conference.

Thank you for the public recognition and gift, even as I couldn't be there. I missed the chance to say goodbye and tell you how much I admire the work you do every day to make democracy work at the local level. Here's hoping my path will cross with many of yours so we can catch up! And, yep, I will be a life member of MCMA, so you can always find my personal contact information in the MCMA website's member directory. ☐

Contact Frazell at kevin.frazell74@gmail.com.

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www.mncma.org

A note from a friend

By David Unmacht, Executive Director, League of Minnesota Cities

Kevin Frazell and I go way back. Like many of you reading this column, we first connected through our passion and love for local government and public sector management. These two values are the glue that binds all our unique backgrounds, qualities, and skills into one bonded experience. How often, over the years, have you uttered or heard the phrase, “Oh, I can relate.”

I have a unique lens through which I reflect on my professional and personal relationship with Kevin. In simplest of terms, it is best described in three parts. Most of our shared time was spent as peers and colleagues, members of MCMA and ICMA—attending meetings, sharing service on various committees or groups, and socializing at conferences and events.

In 2007 my relationship with Kevin changed when I served as chair of the MCMA Board. Stopping short of describing it akin to mayor-manager, for those of us who have served as

chair, you realize how your experience with Kevin changes. Firsthand, you are witness to his personality, sense of (ok, quirky) humor, his institutional knowledge of MCMA, his immense connections and his professionalism in support of the board and association. Kevin is to MCMA as professional ethics are to ICMA.

And, then who would have guessed in 2015, he started calling me “boss.” Kevin and I competed for the executive director position, but it is a testament to his kindness, professionalism, and deep love for the League that this did not influence, alter, or impact his work with me and our members. Now four years later, over a glass of wine, we often reflect on how fortunate both of us are knowing the outcome and circumstances could have been much different.

Kevin's retirement is not a goodbye, but an opportunity for both of us to discover the fourth way to engage: a long-time friendship. ☐

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