



2024

Academy for Good Governance

- *Course I. Governing Body Roles & Responsibilities*
- *Course II. Financial Responsibilities*
- *Course III. How to Run an Effective Meeting (and Comply with the Right-to-Know Law)*
- *Course IV. Understanding Employee Benefits*
- *Course V. Preventing Discrimination, Retaliation and Workplace Hostility in the Public Sector: The Essential Role of Good Governance*
- *Course VI. Managing Your Public Entity's Liability Risk*
- *Course VII. Cybersecurity for Elected Officials*



I. GOVERNING BODY ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Wednesday, September 4, 2024 – Virtual Course (online)

Good governance starts with understanding the roles and responsibilities of the governing body. In this kickoff session, attendees will learn what governing body members can and cannot do and the extent of their authority. The presenters will review the most important statutes applicable to governing body members for both towns and schools, with some time spent discussing the differences between them.

Presented by: Margaret Byrnes, Executive Director, NH Municipal Association; Barrett Christina, Executive Director, NH School Boards Association

Biographies:

Margaret has served as Executive Director of the New Hampshire Municipal Association since 2019. She joined NHMA in 2014 as a staff attorney. Previously, she was an associate attorney with the firm Hage Hodes, P.A. in Manchester and an adjunct professor of legal research and writing at Northeastern University School of Law, Suffolk Law School, and The Massachusetts School of Law. Margaret has an M.B.A. from The University of New Hampshire Paul School of Business, a J.D. from the Massachusetts School of Law, and a B.A. in English Language and Literature and Classical Languages from Smith College, and volunteers as a CASA (Guardian ad Litem) for CASA of New Hampshire.

Barrett has been working at NHSBA since 2005 in the roles of Staff Attorney, Director of Policy Services, and Deputy Executive Director. He was named NHSBA Executive Director in July 2017. Barrett is a 2004 graduate of UNH School Law (formerly Franklin Pierce Law Center).

II. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Wednesday, September 11, 2024 – Virtual Course (online)

This session will explain the fundamental concepts of governmental budgeting, finance, and taxation. Statutory financial duties of the governing body will be addressed, including relationships with other elected officials, importance of internal controls, and measures to help mitigate the opportunity for fraudulent activities to occur in your municipality or school district.

Presented by: Katherine Heck, Government Finance Advisor, NH Municipal Association

Biography:

Katherine Heck provides legislative advocacy and serves as a resource to municipal officials and staff on a variety of government finance and taxation issues. She works collaboratively on publications and workshops for local finance officials to assist them in understanding and successfully performing their fiduciary responsibilities to promote fiscal health in New Hampshire cities and towns. Katherine lives in Greenfield where she has served as the Town Treasurer for the past 18 years and served three terms on the local School Board. Katherine received her bachelor's degree from Mount Holyoke College and certificates in Municipal Finance from the University of Chicago and in Public Financial Management from the International Monetary Fund.

III. HOW TO RUN AN EFFECTIVE MEETING (AND COMPLY WITH THE RIGHT-TO-KNOW LAW)

Wednesday, September 18, 2024 - Virtual Course (online)

An effective public meeting requires knowledge of the Right-to-Know Law, an appreciation for the First Amendment, tact, poise and a healthy dose of humor and humility. This session will cover all those topics and more.

Presented by: Stephen C. Buckley, Legal Services Counsel, NH Municipal Association; Will Phillips, Staff Attorney & Director of Policy Services, NH School Boards Association

Biographies:

Stephen Buckley is Legal Services Counsel for the New Hampshire Municipal Association, and in that capacity directs NHMA's legal services program, with responsibility for providing legal advice to members and overseeing training and publications for municipal officials. In his hometown of Bow, Steve was a member of the planning board for 12 years and served as a member of the budget committee, and he is currently an alternate member of the Bow Zoning Board of Adjustment. He is a past chairman and current member of the executive committee of the Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission, and he is currently chairman of the New Hampshire Association of Regional Planning Commissions. Steve received his B.A. from San Diego State University and his J.D. from Franklin Pierce Law Center/UNH School of Law.

William "Will" Phillips joined NHSBA in September 2017, having represented various New Hampshire school districts since 1994. Will is a 1991 graduate of the University of Maine School of Law.

IV. UNDERSTANDING EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Wednesday, September 25, 2024 - Virtual Course (online)

This session will provide elected officials with an overview of employee health benefits focusing on cost saving strategies while providing comprehensive coverage for employees and their families.

Presented by: Melisa Briggs, Benefits Assistant Manager, HealthTrust; Janet Foley, Member Relations Representative, HealthTrust; David Salois, Member Relations Representative, HealthTrust

Biographies:

Melisa Briggs is the Benefits Assistant Manager at HealthTrust, overseeing the team of Benefits Advisors who provide account management services and benefit consultations to Members. In addition, Melisa also serves Member Groups throughout the state and works closely with vendor partners. Melisa has been with the organization since 1996 and holds a Certificate of Achievement in Public Plan Policy through the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans with a concentration in Employee Benefits.

As the Member Relations Representative, Janet responds to specific inquiries from Members, provides information about HealthTrust programs and services, and prepares proposals, bids, and quotations. Prior to joining HealthTrust, Janet held a position at Anthem as a Sales Account Representative. In this role, her primary focus was on building and nurturing client relationships while offering exemplary customer service. She handled inquiries concerning claims and benefits, ensuring clients received exceptional service.

David Salois is the Benefit Services Manager at HealthTrust. He holds Master's Degree in Organizational leadership. David joined HealthTrust after serving as the Police Chief for the Town of Raymond for almost 20 years. During that time David developed a thorough understanding of the inner workings of municipal government, budgeting and negotiations, as well as a deep appreciation for the importance of comprehensive, cost-effective benefit plans to both employers and employees.

V. PREVENTING DISCRIMINATION, RETALIATION AND WORKPLACE HOSTILITY IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR: THE ESSENTIAL ROLE OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

Wednesday, October 2, 2024 - Virtual Course (online)

Laws and employee expectations continue to evolve and expand regarding individual rights in the workplace. Legal conflicts arise when treatment is perceived as falling short of expectations. The key to avoiding the many costs and impacts of litigation is awareness, commitment and follow-through on basic notions of respect and fairness. Governing boards are uniquely positioned to establish the right policy, lead by example and set the tone.

Presented by: Mike Ricker, General Counsel, Primex

Biography:

Mike Ricker has served as Primex General Counsel since 2007, and also supervises the Primex Legal & HR Services team. His prior experience includes judicial clerkships with the NH Supreme and Superior Courts, serving as an Assistant Attorney General at the NHDOJ, working as a litigation attorney at Devine, Millimet, and operating his own general law practice. Mike has devoted the majority of his career to serving the NH public sector, with extensive focus on civil rights, employment, regulatory and business law matters. Mike received his BA in History from UNH; JD with honors from New England Law; and Masters in Management with honors from Harvard University Extension School, where he also received a Graduate Certificate in Strategic Management.

VI. MANAGING YOUR PUBLIC ENTITY'S LIABILITY RISK

Wednesday, October 9, 2024 - Virtual Course (online)

This session explores those risks associated with situations you frequently encounter through managing your daily operations, such as the use of volunteers and use of your public facilities. The goal of this interactive session is to share best practices and preventive measures so that you oversee your operations in an environment that encourages proactive management of risk and overall safety.

Presented by: Monica Panait, Risk Management Services Manager, Primex

Biography:

Monica Panait has been with Primex3 since 2001. She holds a leading role in the Risk Management Services department, supervising and mentoring risk management consultants and other staff in conjunction with the Director of Risk Management.

She continues to work with Primex3 school and county members to address their training, consulting and risk management needs. Monica holds a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration with a major in Marketing and has earned the Certified Risk Manager (CRM) and Certified School Risk Manager (CSRSM) designations through the National Alliance for Insurance Education and Research. She has also earned the Program in General Insurance (INS) certification through the American Institute for CPCU and Insurance Institute of America.

Her areas of expertise include loss mitigation in conjunction with the development of a risk management plan, advising regarding complex liability issues, reinsurance negotiation and placement, training development and delivery, and playground safety.

VII. CYBERSECURITY FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS

Wednesday, October 16, 2024 – Virtual Course (online)

How does cybersecurity impact local government? Can't we just leave it to the "experts"? Why does this topic have anything to do with local elected officials? All these questions and more will be answered during this presentation. Join us to learn about how you can have a direct impact on your organization's cybersecurity posture. We will review the most common cybersecurity threats facing New Hampshire local government as well as practical ways to defend against these threats. Finally, we will discuss free and low-cost resources you can access.

Presented by: Cori Casey, Risk Management Consultant, Primex; Jason Sgro, Senior Partner and Chief Strategist, ATOM; Ken Weeks, Chief Information Security Officer, NH Department of Information Technology, State of New Hampshire

Biography:

Cori Casey is a Primex3 Risk Management Consultant with a focus on the cyber liability threats that members are facing. Cori is Certified in CybersecuritySM through (ISC)² and works with members mitigating cyber risk through training programs, policy planning, incident response coordination, and follow-up. He graduated from UNH with a BA in Political Science and minor in Justice Studies. Cori served in law enforcement for over 22 years with the Concord, New Hampshire Police Department. He enjoys spending time with his wife Jessica and their three children outdoors and attending sporting events.

Leading NH's largest dedicated municipal cyber incident response team, Jason serves as Sr. Partner, Business Strategy, and Head of Cyber Defense Services at The ATOM Group, headquartered in Portsmouth, NH. He is the current head of the FBI's InfraGard Program in NH and the Chairman of the Overwatch Foundation, which deploys NH's statewide cyber defense grant programs protecting critical infrastructure and key resources. A lifelong native of New Hampshire, Jason is a strategist at heart, comprised of equal parts speaker, evangelist, coach, and operator. He has secured and advised public and private entities throughout New Hampshire and is widely recognized for his contributions toward building a future we can trust.

Ken Weeks is the Chief Information Security Officer for the State of New Hampshire. He spent most of his adult life as a Naval Officer, Special Duty, Cryptology and Information Warfare, and retired as a CAPT (O6). Although most of his time was spent in the Pacific Theater, he also enjoyed several all-inclusive trips to Somalia, Iraq, and Afghanistan. After the Navy, he worked as an Executive Leader of Cyber Operations at the National Security Agency (NSA). Ken spent a couple years in the private sector as a Consultant with Booz Allen Hamilton and then moved to New Hampshire and back into public service. Since he always works in rooms with no windows and under artificial lights, he spends the rest of his time as an avid four seasons outdoor sportsman with his spouse, teenagers and two Irish Wolfhounds.

