



MAC PREPARES FOR THE 2012 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

December 30, 2011

MAC's 40th Annual Conference

The Oct. 27-29 Annual Conference at Tan-Tar-A was a huge success! Amidst a challenging economic climate, MAC enjoyed high attendance and excellent participation from its members. Our speakers were excellent; their presentations were informative and inspiring. Sponsor and exhibitor support was strong and helped defray the costs of the conference. Due to the generosity of our gold, silver, and bronze sponsors, we were able to keep MAC registration fees at a very reasonable rate. Please extend your appreciation to them when you have a chance! Company names are posted on our website – www.mocounties.com. Thanks to all who participated despite the tough economic times!

Meet Your New Executive Committee

At conference, the following persons were elected to serve as executive officers for the coming year: President and **Benton County** Assessor Rodger Reedy, President-Elect and **Phelps County** Treasurer Carol Green, 2nd Vice President and **Audrain County** Clerk Shelley Harvey, 3rd Vice President and **Vernon County** Presiding Commissioner Bonnie McCord, Treasurer and **Cooper County** Clerk Darryl Kempf, and Past President and **Polk County** Collector Debbi McGinnis. These are the people that you will be working with (along with the full board of directors and MAC staff) to implement the association's policies in the coming year.

Gearing Up For A New Session ... The General Assembly Convenes On Wednesday, Jan. 4

MAC Legislative Services For 2012

With the Missouri General Assembly convening on Jan. 4, the MAC staff will utilize a number of legislative tools to keep you abreast of what is going on in Jefferson City. Periodic bulletins (including bill numbers, brief summaries and dates of importance) will be sent out to help you track county legislation. Urgent messages will be sent out by broadcast fax and/or e-mail (for those of you who prefer it). Our website, www.mocounties.com, is also a great tool for tracking legislation and keeping informed of governmental changes. The website is linked to the state government website and will allow you easy access to the Missouri Senate and House websites.

MAC's New Website Currently Under Construction

MAC is in the process of designing a completely new website to better serve its members and those across the state. The association has contracted with Lucky Lime Media in Jefferson City to build the new site, which should be implemented by February. If you have any suggestions for additions or changes to the new site, please contact Jay Shipman, MAC Communications Director, by phone at 573-634-2120 or by e-mail at jshipman@mocounties.com.

2012 Missouri County Government Platform

The membership adopted the following seven resolutions during the Oct. 28 annual business meeting. *(These resolutions are in no particular order and will be given the same attention.)*

1. **Support Upgrading Statewide 9-1-1 Wireless Emergency Services.** Missouri trails the nation in wireless 9-1-1 accessibility. MAC will support legislative action to design a complete, detailed, and integrated plan for upgrading Missouri's 9-1-1 wireless emergency services.
2. **Support Fully Funding State Mandates On County Governments.** MAC will respectfully request that the Missouri General Assembly and Gov. Nixon include in the state's FY 2013 budget (1) an increase in the appropriation for prisoner per diem reimbursement authorized under 221.105, *RSMo*, (2) an appropriation to fully fund state assessment maintenance reimbursements, (3) an appropriation to fully fund any new obligations placed on the election officials of this state, (4) both an appropriation to fully fund the reimbursement for the detention and care of neglected and/or delinquent juveniles and the salaries of juvenile court personnel in single-county circuits, (5) an appropriation that would relieve counties of the cost of providing office space and certain utility expenses for the various state public defenders' offices, and (6) also requests that the General Assembly continue to refrain from implementing the requirements of SB 711 relating to property tax enacted in 2008 until full state funding for the same is authorized. Additionally, recognizing the difficult budgetary constraints that the state of Missouri is experiencing and the dim prospects for additional state appropriations for these programs and, as a partner with the state in the delivery of these services, the Missouri Association of Counties requests that Gov. Nixon and the Missouri General Assembly hold county governments harmless from any further state budget cuts in these areas.

3. **Oppose The Pre-Emption Of Local Authority.** MAC will oppose legislation that would pre-empt a county's authority to deal with local issues and problems.
4. **Oppose Legislation That Erodes The Local Tax Base And Call Upon The General Assembly To Address Missouri's Antiquated Tax Structure.** MAC will be calling upon the General Assembly to limit legislation that would have a negative budgetary effect on local governments without guaranteed replacement revenue. Additionally, MAC will request the General Assembly address Missouri's antiquated tax code, especially as it relates to sales tax, so that both state and local governments are well-positioned in the future to meet the increasing service needs of their citizens.
5. **Support A Transportation Funding Package That Will Address Missouri's Dire Infrastructure Needs.** Amendment 3 funding ended in 2009, reducing significantly the amount of funding available for maintenance and repair of our current system and leaving virtually no new money for Missouri's transportation needs beyond our current system. MAC will respectfully request the General Assembly's support for a transportation funding package that will address Missouri's dire infrastructure needs.
6. **Support Of Funding For The County Assessment Maintenance Fund From Additional Withholdings.** MAC will support legislation to allow additional withholdings from local property tax collections to offset the lack of adequate funding from the State of Missouri. Additionally, MAC seeks to protect and preserve all current funding levels, regardless of source, and to cooperate in finding new funding sources, or increasing existing sources, for the betterment of the assessment process.
7. **Support Legislation To Allow County Offices To Continue Conducting Official Business In The Event Of A Vacancy Of The Elected Official.** MAC will support legislation that would allow the chief deputy in any office within the county to perform all official acts of the office until such time as a successor is duly elected or appointed and qualified, unless sooner removed, notwithstanding any other provision of state law. If no such deputy was previously designated, the county commission of the affected county may designate an acting deputy.

Working Group On Sentencing And Corrections Issues Consensus Report

Missouri's prison population has doubled and corrections spending has tripled during the past 20 years. The Missouri Working Group on Sentencing and Corrections has conducted extensive analysis of state data and trends and has reached consensus on a package of reforms that will improve public safety, hold offenders accountable, and contain corrections costs by strengthening community supervision. This package is estimated to reduce Missouri's projected prison population at the end of FY2017 by 245 to 677 inmates at a savings of \$7.7 to \$16.6 million. The Working Group recommends that \$4 million of those savings be directed to swift and certain sanctions at the local level and a portion of the remaining savings be reinvested in evidence-based practices.

The full report can be viewed online at www.senate.mo.gov/12info/comm/special/MWSC-Report.pdf.

MAC Information Technology Update

MAC's IT committee has been working over the past year to address Missouri counties' IT and digital communications challenges. Fifty-seven counties do not have websites, and many county officials still do not use e-mail. Currently, the committee is working with the University of Missouri Extension to look at options for helping counties with limited IT resources. If your county does not have a website and is interested in having one, please contact Jay Shipman by phone at 573-634-2120 or by e-mail at jshipman@mocounties.com.

Consider Joining MAC's Prepaid Legal Services Program

Fifty counties have signed up to take advantage of the Prepaid Legal Services Program managed by Ivan Schraeder, the association's legal counsel and a partner with The Lowenbaum Partnership L.L.C.

Under contractual agreement, Mr. Schraeder will provide to participating counties 10 hours of advisory or opinion services per month via telephone or written communication.

Participating counties pay an annual fee, based on their assessed valuations. Counties who are interested in the program should contact Cindy Wells at the MAC office (573-634-2120) for an application form. Mr. Schraeder may also be contacted at 314-746-4823 for more information about the program.

Your State (MAC) And National (NACo) Membership Service Fees Are Due

What happens in the halls of the State Capitol will not only have an impact on your duties, but it will also influence the public's perception of your ability to extend much-needed services to the friends and neighbors who elected you.

For budgeting purposes, you have already received the formula for estimating your 2012 member service fees and you may compute the calculation, as long as you obtain the exact figure that your county assessor submitted to the State Tax Commission for your 2011 assessed valuation.

MAC will also do the calculations as soon as we receive the current assessed valuations from the Tax Commission the first week in January. Immediately after receiving the figures, we will send out the invoices for MAC member service fees. Please wait for your invoice before submitting your payment.

Current members of NACo should have received a dues invoice from NACo in October. If you have not already paid your NACo dues, please forward your check directly to NACo at P.O. Box 79007, Baltimore, MD 21279-0007. Non-member counties wishing to join NACo may call 202-942-4242 to obtain the amount of dues for 2012.

On behalf of the MAC board of directors and staff, we hope you had the happiest of holidays and we wish each and every one of you a prosperous new year!