

LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

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2013 Session

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Still Waiting . . .

That flood of new bills that we predicted in last week's *Bulletin* has yet to develop, but we know it is on its way. As of this writing, there are only thirteen bills and resolutions listed on the General Court's website. We expect that number to change dramatically in the next few days, as legislative committees are expected to begin holding hearings the week of January 14—and of course, the bills need to be published before hearings can be scheduled.

Next week, most House committees and a few Senate committees will hold organizational meetings and/or hear informational presentations from state agencies and other organizations. The calendars in this week's *Bulletin* list those that are of most interest to municipalities.

So, again, keep checking the [legislature's website](#), and watch next week's *Bulletin*, which we are *certain* will contain a long list of bills of municipal interest.

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In the Meantime . . .

Here are the legislative policy positions NHMA will be actively pursuing in the 2013 session. We do not, obviously, have bill numbers for any of them yet, but if you are interested in one or more of them and have trouble locating them once the bill numbers become available, please let us know and we can provide the necessary information:

- **Restoration of funding for state aid grant programs.** This would restore full general revenue funding of municipal wastewater, drinking water, and landfill closure grants administered by the Department of Environmental Services. This is one of the highest priorities adopted by NHMA members at our Legislative Policy Conference, and you can read everything you want to know on the subject by clicking [here](#) (or go to www.nhlgc.org, then go to NH Municipal Association/Ongoing Topics of Interest/Water Systems Infrastructure/ New Hampshire's Water Assets Under Pressure).



New Hampshire Municipal Association

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In The Meantime - continued

- **Combustion of construction and demolition debris.** A 2007 law prohibits the burning in New Hampshire of the wood component of construction and demolition debris. The law contains an exception for the incidental burning of untreated lumber at municipal transfer stations. However, that exemption is scheduled to expire in 2014, forcing municipalities to pay to have untreated lumber disposed of in some other manner. Our policy bill would avoid this problem by making the exemption permanent.
- **Planning board appeals.** This bill resolves the dilemma faced by parties aggrieved by a planning board decision who cannot decide whether the proper forum for an appeal is the superior court or the zoning board of adjustment, and who risk losing their appeal rights if they make the wrong choice. It provides a process to ensure that appeals may be transferred to the proper forum, rather than simply dismissed, and allows appeals in the superior court to be stayed pending the resolution of any matters appealed to the ZBA.
- **Dam notification.** This bill removes the requirement that a local governing body publish notice of an informational meeting when a dam owner is proposing to lower the water body or breach the dam. Notice of the proposed action would become the responsibility of the dam owner and the Department of Environmental Services.
- **Counting absentee ballots.** This policy bill eliminates the rule that absentee ballots cannot be counted until 1:00 p.m. on election day, and allows them to be counted throughout the time when polls are open.
- **The state budget.** Not a policy bill *per se*, but the budget obviously is the most important piece of legislation this year, as much for municipalities as for anyone else. Check [this page](#) (or go to www.nhlgc.org, then to NH Municipal Association/Ongoing Topics of Interest/State Budget/State Aid to Cities and Towns) for a wealth of information on how state budget practices have affected municipalities.

There may well be other bills introduced that implement [NHMA policies](#), and we will do everything we can to support them. If you are aware of any legislation that addresses one of our policies, please let us know.

Governor's Inaugural Address

On Thursday, January 3, Maggie Hassan was sworn in as the new Governor of New Hampshire. In her inaugural address, Gov. Hassan emphasized the need for bipartisanship and promised to work to “end the era of hasty, reactive government.” She recognized the enormous challenge of balancing the state budget while still funding important priorities, and pointed out that “needs do not go away simply because we don’t fund them”—a reality that is quite familiar to those in local government. The full text of the inaugural address is available [here](#) (or go to www.nh.gov, click on “Maggie Hassan Inaugurated . . . ,” and at the bottom of the press release, click on “Full Text of Governor Hassan’s Inaugural Address”).

Correction to Dues Letter

NHMA recently sent its annual letter to members regarding renewal of membership and payment of dues. The letter gave an incorrect telephone number to call with questions. The correct number is 224-7447, ext. 3408, or 800-852-3358, ext. 3408. We apologize for the error.

HOUSE CALENDAR

Joint House/Senate Meetings Are Listed Under This Section

MONDAY, JANUARY 7

FINANCE/WAYS AND MEANS JOINT WITH SENATE FINANCE/SENATE WAYS AND MEANS, Rooms 210-211, LOB

11:00 a.m. Jeff Pattison, LBA (Status of the state budget).

WAYS AND MEANS, Room 202, LOB

9:00 a.m. Rescheduled organization meeting.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 8

ENVIRONMENT AND AGRICULTURE, Room 303, LOB

1:00 p.m. Organization meeting.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION, Room 306, LOB

10:00 a.m. Orientation.

FINANCE, Rooms 210-211, LOB

10:00 a.m. Rescheduled organization meeting.

FINANCE – (DIVISION I), Room 212

1:00 p.m. Division orientation by LBA.

FINANCE – (DIVISION II), Room 209, LOB

1:00 p.m. Division orientation by LBA.

FINANCE – (DIVISION III), Rooms 210-211, LOB

1:00 p.m. Division orientation by LBA.

LABOR, INDUSTRIAL AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES, Room 307, LOB

9:45 a.m. Committee orientation.

MUNICIPAL AND COUNTY GOVERNMENT, Room 301, LOB

10:00 a.m. Organization meeting.

10:45 a.m. NH Municipal Association.

1:00 p.m. NH Department of Revenue Administration.

2:00 p.m. NH Regional Planning Commissions.

2:30 p.m. NH Office of Energy and Planning.

House Calendar - continued

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 9

ELECTION LAW, Room 308, LOB

10:00 a.m. Organization meeting.

FINANCE, Rooms 210-211, LOB

Agency Presentations

9:45 a.m. Treasury.

10:15 a.m. Retirement.

10:45 a.m. Department of Revenue Administration.

JUDICIARY, Room 208, LOB

9:30 a.m. Committee organization and Judicial Branch presentation.

RESOURCES, RECREATION AND DEVELOPMENT, Room 305, LOB

10:00 a.m. Organization and orientation meeting.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 10

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION, Room 306, LOB

10:00 a.m. Presentation by NH Retirement System

SENATE CALENDAR

TUESDAY, JANUARY 8

FINANCE, Room 103, SH

1:00 p.m. Informational Briefing by the Legislative Budget Assistant's Office



2013 Moderators Workshops

SB 2 Meeting
Saturday, January 19
(Snow date: Saturday, January 26)

Traditional Town Meeting
Saturday, February 23
(Snow date: Saturday, March 2)

9 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. • Local Government Center, Concord, NH

Cost: \$40

Registration and continental breakfast begin at 8:30 a.m.
Attendees will receive a copy of LGC's 2013 edition *Town Meeting and School Meeting Handbook*.

Topics include:

The Basic Law of Town, Village District and School District Meeting

Statutes governing the moderator's duties at town, village district and school district meetings will be discussed along with issues related to warrant articles, the operating budget, secret ballot voting and other town meeting issues. This topic will be offered in two concurrent sessions tailored for new and experienced moderators. Ample time will be devoted to questions and answers.

Strategies for Running a Smooth Meeting

Moderators are faced with a challenging task: keeping meetings focused and fair to all participants, while effectively facilitating the flow of debate. This session will highlight suggested strategies for running respectful and efficient meetings.

Sample Scenarios

A series of sample scenarios will help attendees prepare for a wide range of meeting challenges.

Presenters:

Barrett M. Christina, Staff Attorney, New Hampshire
School Boards Association

C. Christine Fillmore, Staff Attorney, New Hampshire
Municipal Association

Paul G. Sanderson, Staff Attorney, New Hampshire
Municipal Association

Register online today at
www.nhlgc.org/moderators

Online pre-registration
required by January 11.
Space is limited. Questions?
Call 800.852.3358, ext. 3350 or
email registrations@nhlgc.org.