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The Iowa County

April 2004 * Volume 33, Number 4

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*The Iowa County: The official magazine of the
Iowa State Association of Counties
501 SW 7th St., Ste. Q Des Moines, IA 50309
(515) 244-7181 FAX (515) 244-6397
www.iowacounties.org
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ISAC's Mission:

*To promote effective and responsible county government
for the people of Iowa.*

ISAC's Vision:

*To be the principal, authoritative source of representa-
tion, information and services for and about county
government in Iowa.*

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ISAC members are elected and appointed county officials from all 99 counties. The Iowa County (ISSN 0892-3795, USPS 0002-150) is published monthly by the Iowa State Association of Counties 501 SW 7th St., Ste. Q, Des Moines, IA 50309-4540. Periodicals postage paid at Des Moines, IA 50318. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Iowa County, 501 SW 7th St., Ste. Q, Des Moines, IA 50309-4540. Subscriptions: \$20 per year.

New Public Funds Collateralization Law

By: *Beth Grob*

Public Finance Attorney, Ahlers & Cooney, P.C.

The security of public funds deposited at banks has always been a priority for Iowans. Over time, there have been several systems implemented to secure the deposit of public funds, most of which have not involved any action on the part of public entities. The collapse of an Iowa bank in 2001 once again brought this issue to the attention of Iowans.

In 2002, the Iowa Legislature amended the public funds collateralization law and, as a result, public entities should now take some action to ensure the safety of their public funds. The amended law became effective on July 1, 2003 and the Treasurer of the State adopted rules to implement the new law on January 30, 2004, to become effective March 30, 2004. Below is a brief summary of the changes to the collateralization of public funds.

Generally, how does the law work?

Under the new law, when a bank accepts a deposit of public funds, the bank agrees to pledge certain collateral in accordance with Iowa Code §12C.22 to secure the public funds deposited. If collateral must be pledged, the bank is known as a “pledging bank.” If the bank fails to pay a check, draft or warrant of a public officer, if the bank closes, or in other limited circumstances, the Treasurer of the State may liquidate the pledged collateral to pay the claims of the public entity. Now, when the Treasurer of the State pays claims of public entities, the claims will be paid from the following sources in the following order:

1. Any applicable insurance (i.e., first \$100,000 on deposit is insured by the FDIC);
2. Liquidation of any pledged collateral or funds received from a Letter of Credit used by a pledging bank to secure the public funds;
3. Assets of the bank which are liquidated within 30 days of the closing of the bank;
4. Funds in the State Sinking Fund; and
5. Assessments against all remaining banks whose public funds deposits exceed FDIC insurance coverage.

Which banks have to pledge collateral?

Each bank that accepts public funds must determine if it must pledge collateral. A bank must pledge collateral, thus becoming a “pledging bank,” if the *total* amount of public funds (i.e., all deposits by a city, county, school district, municipal utility, etc. must be included) on deposit in the bank exceeds the total capital of the bank. Iowa Code §12C.22 sets out a specific calculation which each bank must make to determine its total

capital. This means a bank may not be a pledging bank one day but may be a pledging bank the next day, depending on the total capital of the bank and the amount of public funds on deposit *on that particular day*. For example, a public entity maintains an account at Bank X and on approximately October 14 Bank X would not be a pledging bank under the statute because the total amount of public funds would not exceed the total capital of Bank X. However, when the public entity receives its property tax collections on approximately October 15, Bank X may be a pledging bank because the total amount of public funds on deposit would exceed the total capital of Bank X *on that day*. Although the Treasurer of the State’s web page states that “[b]anks are required to determine if circumstances on any given day require them to pledge securities that day”¹, it may be wise for public entities to verify to what extent the total amount of public funds deposited exceed the total capital of the bank on the date of any substantial deposit such as state aid payments for school districts, property tax collections, or bond proceeds.

Who holds the pledging bank’s collateral?

The pledging bank must pledge collateral which will be held by an “approved custodian.” Generally, an approved custodian may not be the pledging bank, an affiliate bank or subsidiary of the pledging bank or any bank in which the approved custodian or any affiliate has direct or indirect control of the pledging bank. The Treasurer of the State will develop a list of criteria which a bank must meet to be an approved custodian.

What type of securities are “eligible collateral”?

Iowa Code §12C.22(6) lists specific securities and other forms of collateral which are acceptable. This includes cash and, in certain circumstances, a Letter of Credit. A Letter of Credit will be held in the Treasurer of the State’s vault, not by an approved custodian.

May a pledging bank withdraw, substitute, or change the collateral?

Yes. The pledging bank must submit a Certificate and Approval for Withdrawal, Substitution, or Addition of Collateral to the approved custodian, along with a calculation that demonstrates once the transaction is complete, there is sufficient collateral pledged. Before completing the transaction or releasing any collateral, the approved custodian must verify that, after the transaction is complete, the total collateral market value is equal to or exceeds the total excess public funds. If the

calculation is verified the approved custodian will then notify the Treasurer of the State and the pledging bank of the completion of the transaction.

What are the consequences if a pledging bank violates the law?

If a pledging bank violates any provision of the laws, rules, agreements proscribed by the Treasurer of the State, or fails to fulfill its duties, or applicable FDIC insurance coverage is suspended or terminated, the Treasurer of the State may suspend or terminate the bank's ability to accept uninsured public funds. The public entity will be notified of the suspension or termination of a bank's ability to accept uninsured public funds by notices included in the monthly rate-setting notice posted on the Treasurer of the State's Web site. If a public entity's funds are on deposit with a suspended or terminated pledging bank, the public entity may have an illegal investment and/or deposit under Iowa law and should consult with their attorney.

What are the consequences if an approved custodian violates the law?

If an approved custodian violates any provision of the laws, rules, agreements proscribed by the Treasurer of the State, or failed to fulfill its duties, the Treasurer of the State may suspend or terminate the bank's designation as an approved custodian. The Treasurer of the State will notify the pledging bank of the suspension or termination and the pledging bank must immediately secure the services of another approved custodian.

What should public entities do to ensure the safety of their funds?

Although the statute and rules do not require public entities to take any action, it may be prudent for public entities to implement procedures to periodically verify the bank's compliance with the collateralization requirements and when making a substantial deposit. Because this issue will be receiving increasing attention from auditors, state regulators, and banks, it may be wise to review policies and practices and to consult with legal counsel.

The purpose of this column is to identify issues. It does not purport to be exhaustive or to render legal advice. You should consult with qualified counsel or other professionals in developing responses to specific situations. 404024/99540.305.

For further information contact: Ahlers & Cooney, P.C., 100 Court Avenue, Suite 60., Des Moines, Iowa 50309, bgrob@ahlerslaw.com, Ph: (515) 246-0305, Fax: (515) 243-2149

(Footnotes) ¹ See www.treasurer.state.ia.us

Options For Counties

By: Lynn E. Maaske

Manager of Government Investments, IPAIT

The administrative rules have been written for the public funds collateralization law and implementation of the adopted rules become effective March 30, 2004. The requirements of the law are summarized below.

What does this mean for county treasurers?

For the past year, county treasurers have found that their local banks have been competitive in rates for public funds checking account (overnight) dollars. The continued loan demand from the consumer has allowed local financial institutions to provide better than money market rates in an effort to meet longer-term loan demand.

Now, with the adoption of the new public funds collateralization law, local financial institutions may be forced to decide whether they can take additional public funds as deposits. Depending on whether the financial institution is domiciled within the state of Iowa, or has its bank charter within another state will determine how much they can hold without having to provide additional collateral. Once the bank, savings & loan or credit union nears their collateralization limit, they can choose to reduce the rate they are paying on overnight money or encourage you to look for an alternative placement for your public fund monies.

The Iowa Public Agency Investment Trust (IPAIT) provides a couple of options for you. The easiest and most convenient is to place the money in the Diversified Portfolio Fund with a simple phone call to 1-800-872-4024 or by using the www.IPAIT.org website to access your accounts via IPASonline to initiate the transaction.

For longer-term investments you may use IPAIT's Fixed Term Automated (FTA) program. IPAIT has authorized 66 financial institutions to bid on public funds money within the state of Iowa. These banks have been approved through an authorization process that examines credit worthiness. With this program, IPAIT is able to provide you with the best rate of return in a competitive bidding process. This program also addresses the statutory requirement that public funds stay within the county or contiguous counties where the public funds were generated, allowing for placement for funds anywhere in the state. IPAIT values the ability to invest Iowa's public funds in Iowa financial institutions. As the rules become implemented county treasurers may find their current local rate environment reduced as their local banks near their collateralization limit.

Lynn Maaske can be reached at 800-872-4024 to discuss the impact of the collateralization requirements.

around the statehouse

Counties Caught Between Warring Parties

*"When you arrive at a fork in the road, take it."
- Lawrence P. ("Yogi") Berra*

*"You spend a good piece of your life gripping a baseball and in the end it turns out that it was the other way around all the time."
- Jim Bouton, former major league pitcher*

For all of the time spent venting during the 2003 legislative session over the cost to cities and counties with the passage of the "reinvention of government" legislation, there has been little of that in the two plus months of the 2004 session. Up until early to mid-March, the passionate arguments have been chiefly about the other major political subdivision, schools. But last summer and fall county officials, city officials, ISAC staff and the League of Cities staff met 20 or more times with representatives of Public Strategies Group. The discussions were about their ideas on improving the relationship between local government and the state and local government service sharing.

By the third week of the 2004 session, it was apparent that a number of legislative proposals had to do with the same topics, though the emphasis this year has been on voluntary agreements as opposed to the rumblings of previous years about "too many counties." There was the "freedom communities" bill. There was a first cousin of that measure which would encourage regional approaches to existing community development offices funded by counties and/or cities. Governor Vilsack told members of ISAC's board of directors and the Iowa State Association of County Supervisors that he would support funding property tax credits. The Senate majority leader, Stewart Iverson, held informal meetings to discuss new tax flexibilities for counties and cities. There were changes in the bill introduced last year encouraging county-city consolidations and the process of forming local charter commissions. Legislation favorable to counties has been introduced having to do with hotel-motel taxes and another involved payment for out of state inmates in county jails. There was a rush of good will toward local governments, or that's how it would seem.

Disagreement Over State Aid to Education

However, as was mentioned in this space a month ago, fasten your seat belts. The ill will between the Governor and the legislative leadership has not abated and is becoming even more heated. Counties are getting caught between these warring parties. As the television announcer used to intone at the beginning of "Friday Night Wrestling from Chicago" get your band-aids ready. For example, Senator Iverson has said that counties will be paid for the property tax credits which the Iowa Code states they shall grant. But the disagreement over state aid to education (which was brought to a head with Governor Vilsack's veto of

By: Robert Mulqueen
ISAC Public Policy Analyst



the bill for allowable growth of education funding) will likely pit money for property tax credits against money for schools. Why? The state cupboard is still bare. There's not enough revenue for both, all other state spending being equal.

The Immoveable Object HAVA

Another example is this year's installment of the unstoppable force meeting the immoveable object called Help America Vote Act (HAVA). In last year's episode, you will recall that provisions of the legislation dealing with election law contained sticking points concerning: 1) absentee voting procedures and 2) installment of a new central computerized voter registration file in the office of the Secretary of State. For counties, the distressing part of this nose to nose argument was that this legislation also contained the authorization for an appropriation which would have been Iowa's 5% matching funds with which to draw millions down from the federal funds allotted for election administration modernization under the HAVA. After that partisan battle came to an impasse with no appropriation approved, the Governor, by executive order, came up with the matching funds last summer. This year's lines have been drawn involving the second year's HAVA funding over the absentee ballot provisions again. At stake is a \$770,000 appropriation to qualify for \$15 million in federal funds. The argument is over the conduct of how absentee ballots can be delivered to the county auditor's office.

Fees

While all of this is being argued, fees continue to be the "F word" under the gold dome. For the seventh time in eight years, ISAC is supporting legislation which would increase the cost of an annual retail food service permit paid by restaurants and grocery stores. As long term readers of this periodical know by heart, the current permit fee – that official looking document in a frame on the wall in back of the cash register – is inadequate to pay for food inspections performed, chiefly, by county environmental health officials. The amount was to have been raised to a level which may have been adequate to support the program. The fee was never intended to be paid with property tax dollars, if a Senate amendment had not cut in half the fee amount in 1998 legislation. A recorder's real estate document technology fee approved last year would be transformed, under pending legislation, into a revenue source for local housing trust funds. Such trust funds attract both public and private investment in housing rehabilitation and new affordable housing in rural as well as urban areas. But the continuation of this fee is "outrageous" to some interest groups in the rotunda. The assumption among many legislators is that property tax revenues pay for almost all services delivered by counties and cities. Get your band-aids ready.

County Authority to Regulate Within City Limits

Home Rule Issue: I recently tried to explain county government to a group of visiting mayors from Kosovo. One of the questions that came up was whether a county may enact an ordinance which is binding within the limits of incorporated cities in the county. Great question. The answer is that counties can do so, in certain circumstances.

In the Iowa Constitution (Article III, Section 39A, the County Home Rule Amendment) it grants counties home rule power and authority, “not inconsistent with the laws of the general assembly, to determine their local affairs and government,” subject to certain limitations expressed in the Home Rule Amendment. One such limitation provides, “If the power or authority of a county conflicts with the power and authority of a municipal corporation, the power and authority exercised by a municipal corporation shall prevail within its jurisdiction.”

This rule, that counties can legislate within cities when cities do not pass conflicting legislation themselves, is contrary to the general rule that prevails around the country. The general rule elsewhere is that counties do not have the power and authority to legislate at all in cities within the county on any subject within the scope of the powers granted to the city.

But because of the language in the Home Rule Amendment, counties in Iowa generally have the power and authority to legislate in cities within the county, subject to the limitation that in the event of a conflict, the power and authority of the city prevails within that city.

But that general rule is subject to some exceptions. There are some statutes that define the regulatory relationship between cities and counties in particular contexts. For instance, Iowa Code §335.3 restricts county zoning authority “to land and structures located within the county but lying outside of the corporate limits of any city.”

In other situations, county regulations are applicable within incorporated cities only if the city chooses to go that route. One example would be a county building code, which does not apply within an incorporated city “except at the option of the city,” according to Iowa Code §331.304(3)(a).

In still other situations, county ordinances are applicable within city boundaries up until the time the city takes action to assume the authority for itself. For instance, under Iowa Code §137.5, a county board of health has jurisdiction over the entire county, but any city of 25,000 population can name a city board of health. Another example is Iowa Code §455B.144(2), which gives counties authority to establish a county-wide air pollution control program if an incorporated city in the county chooses not to establish its own program.

Lastly, there are some areas where the Legislature has given the county authority to regulate county-wide, even in incorporated areas. For instance, weed control under Iowa Code §317.9 (weed control authority extends to “streets and other lands within cities”).

By: David Vestal

ISAC Deputy Director



So counties can legislate within cities when cities do not pass conflicting legislation themselves. The question then becomes what constitutes a conflict with the “power and authority” of a city. That’s hard to say. But certainly if there is a valid city ordinance in direct conflict with a county ordinance, the city ordinance would prevail.

Comp Board Issue: A recent Attorney General’s opinion (#03-9-2) answered a small-but-important compensation board question. At issue was the provision in Iowa Code §331.752(2) which says that a full-time county attorney’s salary must be at least 45% of the salary of a district court judge. The dilemma has been that the compensation board typically meets in October to recommend salaries for the upcoming fiscal year, while the Legislature does not set judicial salaries until March. So the compensation board has no way to know whether it has met the 45% minimum. The Attorney General said that it is sufficient if the comp board uses the current year’s salary, in other words, the salary in place at the time the compensation board meets.

Incredibly Tough Meteorological Quiz: Which two Iowa counties tied for the greatest number of reported tornadoes over the last five decades, with 35 each? A) Fremont and Page; B) Mills and Pottawattamie; C) Story and Scott; D) Clayton and Allamakee.

Parting Ponderable: Courtesy of Mike Wentzien, here is an excerpt from “*State and Local Government*” a college textbook published by Allyn & Bacon, Inc. in 1985, revised by William A. McClenaghan, Department of Political Science, Oregon State University: “We have already said that the description of county government as the “dark continent of American politics” remains appropriate. The major weaknesses of county government include its chaotic and headless structure. It is just about impossible to place responsibility in the jungles of independently elected officers, boards and commissions that are generally found. Lax, inefficient, and wasteful government, unresponsive government, government by the “courthouse gang,” favoritism in awarding public contracts, instance of outright corruption – the list of indictments goes on and on.” And those are some of the *nicer* things he had to say about us.

Quiz Answer: C. The key word is “reported.” State Climatologist Harry Hillaker has said that theoretically southwest Iowa counties should have the most tornadoes, since they are closest to “Tornado Alley,” but those counties that are more populated, such as Story and Scott, are more likely to spot tornadoes and have tornado damage.

health check

To Diet or Not to Diet?

Dieting is a hot topic! It is incredible that even restaurants are getting on the low-carb bandwagon. Do you remember a few years ago when we were told that if we would just control fat content in our foods that everyone would be healthier and thinner? There have been many cycles of dieting around and still we are no closer to our goal now than we have ever been.

Of all the dieting organizations, I think Weight Watchers does the best job. They give you tips, help you eat sensibly while still having an occasional snack, and lead you to good nutrition. Their website "WeightWatchers.com" has seven strategies for successful weight loss. (The titles are theirs – the comments are mine.)

1. Keep Track of What You Eat – It would be good to write it down, or at least make a mental note of the things you eat – you might be surprised.

2. Weigh Yourself Weekly – Weigh at the same time every week. I might add that your weight can stay the same but you can be losing inches if you exercise. We should be more concerned with good nutrition than weight loss – it will follow.

3. Find a buddy – Watching your diet with a partner or other support group can be a great help.

By: Sandy Longfellow

ISAC Administrative Assistant



4. Do Exercise You Enjoy – This is very important! Do something you enjoy – get creative. Join a dance class, play racquetball, run around with the kids!

5. Forget Fads – Beware of "new" or "revolutionary" diets. Avoid fads that promote eating unlimited amounts of certain foods like eggs, meat, bananas and limit food groups like carbohydrates or that encourage missing meals or taking pills. Eat a well-balanced diet of a variety of foods.

6. Watch Out for Weekends – Your weakest moment may not even be weekends, but determine when your hardest times are and plan for it. Remember, the occasional treat will not harm you that much if you continue the well-balanced eating plan.

7. Treat Yourself – If you ban something from your diet that will be the very thing that you crave. Rewarding ourselves helps us from losing our resolve and caving in!

I think another important aspect of this whole topic is accepting ourselves and being less critical of our flaws. Our self worth should not reside in our physical appearance.

technology center

What Are Cookies

Q: "I have been told that certain websites create a cookie, what are cookies? Do they harm my computer?"

A cookie is a file that is created by an Internet site that you have visited. It is used to store information on your computer and helps to personalize your visit to their site and any future visits. It makes you feel welcome and gives a website an appearance of really knowing you and anticipating your needs.

There are actually several different types of cookies. Most cookies are used on a first party basis, created and stored solely for the use of the website that you are currently visiting. A cookie will only store information that you input into the website yourself. A website cannot create a cookie containing your e-mail address or any other personal information, unless you have typed it in. In the end, most cookies are friendly and actually enhance your Internet browsing experience.

Third party cookies are the annoying type of cookie and are not so pleasant to have lurking on the hard drive of your computer. These type of cookies are used for the purpose of advertising or marketing. They will not share personal information but they are able to track the pages that you view on a website. This enables them to customize the "popup ads" that occur when you are in a site.

An effective way to control what types of cookies are stored

By: Tammy Norman

ISAC Technical
Administrative Assistant



on your computer is to specify the security settings of them. To adjust the security levels on your computer, you will need to do the following steps: open your Internet browser from the toolbar, select "Tools", "Internet Options", and "Privacy." You may choose from the following levels of security: "Low", "Medium", "Medium High", "High" and "Block All Cookies." You are able to override cookie handling for specific websites and allow all cookies to be enabled or to block all cookies. This feature comes in handy for a site such as the Affiliate website, which uses cookies. For this site, you will want to enable your computer to allow cookies to be made without blocking them. If you know a site is reputable and feel comfortable allowing cookies to be created; cookies can be a very positive experience.

Website Note: We have added a new link on our ISAC home page entitled "Electronic Transactions Clearinghouse (ETC)." Please take a moment to check out another benefit of ISAC. If you have any items that you would like addressed in this column, email me at tnorman@iowacounties.org. Until next month, keep clicking!

MH/DD Redesign Update

By: *Deborah Westvold*
ISAC Case Management Director



MH/DD Commission Recommendations

The report submitted to the Legislature and Governor by the Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities (MH/DD) Commission recommends a number of changes to the current system for delivering adult disability services, including phasing-in the changes over a period of six to eight years. A copy of the full report and its appendices can be obtained at the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) website <http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/publication.asp>.

The system values and principles remain similar to the current system values of consumer choice, empowerment, and community. The specific recommendations pertain to the following area:

- Assure *universal access* to information, service coordination, and crisis/emergency services.
- Establish *financial eligibility* standards specifying minimum financial eligibility, resource limits, and co-pay standards for people accessing disability service funding.
- Establish *functional/diagnostic eligibility* standards.
- Establish a definition of *residency* to replace the concept of legal settlement, a statewide standard for “proof of residency,” a statewide data system that identifies the residency of each individual eligible for MHDDDBI funds, and a mechanism for individuals to contest residency determination.
- Establish a set of *core services* that are available to all eligible individuals.
- Establish *responsibilities of individuals served* by the system, including participating in the development, implementation, and monitoring of their individual service plans.
- Establish responsibilities for *service coordination* that are similar to the current responsibilities for Medicaid Targeted Case Management, but that would be available to folks who might benefit from the service regardless of funding source. Among the characteristics identified is that the need for service coordination is based on functional assessment, not the number of services provided or Medicaid eligibility. The recommendations do not make changes to Medicaid Targeted Case Management.
- Maintain the physical boundaries of *management entities* as a single county or consortium of counties.
- Makes a number of changes to the *state entity*, including renaming the MH/DD Commission the MHDDDBI Commission, and establishing a Division (or Divisions) within the DHS to function as the state’s mental health, developmental disability and brain injury authority.
- Develop and implement a strategy for use of *state operated mental health institutions and state resource centers*.
- Proposes significant changes to the *disability services fund-*

ing methodology, including establishing a levy range with a minimum and maximum rate, a case rate allocation methodology that allocates non-property tax money to each management entity based on the cost associated with that cluster of clients.

2004 Legislative Action

A pared-down version of the MH/DD Commission recommendations passed out of the House and Senate Human Resource Committees in both chambers during the first week of March. This bill changes the name and responsibilities of the MH/DD Commission to include “brain-injury,” changes the term “single point of entry” to “central point of coordination,” and deletes some out-dated language. In addition, it provides legislative intent language to implement the system redesign over a period of years and directs the MH/DD Commission to continue to develop their proposals and gather additional information on the fiscal and programmatic impact of the changes.

SF 2248 contains the streamlined, first year proposal put forth by the MH/DD Commission via the DHS. HSB 649 amended the streamlined MH/DD Commission version to:

- Continue the reference to “mental retardation” in the Code. The Commission had deleted this reference based on the fact that mental retardation is encompassed in developmental disabilities. This change created concern for advocates of services for persons with mental retardation.
- Change the reference to “service coordination providers” to “service providers.” The Commission uses the former term, but it is not defined anywhere in the Code.
- Change the language directing the Commission to address “transition” issues from legal settlement to residency for various populations including corrections. The new language directs the Commission to address “residency” issues for these populations, thus eliminating the presumption that they will become residents of the county in which they are placed.
- Eliminate the reference to the Commission developing a dispute resolution process for county of legal settlement since this did not reflect the Commission’s report.
- Add a section creating a State-County Dispute Resolution Committee to deal with the ongoing issue of billings from the state (both facilities and Medicaid) that are disputed by the county receiving the bill.

Copies of the legislation can be obtained at the General Assembly website: <http://www.legis.state.ia.us/>.

counties in the spotlight

A delegation of 10 Kosovo mayors, accompanied by four interpreters, joined **Scott County** officials for ISAC's County-A-Day on March 2. The delegation learned about state government, observed interaction between local and state government officials and gained understanding of the issues that are of mutual interest at the state and local level. The Kosovo mayors visited the Quad Cities from February 28 – March 14. In the Quad Cities, they explored the day-to-day operations of local government with a focus upon the formation of partnerships between local governments.



Kosovo, originally a part of Yugoslavia, has been a conflict-ridden, politically unsettled area for some time. The region is trying to overcome bitter ethnic strife between Serbs and ethnic Albanians. Kosovo is currently administered by the United Nations as it struggles to create a democratic society.

Scott County Board Chairman Carol Schaefer served as the host for the Quad Cities portion of this project that was organized by the Eastern Iowa Community College District. Chairman Schaefer felt it was an excellent opportunity for the Quad Cities to expand its horizons and learn about another area of the world, while at the same time, assisting Kosovo to build its capacity for self-governance.

In an effort to develop baseline information regarding **Polk County** residents' satisfaction with county government services and to assess and raise awareness of the services provided under the auspices of Polk County government, the Polk County Board of Supervisors worked with CD-DIAL to conduct a survey of residents during the winter of 2003. Completed questionnaires were received from 346 residents in the random sample.

Results showed residents living in both incorporated and unincorporated areas tend to rely on television and the Des Moines Register for information about county government and services. When looking for a county government office telephone number, residents tend to rely on the blue pages in their telephone book.

One question regarded the proposed merging of the City of Des Moines and Polk County government into one government. As a group, respondents appeared to be rather neutral on the issue, until they were separated by incorporation status. Then, a strong difference was seen as respondents living in incorporated areas of the city favored the merger while those

living in unincorporated areas were generally against the idea. Respondents in unincorporated areas are concerned about losing the rural "flavor" of their lifestyle with such a merger. They fear they will suffer a loss or decrease in services. Some respondents also pointed to problems they perceive as currently being experienced by the City of Des Moines and said they did not want to take on responsibility for those problems.

(Taken from Polk County's website, www.co.polk.ia.us)

County officials in **Scott County** are playing music and making money for ISAC's scholarship program. The band BureauCats was formed last year and is almost entirely comprised of Scott County employees. The "BureauCats" have now designed tee-shirts for \$12 each with all proceeds going to support the Iowa State Association of Counties Scholarship Fund. Call Rhonda Skahill at (563) 326-8279 to place your order. All sizes are available and all are tastefully and artfully done in red and black on the best Fruit of the Loom stock! Payment will be due upon receipt.

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Targeted Case Management Supervisor: Send resume to Hamilton County Social Services, 509 Division, Webster City, Iowa 50595. Application deadline: April 16, 2004. Position begins June 1, 2004. Excellent benefits and great working conditions. EOE

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ISAC Fall School 2004

By: Jerri Noboa

ISAC Meetings Administrator

The ISAC staff is working out the kinks for ISAC's Fall School scheduled for November 14-16, 2004 in downtown Des Moines at the Marriott and the Renaissance Savery. Here are a couple questions that have come up recently.

Marriott Billing. The Marriott requires hotel guests to guarantee their room on a credit card. Guests can request an advance invoice from the hotel so that payment can be made by check prior to arrival. The hotel would like to receive the check 10 days prior to your arrival date to ensure proper posting of your account. If you pay this way and then need to cancel, as long as it is before 6pm on the date of arrival, you will receive all of your money back.

Location of Affiliate Meetings. If an affiliate has a hospitality room, it will be located in the same hotel as their meeting. Vendors will have their choice of hotels. The following is a tentative schedule of who will meet where. If affiliates have joint meetings, I will then put them in the same hotel.

Marriott

Auditors
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Public Health Nurses
Sheriffs
Supervisors
Treasurers
General Session
Seminars
Exhibits
Registration

Renaissance Savery

Assessors
Conservation
CPCs
Engineers
General Assistance
Information Technology
Recorders
Zoning

Visit ISAC's website (www.iowacounties.org) under 'Upcoming Events' for further information on ISAC's 2004 Fall School.



Meet the Board Members

Mary Williams has been employed by Benton County for 13.5 years. She was employed in June 1990 as General Relief Technician, appointed CPC Administrator in 1995 and then Director of the Social Services Department in 1999. "I am looking forward to participating in the functions of the Board and learning how those functions impact and relate to member counties. Change is constant in government and the next couple years will be no exception to that. It will be interesting, and hopefully rewarding, to be a part of how things evolve." Mary was sworn in as a member of the ISAC Board of Directors during their January meeting.



"My hope for ISAC echoes one of ISAC's own mission statements that I recently read. That is 'to promote efficient and fiscally sound county government for the citizens of Iowa.' This is especially profound considering the many discussions to consolidate local governments and to change the way business has been conducted for decades."

Mary is a member of the DHS Case Management Advisory Board, Independence MHI Advisory Board, and CRIS Board of Directors. She also serves as ISAC's Community Services Affiliate President. Mary's past experience includes private secretary for Dows Realty in Cedar Rapids; billing clerk for Virginia Gay Hospital in Vinton; office manager for Vinton Popcorn Company in Vinton; and marketing and service representative for Bell Telephone in Waterloo.

Mary's family includes two daughters and one son. Her daughter Samona is a homemaker and trains horses. She lives in Texas with three children and her significant other. Her daughter Kelly and her husband John live in Cedar Rapids. Kelly is employed as display coordinator for Kohls Dept. Store. Her son Bart and his wife Angie have a two year old son, Cole, and live in the Vinton area. Bart is section foreman for Iowa Northern Railroad. In Mary's free time she enjoys outdoor activities, boating, stained glass, reading, gardening, and horseback riding.



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NACo news

NACo Offers Counties New Extended Services

NACo's Community Services Division, the technical-assistance arm of NACo's County Services Department, has announced new or extended services for counties.

The NACo ENERGY STAR™ Courthouse Campaign

This campaign encourages counties to become ENERGY STAR partners to improve the energy performance of courthouses and office buildings and save money. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's ENERGY STAR program will provide counties with the information and tools to help improve energy performance. At various stages of the campaign, counties will receive national recognition for their achievements from NACo and EPA. *For more information, contact Beth Bleil at (202) 942-4246 or bbleil@naco.org.*

Transportation Planning for Local Officials in Rural Areas and Small Communities

NACo and the National Association of Development Organizations Research Foundation (NADORF) are developing a new program, made possible by a grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation, which will use innovative approaches, such as Web-based technical assistance and information dissemination, to assist county and municipal officials in non-metropolitan areas to participate in the statewide transportation planning process. In addition, NACo and NADORF will conduct a series of trainings and workshops at their national meetings and various state and regional meetings. *For more information or if you are interested in having a training conducted in your area, please contact James Davenport, jdavenport@naco.org, (202) 661-8807.*

Implementing Low Impact Development Practices

In partnership with the National Association of Home Builders Research Center (NAHBRC) and EPA, NACo will provide information to county officials and builders to assist them in implementing low-impact development. Low-impact development uses site design practices to reduce the environmental consequences of residential development. The project is an outgrowth of the NACo-NAHB partnership and builds on the ongoing work to help counties protect water quality. In addition, NACo and NAHBRC will conduct a series of trainings and workshops at their national meetings and various state and regional meetings. *For more information or if you are interested in having a training conducted in your area, please contact James Davenport, jdavenport@naco.org, (202) 661-8807.*

Diverting the Mentally Ill from Jails

NACo will continue the work it began under Immediate Past President Kenneth Mayfield's leadership to help counties divert non-violent mentally ill offenders from county jails. With grant support from Eli Lilly and Co., NACo is now able to step up services on this topic, including providing funds and hands-on technical assistance to a select number of counties. *For more information, contact Lesley Buchan, lbuchan@naco.org, (202) 942-4261.*

Using Geospatial Technologies

NACo has signed an agreement with the Institute for the Application of Geospatial Technology (IAGT), under which IAGT has contributed a full-time employee to NACo for the purpose of assisting counties to utilize GIS and other geospatial technologies. The NACo-IAGT partnership provides a key resource for county officials to keep up-to-date on innovative solutions to current issues using technology. Current projects include updating the NACo Web site with case studies and reference materials, staffing the GIS Committee and other technology-related committees, and representing NACo on intergovernmental partnerships related to geospatial technology.

For more information, contact Kevin Neimond, kneimond@naco.org, (202) 942-4247.

NACo's Annual Conference in Phoenix

NACo's Annual Conference and Exposition is *the* place for county officials to network, attend educational sessions and workshops and meet with companies that sell products to counties. It draws some 4,000 officials annually and is held in a different county each year. As county governments are called upon to perform more and more services, this conference offers county officials and employees their best opportunity to discover new ways to address the needs of their constituents.

The 2004 NACo Annual Conference and Exposition will be held July 16-20 in Phoenix, Arizona (Maricopa County). All events will take place at the Phoenix Civic Plaza unless noted otherwise. The conference-wide event will be a one-of-a-kind celebration of the western wonders of Arizona held at Rawhide in Scottsdale...the West's Most Western Town.

The deadline for early-bird registration is May 7. Hotel rooms in the NACo room block are guaranteed until June 9. *For registration information visit NACo's website at www.naco.org.*

associate member highlights

Public Employee Training Services

Fred hurries to the courthouse. He has sold an old car for his mother. The buyer wants it today but the title can't be found. Fred makes a quick trip for a duplicate title. The clerk helps Fred complete the forms and then asks, "Do you want to come back in a week or do you want us to mail it?" Fred protests, "I need it today!" Without explanation the clerk replies, "It takes a week. Do you want to come back or should we mail it?" Fred doesn't understand the delay and is angry when he leaves. He has forgotten the good service he has received over the years. But, he'll remember this time. He will complain at the coffee shop, and he'll repeat the story often. A courthouse staff will collectively be labeled as lazy and/or incompetent.

No wrong information was given and the service was efficient. But, the clerk did not meet Fred's expectations. The citizens of Iowa are blessed by the quality of their courthouse employees. But, scenarios like the above do happen. A reputation for years of good service can be destroyed because an employee is not adequately prepared in the 'skills of service.'

Public Employee Training Services (PETS) exists to provide such training. Citizens expect, and deserve, the best service from their county offices. And they expect public employees to:

- serve an increasingly diverse community courteously,
 - respond helpfully to all requests for information and service,
 - always be patient and cooperative,
 - defuse anger and hostility that can develop in the workplace,
 - and manage increasing workloads without additional help.
- Sometimes employees are not prepared for such demanding expectations.

PETS developed 15 workshops to improve service skills. The half-day workshops are conducted on-site and are specifically designed for public employees. We use job-related case studies and a 'hands-on' approach. Classroom learning is immediately transferable to work environment.

Workshops are conducted by Don Carlson who spent 30 years in state government. He trained and managed a wide variety of public employees in serving the people of Iowa.

Contact Information:

Public Employee Training Services (PETS)
Contact: Donald Carlson
407 SE Delaware #308
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Ph: (515) 963-0647 Fax: (515) 963-0655
E-Mail: dgc473@msn.com



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Contact Information:

Yaggy Colby Associates
Contact: Jeff Rhoda, P.E.
215 North Adams
Mason City, IA 50401
Ph: (641) 424-6344 Fax: (641) 424-0351
E-Mail: jrhoda@yaggy.com

miscellaneous

Building Excellence in Governance Conference

The Public Policy & Administration Program at Iowa State University will hold their Second Annual Conference in Building Excellence in Governance on May 7, at the Memorial Union on the main campus. According to the program director, Professor Kurt Thurmaier, "the conference is in celebration of National Public Service Recognition Week, and this year's theme is Citizens, Customers and Clients."

The conference "is designed for all levels of Iowa's federal, state and local public managers," Thurmaier noted. "It will address cutting edge issues in public management of Iowa's state and local governments." The morning session focuses on various approaches to "Communicating with the Public." It will explore listening, broadcasting, and dialogues with citizens, customers, and clients. Panelists include Jeff Schotts (City Manager, Marion), Lynn Walding (Iowa Alcoholics Beverage Division[invited]), and Paul Coates, Alfred Ho, and Barbara Mack [invited] (Iowa State University). Thurmaier emphasized that this topic was generated by participants at last year's conference. "The conferees last year argued that public officials need to do a better job communicating results with the public, so we created this session to provide some ideas about how to do that," he said.

The afternoon session focuses attention on integrating ethics into everyday decisions. Speakers will discuss the code of ethics that governs their actions. Speakers include: Bob Kindred, Assistant Ames City Manager; Mary Harlan, Iowa Department of Public Health; and Cindy Kendall, City Finance Director, Marshalltown.

The luncheon speaker is Dr. Robin Hambleton, Dean of the College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs, University of Illinois-Chicago. He will speak on 'Interactive Governance,' discussing the pillars of the new public management reform movement (benchmarking/competition and customer focus) and then critiquing the reform idea for its lack of attention to the notion of 'community.'

The Building Excellence in Governance conference is an annual event that celebrates public service—and public servants—in Iowa. The conference is a service to the public managers in Iowa, and the conference fee of only \$25, (\$30 for late registration) which covers only a portion of the expenses. The full program and registration form are available at www.public.iastate.edu/~mpa/ and early registrations must be received by April 20. CEU credits are available through Continuing Education for \$10.

City & County Innovations Summit

Although progress is being made, local governments continue to cope with increased citizen expectations in the face of budget deficits and revenue shortfalls. The reality of increasingly tight budgets warrants the need for improving performance planning and management across city and county functional areas.

To help you survive the budget crunch and improve citizen services, county officials are invited to attend the fourth annual City & County Innovations Summit (CCIS), hosted by the Performance Institute and an array of good-government organizations in beautiful San Diego on April 28-30, 2004.

From strategic planning and measurement to personnel management and budgeting, CCIS 2004 explores innovations in all major management functions. Moreover, case studies from all major city and county operations are presented—from design and implementation to evaluation of lessons learned.

As cities and counties continue to struggle in the wake of a slow economy, containing costs and ensuring strong financial management is more vital than ever. Instead of falling into the mistakes of "feast or famine" budget decisions, you can apply proven solutions presented at CCIS 2004 to navigate tough financial landscapes through improved financial management techniques.

The innovations presented at CCIS 2004 are researched and validated by the CCIS planning committee (comprised of leading city and county experts) and will be presented as case studies. Sessions explore the latest practices and solutions to the most pressing city and county challenges—utilizing a peerbased learning approach.

For more information or to register, call 703-894-0481 or visit www.cityandcounty.org. Group discounts are also available.

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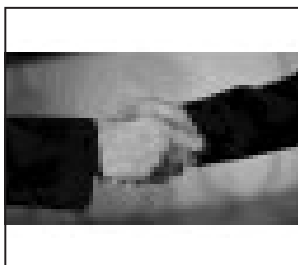
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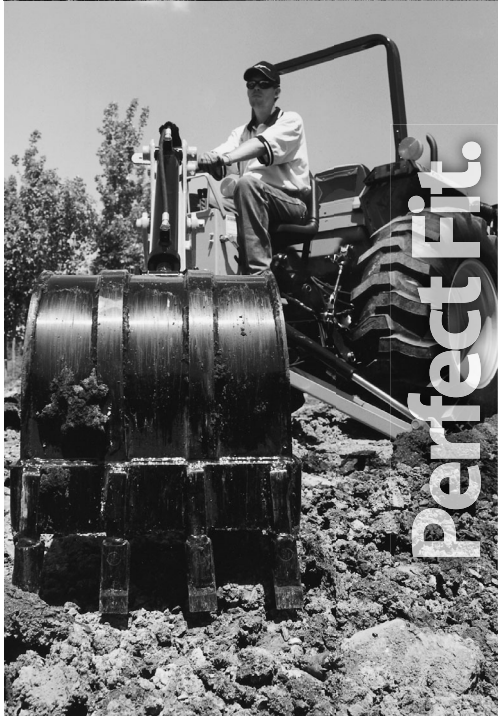


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calendar

APRIL

- 8 Community Services Legislative (ISAC Office)
- 8 CCMS NW Support Group
(AEA Building., Storm Lake)
- 8 CCMS NE Support Group
(Bill's Pizza & Smokehouse, Independence)
- 13 CCMS Administrators/Support Staff
(Baymont Conference Center, DM)
- 14 CCMS Cost Report Training
(Baymont Conference Center, DM)
- 15 ISAC Board of Directors/IMWCA, ICAP &
League Boards Picnic (Jester Park)
- 16 ISAC Board of Directors (ISAC Office)
- 22 CCMS West Support Group
(Montgomery County Courthouse, Red Oak)
- 25-28 Sheriffs & Deputies Civil School
(Holiday Inn Airport, DM)

MAY

- 4 Wellness Spring Meeting
(Buena Vista University, Storm Lake)
- 6 Wellness Spring Meeting (Wellmark, DM)
- 6 CCMS Advanced Case Manager
(Baymont Conference Center, DM)
- 12-14 Treasurers Statewide Meeting (Dubuque)
- 20 Engineers Executive Board (ISAC Office)

JUNE

- 8-9 CCMS Supervisors Training
(Holiday Inn Airport, DM)
- 9 District VI ISAC Legislative Workshop
(location TBA)
- 10 District II ISAC Legislative Workshop
(location TBA)

- 11 District III ISAC Legislative Workshop
(Buena Vista University, Storm Lake)
- 16-18 ICIT Annual Mid-Year Conference
(Council Bluffs)
- 16 District IV ISAC Legislative Workshop
(location TBA)
- 17 District I ISAC Legislative Workshop
(Holiday Inn Airport, DM)
- 18 District V ISAC Legislative Workshop
(Indian Hills, Ottumwa)

JULY

- 9 ISAC Board of Directors (ISAC Office)
- 13 CCMS Administrators
(Baymont Conference Center, DM)
- 16-20 NACo Annual Conference (Phoenix, AZ)
- 21-23 Auditors Annual Conference
(Plaza Inn, Sioux City)

AUGUST

- 5-6 Supervisors Executive Board
(Independence area)
- 11-13 CCMS Annual Conference
(Holiday Inn Airport, DM)
- 11 Records Legislative Meeting
(Grand Harbor Resort, Dubuque)
- 12-13 Records Summer Conference
(Grand Harbor Resort, Dubuque)

For agendas or additional information on any of the above listed meetings please visit our website at www.iowacounties.org and click on Upcoming Events! If you have any questions about the meetings listed above, please contact Jerri at (515) 244-7181 or by email at jnoba@iowacounties.org.



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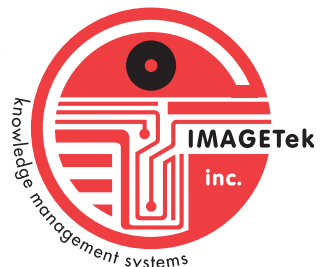
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