



November 6, 2008

Dr. Mohammad Eftekhari
Director of Education
International Institute of Municipal Clerks
8331 Utica Avenue Suite 200
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730

Dear Dr. Eftekhari:

On behalf of the entire Board of Directors I am pleased to present the 2008 Annual Report of the New England Municipal Clerks' Institute. This year we had a total of 99 students, 49 in the three year institute program and 50 in three advanced academy programs. Nineteen graduates successfully completed the three year Institute program and received certificates at the graduation ceremony on Thursday night.

2008 Board of Directors

This was a very challenging year for the Board of Directors. Tody Justice was appointed chairman in November 2007. In January 2008, Tody was forced to resign her position for personal reasons. Carol Johnson was appointed to fill the position of Institute Director. In the next few months two other board members resigned due to unforeseen circumstances and two new members were appointed. The result was the "youngest" Board of Directors since our inception 34 years ago. Additionally, Carol Johnson was unable to attend the NEMCI session in July. Sandra Harris stepped in at the last minute and served as acting chairman during the week. Sandra did an excellent job. All twelve members of the board worked very hard to fulfill the commitment of offering New England Clerks the best educational experience possible.

The 2008 Board of Directors are:

Carol Johnson, CMC, NH – Chairman
Leslie Cotton, MMC, CT – Curriculum
Christina A. Silberman, ME – Evaluations
Linda Hutchenrider, CMCMA – Evaluations
Michelle Hardy, CMC, RI – Logistics
Sandra Harris, CMC, VT – Vice Chairman
Registration

Debra Patrick, CMC, NH – Promotion/Marketing
Karen Gaudreau, CMC, CT - Information
Connie Brown, CMC, ME – Treasurer/Graduation
Cheryl Johnson, MA – Secretary, Food/Brochures
Maureen Smith, CMC, RI - Logistics
Linda Spence, CMC, VT Scholarship/Orientation

Faculty

A substantial reason for the success of our program over the years is our wonderful faculty. We currently have ten faculty members who are all very accomplished professionals. All three of the new faculty from last year returned this year. We also welcomed a new faculty member on a part time basis. Diane Fellows stepped up at the last minute to teach two courses in place of Dr. Agnes Doody who was not able to come due to illness. Diane taught two courses in the Leadership Development Academy Program, Gender Communication and Mentoring. She did a great job and we hope she will consider returning again next year.

Problems Solved

The financial problems experienced in 2005 and 2006 are now behind us. The beginning balance in the checking account this year was \$33,513. Revenue from tuition was \$85,912; expenses were \$90,625, leaving an ending balance of \$28,800. Additionally there is \$12,340 in a certificate of deposit.

As you are well aware, we were able to satisfy the certification problem encountered in 2007 with the two computer academies. The Board of Directors appreciates your willingness to work with us in solving the certification issue. The essay you suggested was completed before the deadline and MMC credit was awarded the participants of both those programs. In 2008, John Hannington developed a new technology academy entitled Technology in the Municipal Office. This academy was approved for MMC credit. The program was very successful and very well received by the attendees.

Another new academy approved for 2008 was Emergency Preparedness. Because of low enrollment we were forced to cancel this program. We will need to assess whether or not to offer this in the 2009 program.

Evaluations

The New England Institute utilizes two types of evaluations. One evaluation measures the course content and relevance to the clerks' profession and the faculty members in presentation style. Our faculty members continue to receive rave reviews. Their commitment to our program is exceptional. Attached is a summary of the faculty and program evaluations.

Additionally, we ask for an evaluation on our overall program. We pay very close attention to the suggestions and ideas offered by participants to make our program better. Some of the words that were used to describe the 2008 week were: Educational, enlightening, exhausting, informative, inspiring, challenging, thought provoking, eye-opening, empowering, great, wonderful, awesome, friendships, fun, bonding, exciting, hectic, tiring,

One clerk said, "One of the best weeks of my life – really! I have met many new friends and fully intend to keep in touch with them. It was fast-paced and fun and it brought out so much more confidence in me."

2009 Session

For the past three years NEMCI has been hosted at St. Michael's College in Vermont. In the spring of this year, St. Michaels informed us that they would not be able to host NEMCI in 2009. They have forged a partnership with another college to offer an intensive language program for six weeks in the summer. They no longer will have space available to house our program. Although we are disappointed, we view this as an opportunity for us to make our program even better.

In June the board appointed a search committee of six former NEMCI board members. The search committee spent two months looking throughout New England for possible new sites for the NEMCI

program. The search committee identified three possibilities for our consideration. In October, the NEMCI Board of Directors chose Plymouth State University in Plymouth, New Hampshire as our new home. We are confident that Plymouth State University will satisfy our needs and offer us the opportunity to improve our program in the future.

Over the past two years NEMCI has added classes to the three year Institute program to meet the increased requirements of IIMC. Our Institute program now is 120 hours over three years. Fitting these additional hours into the existing time frame has made for a very demanding schedule. Also, the new Leadership Academy offered this year was 32 hours rather than the usual 24 hours. Again this made for a very tight schedule. We are looking at the possibility of extending the program by one day starting on Saturday rather than Sunday.

The Saturday option, besides easing the schedule, might allow us to incorporate some additional options into our program. Budget constraints have impacted the ability for some towns to afford the cost of a full week program. Also, it is sometimes difficult for clerks to be out of the office for a whole week. We are considering offering a partial week academy program which would allow clerks to attend for two or three days instead of five. A book discussion option, patterned after the IIMC Athenian Leadership Society, is also being discussed as a possibility. That was an idea that came up this year but we did not have the room in our already tight schedule. It is already looking like 2009 will indeed be a very exciting year for the New Municipal Clerks' Institute.

In closing, I want to add that a very special highlight of the 2008 session was a visit by Dyanne Reese. Dyanne attended our graduation ceremony on Thursday night and offered words of encouragement to the graduates and a commitment to the NEMCI program. Dyanne also attended two classes on Friday morning. Her presence meant a great deal to the Board of Directors, the faculty and especially the students. Dyanne is a wonderful ambassador for IIMC.

I have served two years as Curriculum Chair on the Board of Directors. I will be returning as Curriculum Chair again next year. Sandra Harris has been elected as Chairman of the Board of Directors for the 2009 season. We are looking forward to meeting the challenges that lie ahead.

Sincerely,

Leslie G. Cotton, MMC
NEMCI&A Curriculum Chair 2008

Cc: Jennifer Ward
Sandra Harris, NEMCI&A Institute Chair 2009