

LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

The Session Ends

Bulletin #23, 2016 Session
June 3, 2016

The House and Senate both met on Wednesday and finished their work for the legislative session. With a few exceptions, they approved all committee of conference reports, so all results described in last week’s *Legislative Bulletin* remain unchanged.

Many bills are now on their way to the Governor, and will be signed into law—or, in some cases, may be vetoed or become law without her signature—over the next two months or so. We will publish our *Final Legislative Bulletin*, summarizing all new laws of municipal interest, in late July or early August, depending to some extent on how quickly the bills get signed.

If you are wondering when a particular law will take effect, look at the “effective date” section at the end of the bill. Many bills state a firm effective date, such as January 1, 2017. Others state that they will become effective “upon passage,” or 30 or 60 days after passage. For this purpose, “passage” means signature by the Governor—so if a bill states that it will take effect 30 days after passage, and the Governor signs it on June 8, the effective date is July 8.

Aside from the special session mentioned below, the legislature will meet one more time, probably in late September, to consider bills that have been vetoed by the Governor. It takes a two-thirds vote by each chamber to override a veto. We do not anticipate a veto of any bills NHMA has followed closely—but, as we have said many times before, anything can happen.

And a New One Begins

Having finished its regular session, the legislature is returning for a one-day (we hope) special session on Thursday, June 16, in an effort to revive a bill that died unexpectedly on the last day. **SB 485** would have appropriated \$1.5 million for state and local law enforcement efforts to address substance abuse. The bill also contained provisions dealing with health insurance for retired state employees. (This has nothing to do with municipal employees or the New Hampshire Retirement System.)

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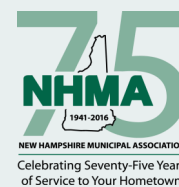
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The committee of conference report failed in the House on a vote of 159-160. Apparently some members believed the law enforcement appropriation was unnecessary or misguided, while others objected to the health insurance provisions.

It is conceivable, but unlikely, that the special session will take up other issues. We do not plan to publish another *Legislative Bulletin* unless other issues arise that require the attention of local officials.

RGGI's Revenge

One of the committee of conference reports that were *not* approved was the one on **HB 1660**. As we explained last time, this bill originally dealt with eminent domain takings by gas pipeline companies; the Senate had attached an amendment that tracked the language of **SB 492**, increasing the amount of funds distributed to municipalities (and others, including commercial ratepayers) from the sale of carbon allowances under the regional greenhouse gas initiative (RGGI). NHMA had strongly supported the Senate amendment. At the committee of conference meeting last week, House conferees refused to budge, so the RGGI provision was removed from the bill, and the bill was sent to the House and Senate with only the eminent domain provisions.

By a 13-11 vote, the Senate issued its requital on Wednesday, refusing to approve the committee of conference report, thus sending the bill to its death. This was not a victory for anyone, as the Senate did not get the RGGI amendment and the House did not get the eminent domain provisions; but it did serve as a reminder that in the legislature, sometimes you have to give something to get something.

Summer Homework

Although the legislative session is over, the fun doesn't have to end. (See "The Edge" for a summary of what NHMA staff will be doing this summer.) Here are a few assignments to keep everyone's mind sharp:

- Tune in to NHMA's Legislative Wrap-Up webinar next Wednesday, June 8, at noon (NHMA members only)—see details at the end of this Bulletin;
- Check the legislature's [website](#) for updates on bills that have been signed into law. (Use the [Chaptered Final Version](#) link or check the bill's docket.)
- Check the [Secretary of State's website](#) to see who has filed to run for the House and Senate in your district. (You have until June 10 to file in case you're thinking of running yourself.)

THE EDGE

What do lobbyists do all summer?

It's a question we hear with some frequency, and it's certainly a reasonable one. Given that the legislative session ends at the end of May (end of June in budget years), and the next one does not get underway until January, lobbying can seem like a seasonal occupation. Maybe we take three-month vacations, or spend the summer working as house painters or landscapers?

Not quite. We cannot speak for all of the 300-plus registered lobbyists in the state. (Aside: If that seems like a lot, note that New Hampshire has the *lowest* lobbyist-to-legislator ratio of any state in the nation—a status that admittedly is helped by having far more legislators than any other state.) But here is what we do:

Among other things, we will produce our *Final Legislative Bulletin*, oversee NHMA's legislative policy process (see separate article), monitor study committees and commissions, begin planning legislative initiatives for next year, and catch up on filing and other administrative matters that have not gotten our full attention over the last five months.

In addition, all members of the Government Affairs staff have significant non-legislative duties that help us stave off idleness. We respond to legal and finance questions from our members, do presentations to

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- Watch for our *Final Legislative Bulletin* in late July or early August.
- Review our legislative policy proposals when they are sent out in a few weeks, and plan to participate in our Legislative Policy Conference in September (details in next article).
- Finally, thank your representatives and your senator for all the work they do, especially those who pay attention to municipal issues and regularly vote to support local government.

Legislative Policy Process Update

The first phase of NHMA's 2017-18 legislative policy process has been completed. The three legislative policy committees, comprising over 50 local officials from 45 municipalities, spent several weeks reviewing existing legislative policies and new proposals. They have made their recommendations, which will be sent to all member municipalities later this month. We will ask municipal governing bodies to review the recommendations, establish positions on them, and appoint a delegate to vote at the NHMA Legislative Policy Conference on September 23. Members will also have an opportunity to submit floor policy proposals by August 12.

NHMA Moving

As mentioned in a recent Legislative Bulletin, NHMA is moving—but not far. We are migrating approximately 150 feet to the northwest, within the same building. All of our contact information will remain the same.

Most of the move will take place this coming Monday and Tuesday, June 6 and 7. Because we will be moving all of our furniture, computers, and phones, we may be incommunicado for a good portion of those two days. Please bear with us, and we will respond to all telephone and e-mail messages as soon as we can. Thank you for your patience!

To view the weekly Legislative Bulletin from the NH School Boards Association, please click [here](#).

THE EDGE (CONTINUED)

various groups, participate in webinars and workshops, and, with other members of NHMA staff, assist in planning NHMA's annual conference. And finally, yes, we do take some vacation time.

As we move into the fall, we will start to contact legislators (once we know who they are, or at least who they are likely to be) to discuss legislation for 2017. After the elections, we will shift into full gear, preparing for the excitement of another legislative session.

Summer is definitely a little more laid back at NHMA, but we are not worried about running out of things to do.



Upcoming Events for NHMA Members

NHMA Workshops

June 10, 2016 [2016 Avoiding the Road to Liability](#), Concord, NH at 9:00 a.m.

June 16, 2016 [Fundamentals of Local Welfare](#), Concord, NH at 9:30 a.m.

September 2016 Budget & Finance Workshops

For more information please access our website: www.nhmunicipal.org and scroll down on the left to CALENDAR OF EVENTS and Click *View the Full Calendar*.

Contact us by phone at 1-800-852-3358 x3350 or email us at NHMAregistrations@nhmunicipal.org

NHMA Webinar

June 8, 2016 2016 Legislative Wrap-up
Time: 12:00—1:00 p.m.
Click [here](#) to register by noon on June 7, 2016

Join Government Affairs Counsel Cordell Johnston and Government Finance Advisor Barbara Reid for a review of the highlights of the 2016 legislative session. This will be several weeks after the legislative session ends, so except for possible vetoes, all legislative action will be final.

This webinar will discuss the most significant bills of municipal interest that made it through the legislature this year, as well as a few that failed but may be back in the future. The discussion will include, among others, state aid grants for water and wastewater facilities, assessing issues, planning and zoning, the Right-to-Know law, municipal liability, election laws, and various other changes affecting municipal governance and administration.