



New Hampshire Municipal Association



2023 Annual Report

Pictured: Budget & Finance Workshop at the Opera House in Littleton.



Margaret Byrnes,
Executive Director

executive director message

Although we have already launched full speed into 2024, we want to take a moment to reflect on 2023—and another year of working with thousands of local officials across the state to support effective and efficient local government. Our Annual Report is intended to give members a snapshot of what NHMA has been doing to serve the interests of local government over the past year.

NHMA is a staff of nine, serving all 234 cities and towns through legal services, training and education, and advocacy; supporting 50 associate members; and providing association management and legislative tracking services for other organizations of municipal officials. Every year, I am amazed at how our small staff adapts and responds to serve the changing needs and growing challenges affecting local government. 2023, in particular, featured several new initiatives.

Last July, we premiered a beta program: In response to the unprecedented availability of new federal grant programs, NHMA launched the Coaching and Technical Assistance Program (CTAP) to provide technical support to selected municipalities with populations under 10,000 to find and apply for grant opportunities. Thirteen municipal projects were selected, with seven making significant progress towards acquiring funding. NHMA is looking to continue this program in some form in the future.

In October, the board of directors voted to engage in a strategic planning process. Because we are a member funded member founded organization, the newly formed strategic planning committee will be soliciting input and feedback from NHMA members to help us formulate our 2025 – 2028 strategic plan, which will be unveiled at NHMA’s Annual Conference in October, and will set goals and a guiding framework for the association over the next several years.

Then, in December, we launched the new member portal, which allows local officials to more easily update their contact information, change their communications subscriptions, register for workshops, view and pay invoices—and more. If you have not yet visited the portal or created your account, please refer to page 20 for more information.

And since we’re on the topic of annual reports, I would be remiss not to mention that we hosted a webinar with the University of New Hampshire on a very fun, important project: The archiving of [all annual reports](#) for New Hampshire cities and towns. This was a huge undertaking and a critical effort to preserve the history of our municipalities. You can learn about everything from the number of horses, oxen, cows, and “neat stock” the Town of Barrington had in its inventory in 1928 to how many forest fires were rec-ordered in Whitefield in 1944.

NHMA was founded by municipalities for municipalities in 1941. With 100% municipal membership, NHMA is proud to be your source of education, training, legal guidance, advocacy—and all things local government—as you navigate your municipal role as employee, elected or appointed official, or volunteer.



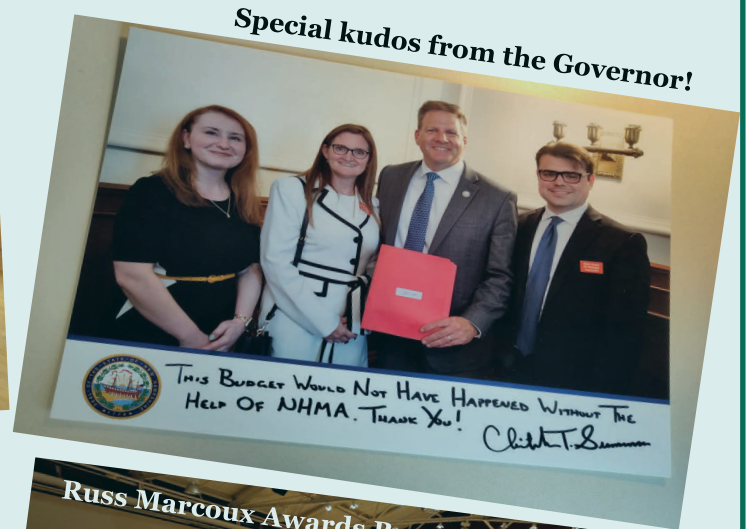
Pictured: Budget & Finance Workshop at The Derryfield in Manchester.



the year in photos



NHMA team in the field



Special kudos from the Governor!



Financial Policies Certificate Series



Russ Marcoux Awards Banquet Dinner



NHMA's Government Affairs Team Speak!



Hampton Fall's Town Administrator Karen Anderson Accepts Russ Marcoux Award



Budget & Finance Workshop in Manchester



Annual Member Business Meeting in Manchester



Workshop at Annual Conference in November



the year in numbers

100%

Representing all **234** cities and towns in NH

50

Associate Members, including 7 counties, 10 regional planning commissions, 6 fire districts, 14 water and sewer districts, 13 village districts

31

Affiliate Groups primarily of municipal officials serving a particular position, such as town and city clerks, assessors or road agents

3,000

Attorneys handled over **3,000** legal inquiries, averaging **12** inquiries per day

Top 5

Top 5 legal inquiries were Right-to-Know Law, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Planning Board, Select Board Authority and Procedures, and Warrant Articles

27

Staff presented to **27** outside agencies, including NH Government Finance Officers Association, NH Clerks and Tax Collectors Association, NH Office of Planning and Development, and five workshops with UNH's T2

9

Staff at NHMA

26/315

Number of **On-Demand** workshops presented to over **315** members

23/540

Staff presented **23** educational programs to over **540** attendees

1225/26

1,225 subscribers to *Legislative Bulletin* received **26** Bulletins and a *Final Bulletin* in 2023

1,050

NewsLink distributed **26** times in 2023 to a base of **1,050** subscribers

6

Association Management Services (AMS) provided

2,150

Classified ads posted on behalf of members

1,660/2,000

Print subscribers to *New Hampshire Town and City*, and over **2,000** digital copies distributed to members

3,000

Nearly 3,000 member views on archived webinars and workshops

400

Legislative team followed nearly 400 bills at the State House

2,555/1,900

34 webinars **2,555** registrants; **1,900** attendees; on variety of topics including e-leadership, tax deeding, treasurer training, charter government, municipal immunities

358/125/100

358 members from **125** cities and towns attended our fall Annual Conference and Exhibition in Manchester. NHMA also received generous support from nearly **100** sponsors and exhibitors



government affairs and legal services



Pictured: NHMA's Government Affairs Counsel, Natch Greyes, with NHMA's Government Finance Advisor, Katherine Heck, on the steps of the state capitol.

The session started out with NHMA following nearly 400 bills and ended with only a handful of committees of conference. Several deeply concerning bills, such as **HB 51**, the anti-lobbying bill, and **HB 647**, the immunity repeal bill, were decisively defeated early on in the session.

This session saw bipartisan support in both chambers on many important bills, as well as a willingness to work with stakeholders to improve legislation.

HB 1 and **HB 2**, the largest bills of the year in both the literal and figurative sense, saw a number of municipal priorities included in its final version. The concurrence of the New Hampshire House with the New Hampshire Senate on the State Budget (**HB 1**) and Trailer Bill (**HB 2**) marked a historic moment at the State House—and an investment in our cities and towns. The bipartisan effort that went into those bills resulted in a number of wins for every-one, including **\$145 million more for municipalities** than in the last biennium's budget.

Please refer to *Final Bulletin* for more details!

Top 5 legal inquiries were Right-to-Know Law, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Planning Board, Select Board Authority and Procedures, and Warrant Articles

NHMA staff includes two attorneys who are available to answer legal inquiries and provide general legal assistance by email and telephone to elected and appointed officials from member municipalities. Our attorneys prepare articles, handbooks, seminars, and other educational resources in addition to answering specific legal questions from our members.

NHMA's Legal Services handled over 3,000 legal inquiries in 2023. This averages out to twelve legal inquiries a day.

Please refer to the Legal Q&A section in this issue which provides a more comprehensive overview of legal services provided in 2023.



Pictured: NHMA's Legal Services Counsel, Stephen Buckley (standing) and Municipal Services Counsel, Jonathan Cowal (seated).



new programs and publications



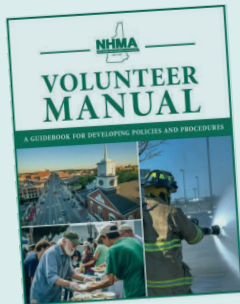
NHMA's Government Finance Advisor, Katherine Heck, leading a discussion with the Financial Policies class in Concord

Financial Policies Certificate Program

52 local school and municipal officials graduated from the inaugural class of a free, eight course certificate program, ***the Financial Policies Certificate program***, designed for officials who wanted to improve the fiscal operations of their city or town.

Coaching and Technical Assistance (CTAP) Program

NHMA partnered with [ADG](#) to pilot a [Coaching and Technical Assistance Program \(CTAP\)](#) providing twelve members with technical assistance to attain funding for local projects. The goal of this pilot project is to help smaller towns successfully access federal, state, and other funding in order to implement impactful projects in their communities.

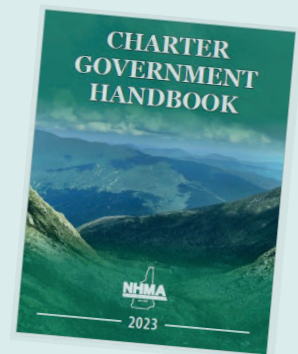


Volunteer Manual

The Volunteer Manual was developed to assist municipalities with recruiting and maintaining the ranks of elected and appointed officials who serve as officials and members of public bodies. It is designed to be used by managers, administrators and governing bodies who are responsible for shepherding those officials who are elected, and appointing residents to sit on municipal boards and commissions.

Charter Government Handbook

The Charter Government Handbook is a brief overview of selected topics important to effective municipal governance and offers an introduction to New Hampshire municipal government.



Municipal Marketplace

With over 50 businesses participating, NHMA created a new [Municipal Marketplace](#) to bring greater member attention to those vendors who provide products and services to New Hampshire's municipal marketplace. Our online marketplace provides a wide range of categorized municipal product and service listings that serve as a quick resource of information for members.



Sustaining Sponsors Program

With tiered options offering increasing visibility and member access, the new Sustaining Sponsors program is a strategic investment for businesses aiming to elevate their profile and contribute to NHMA's mission of serving New Hampshire cities and towns.



finances at a glance



NHMA's most recently completed audited financials are available on the NHMA website.

Thank you to our Sustaining Sponsors!

PREMIER SPONSOR



Providing healthcare coverage to New Hampshire public sector employees, retirees and their families





board of directors and staff

NHMA Staff

Margaret M.L. Byrnes, Executive Director
Stephen C. Buckley, Legal Services Counsel
Natch Greyes, Government Affairs Counsel
Katherine Heck, Government Finance Advisor

Jonathan Cowal, Municipal Services Counsel
Judith Pellowe, Business Administrator
Timothy W. Fortier, Communications Coordinator
Ashley Methot, Event Coordinator
Pam Valley, Administrative Assistant

NHMA Board of Directors

Throughout its rich history, the NHMA has been honored by the outstanding caliber of the municipal officials serving on its Board of Directors. The active participation of these dedicated and experienced municipal officials continues to be an important part of the Association's history. The result has been many years of impressive leadership and innovative programs and services for New Hampshire's cities and towns.

CHAIR: Elizabeth Fox, Asst. City Mgr./HR Director, Keene

VICE CHAIR: Candace Bouchard, Supervisor of Checklist, Concord

SECRETARY: Jeanie Forrester, Select Board Member, Meredith

TREASURER: Cheryl Lindner, Finance Director, Bow

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT: Laura Buono, Town Administrator, Hillsborough

David Caron, Town Administrator, Derry

Shelagh Connelly, Conservation Commission, Holderness

Phillip A. D'Avanza, Planning Board, Goffstown

Joseph R. Devine, Assistant Town Manager, Salem

Stephen Fournier, Town Administrator, Newmarket

Dale Girard, Mayor, Claremont

Joanne Haight, Select Board Chair, Sandwich

Bonnie Ham, Planning Board Member, Woodstock*

Neil Irvine, Town Administrator, Northwood

Holly Larsen, Finance Director, Berlin

Patrick Long, Alderman, Manchester

Conner McIver, Town Administrator, Barrington

Jim Maggiore, Select Board Member, North Hampton

Michael Malaguti, Town Manager, Londonderry*

Jim Michaud, Chief Assessor, Hudson

Judie Milner, City Manager, Franklin

Donna Mombourquette, Select Board Chair, New Boston

Shaun Mulholland, City Manager, Lebanon

Dennis Shanahan, Deputy Mayor, Dover

David Stack, Town Manager, Bow

***Designates new board members elected in November**

The New Hampshire Municipal Association is a nonprofit, non-partisan association working to strengthen New Hampshire cities and towns and their ability to serve the public as a member-funded, member-governed and member-driven association since 1941. We serve as a resource for information, education and legal services. NHMA is a strong, clear voice advocating for New Hampshire municipal interests.