



WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT

July 9, 2010

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MTA Web site: www.michigantownships.org

Please route to all interested parties in your township.

SENATE APPROVES BILL TO ALLOW MORE FLEXIBILITY FOR LOCAL ROAD SPENDING

The Michigan Senate approved HB 4848 on the floor of the Senate on July 1, a bill that allows county road commissions more flexibility regarding how they can allocate funds to local roads. HB 4848, sponsored by Rep. Joel Sheltroun (D-Ogemaw Twp.), would allow county road commissions to spend up to 50% of the funding they receive from the Michigan Transportation Fund (MTF) for county primary roads on the county local road system. Current law limits road commissions to transferring no more than 30% of primary road funding for local roads. MTA strongly supports the idea of allowing county road commissions to have more flexibility with their allocated state funds; however, the version of HB 4848 that was approved by the House contained a provision that road commissions only have such flexibility if the county road commission secures funds from other sources. MTA believes this is an attempt to try and lock in township match requirements for roads in Michigan law that does not exist today. There are few other entities, other than townships, that would be considered "other sources," under this legislation. MTA worked with the Senate to remove the provision, producing an S-1 substitute to HB 4848. MTA appreciates the efforts of the Senate in their unanimous approval of HB 4848 (S-1) and encourages the House to concur with the Senate version. Many of our local roads need attention and road commissions should have maximum flexibility to address them.

DEADLINE FOR SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS FOR NEW ASSESSING CLASSES IS JULY 20

Under the new requirements created by the State Tax Commission, anyone who wishes to become an entry-level assessor in Michigan must complete a 24-month program to become a certified assessor. Classes are expected to meet once a month during the weekends. The first class for the Michigan Certified Assessing Officer (MCAO) program is scheduled to begin in October. The STC is offering one scholarship to be administered by MTA. The deadline for submitting applications to MTA for the scholarship is July 20, 2010. Criteria for the scholarship are as follows: Current township supervisors will have priority, but other township employees will be considered. Applicant intends to become an active assessor and currently has a township salary of under \$50,000. Background materials should be submitted that include a description of local government experience, related property experience, i.e. real estate, engineering, accounting, computer proficiency, people skills, prior assessing classes taken and career objectives related to assessing. A description of the township's current assessing practices should be included, including any recent 14-point reviews or mini-reviews that have been conducted. A short essay should also be included (less than one page) that describes why it would be in the best interest of the township for the applicant to become the assessor of record, with a demonstration of the applicant's need for the scholarship and demonstrating a willingness to commit the time required for the course over a two-year period of time. Questions can be directed to Bill Anderson at bill@michigantownships.org or 517-321-6467.

STATE EDUCATION BUDGET APPROVED BUT REST OF BUDGET STILL INCOMPLETE

The Michigan Legislature worked out a deal on the K-12 Education budget (SB 1163) prior to their July break but the remainder of the 2010-11 state budget is a long way from completion. Governor Granholm signed the education budget bill on Thursday, which is the earliest the K-12 budget has been approved in her eight years as governor. However, the goal of the Legislature to approve the entire state budget by July 1 fell well short. The Legislature will return for two more session days this month (July 21 & 28) and at least the leaders of the appropriations process are hoping to have budgets completed by or near the end of August. The May revenue estimating conference helped derail budget efforts as a \$300 million deficit in the general fund was revealed. Compounding matters was further news that the federal Medicaid reimbursements to the state could be \$500 million less than expected. MTA will follow the budget process closely when it resumes over the summer.

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