



CONFERENCE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

Issue III 2010



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September 10, 2010**

at the Governor's Residence, Drumthwacket, Princeton

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# President's Message

*By: Mayor Thomas Arnone, NJCM President*

Dear Mayors,

What a difference a year can make! With the change in Administration in Trenton, we are seeing unprecedented activity on a host of issues across the board. We are seeing things like COAH, State Mandates, Caps, Pension Reform, Arbitration and more, all being pushed to action. With this action the normally quiet summers in Trenton has been anything but quiet. The Legislature is holding hearings and committee meetings to work on the "Toolkit" items for Mayors to utilize in our quest to get to a 2.0% Cap. All this activity in our state's capitol has kept the NJCM very busy.

We have jumped right into the mix with the Administration and Legislature on all of the above mentioned issues. Offering testimony, recommendations and expressing our concerns on behalf of our entire membership. Especially in these times of certain change, the NJCM is diligently representing the concerns of Mayors on matters that affect us all. I know we have asked for your input on many of these matters and we will continue to solicit your input and data so we can best press our case on the various proposals being discussed. I highly encourage you to get engaged with your NJCM as we work to shape the direction of things to come. We are all in this together and by working together, we can make a direct difference.

In addition to the Legislative side of our activities, I am honored to announce that the NJCM Annual Fall Mayors' Summit is being held at the Governor's Mansion, Drumthwacket this year, on Friday,

September 10, 2010! Centrally located in Princeton, NJ, with the Governor's approval, we hope you take advantage of the opportunity to see one of our state treasures while networking with Cabinet Officials, State Elected, fellow Mayors and the Governor. This event has been designed for you as Mayor to ask specific questions about your community to our State Leaders. The event will run from 3pm to 8pm and will allow those Mayors that honor or host 9/11 functions to do so without conflicts. It is my hope to see you all there on the 10th!

**Thomas Arnone**, NJCM President is also the Mayor of Neptune City



Our NJCM Office is also hard at work putting together a variety of educational programming for the Fall. This, coupled with the roll out of our NJCM Video Library on our website, will provide the NJCM with the ability to broadcast live web programming and supply you with a growing educational library for you to benefit from. Promotional materials will be sent out in the coming weeks to inform you of all the new happenings within your NJCM.

As a fellow Mayor I know times are difficult. The tough decisions we already have been making will have to continue. I understand as do you the real

shared pain each of our towns and cities is going through. It is why as a member in good standing and President of the NJCM that I ask for your support and continued membership in our Organization! In 1963, several Mayors banded together to team up and address matters of state for the betterment of their communities. Now more than ever before, we need to be a solid, unified voice in Trenton. We can ill afford

to be islands to ourselves for if we do, we risk losing what makes each of our communities the special places that they are. So again, I ask you in closing, to get engaged with us and do your part to help your residents and fellow Mayors in our combined quest for a better New Jersey. 🇺🇸

Sincerely,



Mayor Thomas Arnone  
President - NJCM

# I Saved a Life with TASER.

**He had two hostages,** a large knife, and a very aggressive attitude. I was a responding officer for a report of a domestic disturbance involving a mother and her two sons. En route to the call, I was advised that one of the sons was brandishing a knife and threatening the mother and the other son.

Upon arriving I found all three subjects just behind a locked front door and observed one of the sons holding a large kitchen knife and acting aggressive toward his mother and brother. I had only one chance to disable the suspect before deadly force was used. I broke a small windowpane in the front door and deployed my ADVANCED TASER® M26 ECD. The probes struck the suspect in the leg. Of course this disabled the suspect and he was taken into custody with no resistance.

My point to this story is that the TASER ECD not only saved the life of a disturbed 17-year-old boy, but quite possibly saved the mother and her other son from injury or death. Had I not had a TASER ECD, I more than likely would have been forced to fire my service weapon in order to protect the hostages.

I am a huge proponent of TASER's life saving products and their benefits and would like to thank you for developing newer and more advanced systems. At the time of this incident, we only had three ADVANCED TASER M26 ECDs that were shared by several officers. We have since upgraded to the TASER® X26 ECD and we now have a full deployment for all patrol officers.

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# Energy Efficiency Grants for Local Governments

\$20,000 rebates through the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program provide important funding for reducing operating budgets

By: Lee A. Solomon, President, NJ Board of Public Utilities

Year-after-year, local government officials face the challenge of managing costs and keeping taxes under control for their communities. Over the past ten years, property taxes in New Jersey have increased by 72%, according to the Department of Community Affairs, bringing the combined annual budget for the state's local governments to a total of \$45 billion.

The solutions for slowing the growth of operating expenses are often hard to uncover. We must avoid thinking a "one-size-fits-all" strategy will be effective. However, taking steps to improve the energy efficiency in municipal and county owned buildings can be a great place to start.

Benefitting from lower utility bills associated with energy efficiency measures typically requires a significant investment. First, there must be an analysis of the energy consuming systems in our facilities to determine which alternatives are cost-justified. Secondly, projects recommended by those audits must be implemented.

Governor Christie is committed to providing the tools that local leaders need to manage their finances effectively. At the NJ Board of Public Utilities (NJBPUB), we believe conservation through energy efficiency is one of the most important initiatives in that toolkit.

## \$20,000 Rebates to Supplement Energy Efficiency Projects

Earlier this year, the NJBPUB launched a new energy savings program that provides rebates of up to \$20,000 through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Local governments can use the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) to upgrade lighting systems, heating, cooling and water heating equipment, occupancy sensors, programmable thermostats, and much more.

The NJBPUB is making this program available to municipalities and counties

that did not receive a direct Block Grant from the U.S. Department of Energy. A total of 512 municipalities and counties qualify for the grant, with the complete list available for viewing at the NJ Clean Energy Program website, [NJCleanEnergy.com/eebg](http://NJCleanEnergy.com/eebg). The website also includes links to the grant application and complete documentation about eligible measures and other program details.

## Putting the Grant to Use

There are three possible paths to take advantage of the grant program.

1. Participate in at least one of the following New Jersey Clean Energy Program (NJCEP) initiatives:

**Direct Install**, a turnkey equipment replacement service designed for small to medium sized buildings that covers up to 60% of project costs;

**Lee A. Solomon, Esq.** was named by Governor Christopher J. Christie as President to the Board of Public Utilities (BPU) on February 23, 2010 and serves as a member of the Governor's Cabinet. Prior to his nomination, Lee served as a Judge of the Superior Court of New Jersey, sitting in Camden County; served as the Deputy United States Attorney for the Southern Vicinages of New Jersey and served five years as the Camden County Prosecutor and one year as Acting Prosecutor.

2. Applicants must enroll in an eligible utility energy efficiency incentive program; or

3. Applicants must install building shell measures recommended by a Local Government Energy Audit available from New Jersey's Clean Energy Program (or an equivalent audit conducted within the past year).

## Free Benchmarking Offer

Sometimes, the hardest part is knowing where to start. Many communities look to the Local Government Energy Audit; others need to see a bigger picture before setting their plans in motion. New Jersey's Clean Energy Program now offers free benchmarking services for key sectors, including municipalities. Benchmarking helps to uncover where the largest energy users are at your facilities. This provides



**Pay for Performance**, a whole-building approach for large facilities that provides financial incentives based on actual savings as compared to an Energy Reduction Plan that is customized for your building;

**NJ SmartStart Buildings**, which provides financial incentives for energy efficient heating and cooling equipment, lighting upgrades, and devices that control energy usage (recommended by a Local Government Energy Audit or an equivalent audit conducted within the past year); or

direction as to where the best energy saving opportunities lie.

The benchmarking process compares the energy usage characteristics of a facility to previous years usage by similar buildings; or in some cases, to national data available through the use of EPA modeling. You will receive an analysis of building performance covering electricity use, heating fuel use and costs, all of which are normalized for comparison by square footage and weather. You will also see an assessment of the building's

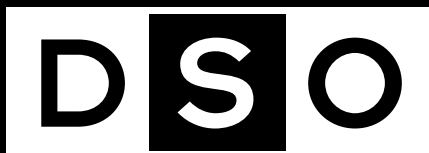
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# Creative Ways to Deal With Local Municipal Budgets

By: Gerry Scharfenberger, Ph.D.

Formulating a municipal budget has become one of the greatest thorns in the collective sides of local government officials. The pressure to keep property taxes low while providing quality services has become nearly impossible. Union contracts, unfunded State and Federal mandates, rising energy costs, tax appeals and falling revenues have all combined to wreak havoc with municipal budgets. Although in most communities the municipal share comprises only a small percentage of the overall property tax bill, taxpayers are loathe to embrace any increase, regardless of proportion. Thus, we are left with the vexing question – how do we provide essential services without raising taxes even as costs continue to rise? The answer may lie not in property taxes, but in cutting fixed costs and uncovering new sources of revenue. In Middletown, we have looked toward energy and recycling as promising sources of revenue and cost cutting.

Energy is one of the most costly items in Middletown's budget. The volatile nature of supplies and the unpredictability of world markets make cost projections speculative at best. As part of the Middletown Green Initiative passed in 2005, we have been experimenting with alternative sources of energy. One program involves the operation of township vehicles with used cooking oil from local restaurants. This oil is strained and mixed with an equal quantity of diesel fuel. The results have been nothing short of spectacular. The annual savings for each front end loader powered by the hybrid fuel comes to about \$5500. The restaurant also derives a savings. Previously, businesses had to pay between \$25 and \$35 per barrel to have the oil removed. Now, it is removed at no cost.

Another area with a tremendous potential for both savings and revenue is solar energy. As part of a township-wide energy audit, at least four municipal buildings have been deemed suitable for solar panels. However, the Middletown Train Station parking lot may be the most lucrative location for solar panels. Our proposal is to construct solar "canopies" atop a substantial portion of the parking lot.

This area accounts for over 50% of the lot, or potentially about five acres of canopy, which could generate a substantial amount of energy. The one drawback at present is a regulation that limits the use of power generated by solar panels to the physical lot where they are erected. This precludes transferring this energy to municipal buildings in other parts of town and even to adjacent properties. Changes to these limitations are now pending and the legislation would allow towns the flexibility to maximize savings or even surpluses without the constraints of lot boundaries.

**Gerry Scharfenberger, Ph.D.** is a Senior Lead Archaeologist with GAI Consultants, Inc. He holds a master's degree from Hunter College and received his doctorate in 2005 from the CUNY Graduate Center. Mayor Scharfenberger has lived in Middletown for more than 15 years and has been serving on the Township Committee since 2005. Mayor Scharfenberger served as Mayor from 2007 through 2008 and as Deputy Mayor in 2006 and 2009.



Solar energy has also been used as a direct source of power for such things as surveillance cameras, traffic signs, electric vehicle rechargers and parking meters. The cost in energy to operate these instruments which function 24 hours a day is zero.

Recycling has also played a major role in Middletown's budget over the past few years. I was shocked to learn that revenues from recycled newspapers fell by \$400,000 in 2009. This may be from the fact that people are reading fewer newspapers, or not recycling as they have in the past, or a combination of both. Regardless, that is a staggering sum to lose in revenue. To try and reverse that trend, Middletown recently passed an ordinance which will allow for the recycling of mixed paper, cardboard and corrugated boxes along with newspapers. We are in the process of creating a program that would be equal parts education and incentive to alert the taxpayers of not only the environmental benefits, but the economic potential as well. If we are successful in enlisting the public in helping us to use recycling as a source of revenue, it would give taxpayers a new way to replace the

funding of essential services with tax dollars to a passive stream of outside revenue.

Another potential source of revenue comes from the seemingly endless supply of brush that the township collects every year. With 23,000 residences and 340 miles of roads, Middletown collects an enormous amount of brush. This brush is brought to the township recycling center where it is processed into wood chips. The wood chips are then distributed free of charge to Middletown residents for

domestic use. Commercial landscapers and non-residents are charged a fee to acquire any surplus material not used by residents. Given the particularly harsh winter and the expanded volume of brush that the township is collecting, it is likely that Middletown will see an increase in revenues from this program.

Until a new funding system is implemented statewide to remove the burden on property taxpayers as the principal underwriters of essential services and education, municipal officials must be ever more creative in finding new sources of revenue and cutting costs. As new technologies become available, areas of the budget that include energy and recycling are fertile ground for savings and/or new revenue streams. In addition, the need to modify existing legislation or introduce new legislation is essential to allow municipalities to fully participate in these cost saving measures. ♡

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# Reductions in Energy Consumption are Important for New Jersey

*By Edward J. Graham, Chairman, President and CEO of South Jersey Gas*

At South Jersey Gas, we stand committed to providing the most environmentally friendly energy supplies and to encourage customers to implement advanced energy efficiency equipment and measures. Not only do these activities help to reduce energy consumption for our customers, they also help to stimulate the economy through the creation of jobs and fall directly in line with New Jersey's Energy Master Plan.

In fact, SJG was one of the first utilities in the country to implement an innovative Conservation Incentive Program (CIP) rate structure. This four year pilot program began in October 2006 and encourages customers to use natural gas more efficiently by educating them about measures they can take to reduce consumption. Since the inception of the CIP program, customers have saved approximately \$166 million.

In July 2009, SJG also received approval from the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities to implement new, energy efficiency program incentives that are resulting in further reduced usage and energy bills and also strengthening local economies by creating green jobs. The initiative involves five incremental programs that will be implemented through 2010, totaling more than \$17 million.

- Program I helps to influence purchases of heating equipment between now and the end of this year. Enhanced rebates of up to \$900 are available for high efficiency heating equipment purchases if customers agree to an in-home energy assessment by a certified auditor. The average customer will save about 151 therms of natural gas per year (or approximately \$200) by upgrading his or her heating equipment. The total annual fuel savings is expected to be 67,950 dekatherms. This program is creating more than 70 direct and indirect green jobs.

- Program II offers customers an attractive financing package to assist in obtaining whole house energy efficiency. With

recommended measures installed from a home energy assessment, SJG, through a lending institution, will offer a financing package of up to \$10,000. With rebates from the NJ Clean Energy Program and SJG, customers who earn less than 400 percent of federal poverty guidelines will only have to pay back 25 percent of the loan over 10 years, interest free. Customers who earn more than 400 percent of federal poverty guidelines may obtain financing and rebates but will have to pay back 50 percent of the loan, interest-free over 10 years. Based on a baseline of 914 therms per home, savings would total a minimum of 7,312 dekatherms annually. This program is creating more than 10 direct and indirect green jobs.

**Edward J. Graham** is Chairman, President and CEO of South Jersey Gas (SJG), the principal subsidiary of energy services holding company South Jersey Industries. SJG provides natural gas utility service to over 343,000 residential, commercial and industrial customers in Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, Salem, and significant portions of Gloucester, Burlington and Camden counties.

- Program III complements New Jersey's Energy Master Plan goals to reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions by lowering dependence on the electric grid system. This initiative provides incentives for large commercial and industrial customers to install a combined heat and power (cogeneration) system or an efficient distributed generation power plant to generate electricity. A rate and contract mechanism will stabilize natural gas prices over a longer period of time to mitigate price volatility. SJG will provide a direct financial incentive to match NJ Clean Energy program incentives. Approximately 50 people will be needed to develop, design, build and operate a CHP plant worthy of a \$1 million incentive.

- Program IV encourages commercial customers to implement the NJ Clean Energy Smart Start Building program

qualified measures or improvements identified by the 2009 NJ Clean Energy Direct Install program. SJG, through a lending institution, will offer commercial customers whose electric demand is not greater than 200 kilowatts per month, zero percent financing for up to \$25,000 to install energy efficient gas reducing technologies, less the NJ Clean Energy rebate received, for a 10-year period. Based on an estimated 300 customers that will participate in this program, the total annual savings will amount to 2,910 dekatherms.

- Program V will help to generate savings for larger commercial and industrial customers such as multifamily housing



complexes, institutions, schools, municipal complexes, medical facilities, etc. This program will provide upfront financing options of up to \$100,000. SJG will also offer a financing package to encourage the installation of a whole building approach to energy efficient technologies. Based on the average savings of 2,522 dekatherms per customer, this program could generate 80,704 dekatherms savings annually.

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For more information, please visit [www.southjerseygas.com](http://www.southjerseygas.com) or call (609) 561-9000.



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# Why Small Towns are Good for the State

By: Mayor Raymond S. Heck C.P.M., Millstone Borough

In the current economic climate, our State Government is continuously challenged to search for better ways to save money. While I applaud the efforts they put forth in creating change, I do get disappointed at times when they point the finger at small municipalities as a source of the problem. I routinely hear the rumbles that "Home Rule" is a dying concept and that, small rural communities, are an inefficient government. This is far from the truth. Of the over 190 small towns in the Garden State, (population under 5,000), the vast majority are both efficient and fiscally responsible. We have been using the theory of "Shared Services" long before it was even fashionable for others to embrace. Small, local governments draw heavy support from their communities whereas the stakeholders truly have a voice and a vote on local issues. Generations of families have remained in these communities, and many more tend to gravitate towards them. Some of these towns have roots that date back to the Colonial times. Small communities tend to have very strong volunteer bases that are willing perform the tasks that, in larger towns, become quite costly. Isn't that what the true genesis of local government was meant to be? Most of the parks and Open Space in small towns are some of the most beautiful in the State. Statistically, our communities have a lower crime rate than that of larger towns. This is due to voluntary neighborhood crime watches.

Most of our staff is part time, which allows the towns not to be obligated to offer health insurance. Much of the staff is "at will" which means we don't have to be bogged down with the terms of Collective Bargaining Agreements. Though New Jersey constantly sees an ever growing tax hike, what many fail to see is that the municipal purpose tax in small communities, (the part that local government has control over), is historically lower than its counterparts.

The real issues that need to be addressed have affected all communi-

**Raymond S. Heck C.P.M.** has been the Mayor of Millstone Borough since 2007. Mayor Heck is a Nationally recognized Training Instructor in Homeland Security and has been actively involved in the Public Safety field for 17 years as both an Educator and Team Leader.

ties, regardless of size. These include areas like; Affordable Housing Regulations, Municipal Budget Acts and Bond Laws, Local Expenditure Laws, and Unfunded Mandates. The problem of wasteful spending is not with the local government itself, but more with the people who are elected to govern these tasks.

In short, larger communities can learn a lot from the small towns. Our



and figures will show that we are far from the problem. Just looking at the disastrous results of the forced consolidation of non operating school districts should prove that merging is not the answer. Instead of pointing the finger at us as part of the problem, maybe they should pull up a chair and ask us, "how we do it so well."

## Lee A. Solomon, Esq. - continued from Page 5

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# Making Sense of Health Care Reform

## A Guide for New Jersey Mayors

By: Erin Lieber, Senior Product Manager, AmeriHealth New Jersey

Health care reform – more formally known as the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act – is among the most scrutinized topics in the country, New Jersey included. Perhaps the only true consensus emerging thus far is that health care reform is, in a word, confusing. This article aims to bring clarity to some of the key, and potentially more confusing, elements of the reform law.

Many specifics about health care reform remain to be defined; further, those definitions can change frequently as the legislation takes shape.

In such an uncertain, shifting environment, it's imperative for New Jersey's municipalities to understand:

- what is already known about health care reform and what remains to be determined;
- where opportunities for choice do – and do not – exist;
- how to get essential information and keep abreast of health care reform's evolution.

### Grandfathering: what it is...and isn't

One area of frequent confusion involves "grandfathering" – generally speaking, whether an employer-sponsored group (for example, a group of municipal employees) may keep the coverage it had when reform went into effect on March 23, 2010, rather than having to more immediately comply with new mandates.

There are two crucial messages here for New Jersey municipalities:

- As a group sponsor, there are certain components of your existing coverage that you may choose to maintain through 2014 but other areas where you must comply with new mandates the next time your group policy is eligible for renewal.
- Just because you have the right to maintain components of your existing

coverage doesn't necessarily mean it's in your best interest to do so.

Following are among the areas where grandfathering does apply – in other words, elements of reform that you may choose to defer until 2014:

- 100 percent coverage of preventive services (such as select immunizations and screenings);
- coverage of in-network emergency services without prior authorization;
- designation of in-network pediatricians as primary care providers (PCPs);
- Elimination of authorization and referral requirements for in-network OB/GYN care.

Erin Lieber is Senior Product Manager for AmeriHealth New Jersey.

- prohibition of lifetime dollar limits and annual lifetime maximums;

- extension of dependent coverage to age 26, regardless of student or marital status;

- compliance with the Department of Health and Human Services' requirement for uniform descriptions of coverage standards so benefits can be more easily and accurately compared.

### "Hot button" issues

Two reform provisions have been subject to particular conjecture and debate, both in New Jersey and nationwide, and merit discussion here:

- dependent coverage to age 26;

- 100 percent coverage of preventive services.

Dependent coverage to age 26 is something that all groups must comply with immediately, regardless of grandfathered status; 100 percent preventive services coverage isn't an absolute requirement until 2014.

### What is "Dependent to 26?"

This provision is especially relevant to families with young adult children. Put simply, reform legislation requires insurance companies to allow dependent children to stay on their parents' insurance policies until age 26 (versus the prior standard of age 19 in New Jersey).

A grandfathered plan may choose not to cover dependents who are eligible for their own employer-based insurance; as of 2014, however, all plans will be required to cover these dependents regardless of other coverage options.

Bear in mind that some of these requirements vary based on fund type (for example, self-funded or fully insured plans).

Just because you *may* maintain your group's current coverage doesn't necessarily mean you should. Among other considerations, your group should evaluate:

- changes you may make to current benefits and still preserve grandfathered status;
- whether any state and federal mandates relative to your current plan jeopardize your grandfathered status;
- the possibility that complying with certain deferrable components of reform immediately will be to your advantage.

Meanwhile, following are areas where grandfathering does not exist and where immediate compliance is mandated:

continued on Page 36

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# Efficiency in a Time of Diminishing Resources

By: Mayor Bernie Platt, Cherry Hill Township

To say that Gov. Chris Christie's prescription for the state's budget woes is a bitter pill to swallow, well – that's a bit of an understatement. A nearly half a billion dollar cut to municipal aid at a time of ailing local revenue sources is more like a punch to the gut. But while it will take some time for to absorb the blow, it is imperative to take the steps needed to regain fiscal health, with or without an effective remedy being dispensed from Trenton.

Cherry Hill Township's budget has already been suffering from a significant and exponentially worsening drop in revenue over the last few years due to the sputtering national economy and the subsequent drought in building fees, among other shortfalls. As such, my administration has had to make a number of tough decisions in order to reduce the cost of municipal operations and our employee headcount.

Here in Town Hall, once active offices, none being the Human Resources Department, have been shuttered for since 2008. In fact, we just weathered a fourth round of painful layoffs, leaving us with the lowest full time employee head count in more than a decade, despite an expansion of constituent services that has occurred over that same time period. In addition, employees are now paying more toward their health care, the administration of the Township's prescription drug plan was moved in house to lower the price, and Township Council members, our Business Administrator and I have all taken salary cuts.

But we have not limited ourselves to a slash and burn all nonessential expenses approach. Our Township has also instituted a number of "green," sustainability minded initiatives, such as undergoing a municipal energy audit to enhance efficiency, reducing fuel and paper usage through targeted goal setting, re-thinking the use of resources – by creating a "No-Mow" program for certain public lands and significantly lowering the cost of solid-waste tipping fees by utilizing RecycleBank to effectively increase residential recycling rates. All widely considered positive measures by residents that are creating both short- and long-term savings in the budget.

Cherry Hill Township has, basically, been on a regimen of sacrifice and

flexibility in order to get through a time of economic turbulence compounded by rapidly diminishing state aid and more aggressive state mandated payments, such as those which must go into the pension system. That said, my administration's priority, despite shrinking to a much leaner size than ever before is to continue offering efficient yet comprehensive constituent services. We in Town Hall are not alone in going through tough fiscal times.

Fortunately, we have a staff willing to go above and beyond for our residents. But, besides helpful employees, technology itself has offered an increasing array of means through which to streamline operations and lower expenses, while enhancing capacity. For instance, in tapping the power of our strong IT infrastructure and funding from several state awarded Public Archives and Records Infrastructure Support (PARIS) grants, we've been able to share document imaging and electronic storage services with the neighboring communities of Merchantville and Gloucester Township, all while generating a new stream of revenue from the PARIS grants that sustains and incentivizes the effort.

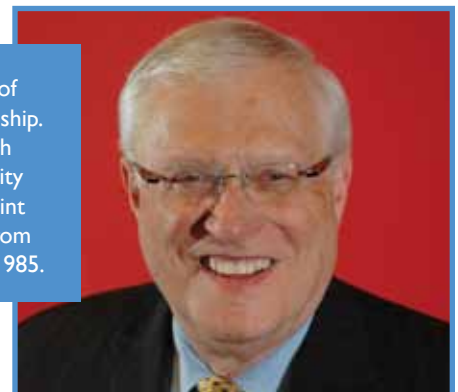
**Mayor Bernie Platt** is in the middle of his second term as leader of Cherry Hill Township. A business owner with strong ties in the Jewish community, he has been active in his municipality for more than 40 years, including a previous stint as Mayor from 1979 to 1980, Deputy Mayor from 1976 to 1979, and Councilman from 1980 to 1985.

anticipate awarding a new five year contract by January.

Also included in the three town bid will be Cherry Hill's local public school and fire districts, which have been another example of the Township's shared services approach to expense reduction and, in the case of the IT Department, revenue generation.

Thus, after successfully sharing IT based document storage services and absorbing schools and the fire department into our previous waste contract, I am confident this cooperative purchasing initiative will prove to be another efficient use of resources, and a blueprint for future service contracts that target universal municipal needs.

Lastly, rethinking our operations through the lenses of austerity and sustainability, the Township has been able to consolidate departments and special offerings that have become expectations in the eyes of our constituents, such as the quarterly Township newsletter and a seasonal com-



Indeed, sharing services between New Jersey's hundreds of pockets of municipalities may be the single most effective way to cut costs while maintaining the quality of life residents have come to expect. To wit, my administration and I recently took our successful collaborative partnerships with Merchantville and Gloucester Township to the next level, teaming with them on a cooperative purchasing agreement for a shared waste-services contract.

Together, we are leveraging the market and expect to, in turn, save money on an essential but expensive service through collectively expanding our buying power. There is great value in tapping the economy of scale for waste collection which represents for each entity one of our largest budget items. Cherry Hill Township is taking the lead on this initiative, and we

munity programs brochure. While they have long been two distinct publications, printed and mailed separately, we made the decision last year to combine them into one magazine, a move that is saving us tens of thousands of dollars annually, and has proved to be a seamless switch as far as public reaction goes.

The cure for municipal fiscal woes that my administration has been implementing may not be a guarantee of an easy rebound from deficit to surplus but harnessing the energy of an organized workforce, sustainability minded resourcefulness, and modern technology does go a long way toward easing the pain. ♡





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# Grant Writing—An Alternative Source of Financial Support

By: Ed Farmer, CEO & President of Millennium Strategies

Whether the economy is strong and healthy or fragile and weak, public scrutiny over government finances is certain to exist. Nowhere is this challenge more prevalent than at the local level, where municipalities must skillfully balance the demand for increased services with frequent cries for less waste and lower taxes. In order for administrations to alleviate the stress this phenomenon places on municipal budgets, it is crucial to understand the emerging role grants can play in supporting community-based projects.

Particularly in the current economic climate, grant funding has surfaced as an alternative source of financial support for local governments. When struggling to maintain the existing range of services while simultaneously aspiring to improve community programming and facilities, grants are quickly becoming one of the most employable tools to fill the voids. Monies received through grant awards have varied applicability and can be used towards both new and existing programs or to reduce the cost burden of already-planned projects. Yet to capitalize on all the benefits grants provide, municipalities must be aggressive in making grants a priority funding source. While it may appear more convenient and transparent to utilize existing public finances, an incredibly diverse range of grant opportunities exist at the state and federal levels of government as well as from private sector sources. Local governments must be proactive in order to take advantage of these numerous opportunities.

Although grant guidelines can range from a quick 15 page to a monumental 300 page document, the devil is in the details. At face value, it is rather easy to believe that all applications require are simple narratives on the specified project. However, the grant process is seldom quick, often frustrating, and demands a significant amount of preparation. Benefactors require loads of data and information that must be obtained with the coordination of multiple departments. Additionally, local governments often lack the internal infrastructure to facilitate the flow of information and communication between departments. There are simply not enough human resources that towns can draw from to be successful in their grant ambitions. This limitation not only blinds municipalities to the immense volume of

grant opportunities available, but also inhibits their chances of acquiring the desired funds.

Knowing how to organize and prioritize grant opportunities is an important consideration towards effectively implementing alternative funding strategies into local budget designs. Although municipal governments may be constrained by available personnel to manage the grant process from start to finish, professional grant writing firms can provide an invaluable and affordable service to towns looking to expand their funding resources. Seasoned grant writers have the experience and know-how to navigate the process in the most efficient manner, including the ability to identify opportunities that match needs, understand eligibility criteria, and clearly communicate designs for the project in a competitive, well-thought out proposal.

The grant professionals that serve on Millennium's staff have years of experience systematically breaking down the process in a continuous cycle that ensures that a municipality's short and long term funding goals receive the constant attention they require to be successful. It is es-

**Ed Farmer** is CEO & President of Millennium Strategies, a professional grant writing firm with expertise in government affairs, state and federal appropriations, and alternative funding methodologies. Millennium Strategies may be reached at 973-226-3329 or on the web at [www.m-strat.com](http://www.m-strat.com).




sential that your grant writer analyzes your objectives and conducts extensive research to match available funding opportunities with projects or program areas that are priorities in your town. It is important to appreciate that there is no one source for grants and a professional writer has the ability to draw on past and current funding sources to help realize your goals. Hiring an external consulting service also guarantees that your grant strategy is managed in the most organized and efficient way possible by implementing a timeline and organizing and preparing the necessary information well ahead of the deadline.

When drafting the project narrative, every word counts. Professional writers pride themselves on knowing what to say, how to say it, and what information

is vital to include for the winning application. In most cases, having a well-thought out project that will welcome lasting benefits to the target population is not enough. The message needs to be clearly communicated in a manner that complements what the reviewers are looking for. Additionally, some grant writing firms are adept at obtaining legislative support for a given project. The extensive network built with a diverse client list opens doors to advocacy opportunities and the ability to navigate the treacherous appropriations process at the state and federal level.

While countless opportunities exist for municipalities to incorporate grant funding into the local budget, the key is to be creative and aggressive with the strategy. Although many grants require matching funds, which may scare away potential applicants, it is often possible to use already scheduled line items in the budget to satisfy cost sharing requirements. When a grant award is used to split the cost of a forthcoming project, the excess funds become

available to support other initiatives. This is just one example of how getting creative with the grant process can help accomplish big things.

Grants are an innovative way to get projects off the ground, but only if towns are willing to make them a priority. Yet, this strategy requires capable personnel with the ability to prepare, organize, and clearly communicate the project in application after application. If skilled grant writers are not available on the municipal staff, seeking professional guidance from an outside consultant is a wise decision on the way to reaping the benefits of more finances, lower taxes, and new quality programs and projects throughout the town. 

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# Change Takes Time

*By: Mayor Vince Mazzeo, City of Northfield*

It's no secret that state government is pushing municipalities towards shared service and consolidation, but through experience we've found that it isn't always an easy process. In 2006 our City Council approved a referendum to authorize the formal exploration of shared service opportunities with the neighboring communities of Linwood and Somers Point. To some, it seemed ridiculous to put this to public vote; after all who wouldn't want their taxes reduced? Others, however, were opposed since sharing services can be perceived as a loss of control. Nonetheless, the question passed, and committees were formed in each of the three participating towns. We started down this path several years ago, engaging in serious discussions well ahead of the state's recommendation. Despite our best efforts and a great many meetings in 2006 and 2007, no real opportunities were realized.

In 2009, a new opportunity arose with the possibility of Northfield and the City of Linwood agreeing to privatize EMS by entering into a shared service, zero-cost agreement with one provider. This was a big change for our town; for decades, the all-volunteer Northfield Rescue Squad had been our EMS provider. In 2008 they had converted to a partially-paid squad and began to bill residents for services; we agreed to pay them \$50,000 under those terms. Although the decision to provide funding did not receive unanimous support from City Council, at the time it seemed like the right decision and we operated under this agreement until 2009, when the service went out for a shared-service bid. This issue divided our town; the Northfield Rescue Squad had been serving our residents for decades. As Mayor, I supported them until the very end, but they were not chosen for the contract and ultimately, dissolved. Shortly after, the City auctioned off our EMS vehicles and equipment; we no longer needed them and it provided much needed revenue for our 2010 budget. Privatization does satisfy the State's goals of consolidating and sharing services, and is another way for a municipality to eliminate

a budget line item. But it involves a lot of hard work, and in our case, a lot of pain.

In the fall of 2009, Northfield and Linwood found another shared service opportunity, and agreed to share municipal court. We now share a court administrator, judge, prosecutor, and public defender, resulting in substantial savings to both communities. This time it was more easily accepted and less emotional; and passed without a lot of fanfare. Under the terms of the agreement, the selection of the judge is at the Mayor's discretion, alternating between the towns. Although the first appointment was mine, my counterpart in Linwood wanted it. When making these decisions, the Mayors need to work together and put the best interests of their communities first. As a result of cooperative effort, Linwood appointed the judge for our first shared service term.

**Vince Mazzeo** is now in his third year as Mayor of the City of Northfield. Prior to becoming Mayor, Mazzeo served 4 years on city council, and in 2006 as President. Mayor Mazzeo is also Vice President of BF Mazzeo Fruit & Produce Inc. a family run business since 1959.



The two shared services agreements that we finalized involved a great deal of perseverance and determination, over the course of two years. In our town, the makeup of Council changes with each election, and each change in government brings different approaches to shared services. So, in the end, it's good that it takes time to accomplish. These decisions would be hard to reverse and they must serve the purpose for which they were created: to continue vital services and create cost savings for the community.

But sharing services wasn't enough, and like many towns, in 2010 Northfield was faced with layoffs, though we did everything we could to avoid it. In this budget year, various labor unions agreed to more than \$350,000 in negotiated concessions. Part of the \$201,000 in concessions from the police department was the layoff

of four school crossing guards. Although the posts manned by the four guards in question had minimal activity, public outcry was immediate. After careful evaluation, I decided to lay off only two.

In the past three years we have reduced staff through attrition and left many positions unfilled, including an administrator, deputy city clerk, captain in the fire department, and one police officer. Our building inspector now works part time, and our public library returned \$55,000 to offset property taxes. But when do cuts erode at service so much that residents suffer? So far, we've been able to maintain, but a poor economy and bad news from Trenton have made it tough for elected officials. Northfield's budget was adopted in May of this year, under the cap, but despite all of the hard work there was still a tax increase.

What's next for our City? Governor Christie and legislators in Trenton are determining the fates of all municipalities with the 2 percent cap. I agree with this approach but the final effect remains unknown. It should aid with collective bargaining, but this may evolve slowly, as towns wait for existing contracts to expire. Will it be enough to sustain smaller towns and keep home rule alive? Some may be forced to consolidate. As all Mayors deal with the new cap laws, we must all realize that this is just the beginning. We will continue to make difficult decisions in order to survive. I am hoping for a brighter 2011; we shall see. 🍀



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# Cost Savings to Local Governments via Telepsychiatry

By: Geoffrey Boyce, Executive Director-Telepsychiatry, CFG Health Systems LLC

As we all understand, our State Administration has placed an emphasis on controlling budgets and cutting costs. While no one likes the prospect of cutting either services or jobs, shared services prevent alternatives that can accomplish the goal of cost savings without compromising anything.

A series of shared service programs now underway in Middlesex, Bergen, and Gloucester Counties are examples of the sort of opportunities that an actually improve services and save costs to municipal and county governments. Under these programs, municipal police departments and county jails have come together under shared service agreements to expedite the admission of individuals into its county jail after being arrested by municipal police.

Previously Police and Sheriff's Officers faced problems when dealing with the mental health needs of arrested individuals. The problem was that a surprising number of arrestees were hoaxing mental illness via threats of suicide in order to delay their admission into jail. By regulation when an individual threatened suicide or homicide, the arresting officers are obligated to transport the arrestee not to the county jail but rather to a hospital's emergency department for a psychiatric evaluation. Once at the ED, multiple officers are forced to guard the individual within the hospital while waiting for both medical and psychiatric clearance. This translated into excessive wait times for officers during which the police departments were forced to pay high overtime rates. Wait times were even longer on evenings and weekends. For small departments, these unnecessary waits translated into considerable expense and a drain on limited resources.

Under the leadership of Middlesex County's President of the Chiefs of Police Association, Ray Hayducka the municipal police departments of Middlesex decided to do something to solve the problem. Middlesex had grown increasingly concerned about the cost of overtime for officers and the excessive wait times that officers often faced when attempting to have a prisoner psychiatrically evaluated. According to Hayducka, his officers typically waited a minimum of eight hours for



an evaluation during a weekday in normal business hours and up to 48 hours on weekend nights.

In addition to the costs, the risks of having a potentially unstable prisoner accompanied by two armed police officers for long periods of time within a public ED were a liability that neither the hospital nor the police department were eager to shoulder.

To address this problem, the municipal police departments of Middlesex, came together to share the cost of having these arrestees evaluated directly at the county correctional facility via telepsychiatry by a licensed correctional psychiatric clinician. The police departments contracted with CFG Health Systems, LLC to conduct the evaluations utilizing videoconferencing equipment already in place at the county jail for its video court system.

**Geoffrey Boyce** is the Executive Director Telepsychiatry for CFG Health Systems, LLC. He has been with CFG Health network since 2008 as a new venture consultant bringing his expertise in the development and growth of businesses within the telepsychiatry service industry.

Now with telepsychiatry, prisoners are evaluated by a trained clinician within minutes of being transported to the county jail so that their mental health can be assessed and appropriately addressed. This centralized evaluation point is available around the clock and completely alleviates the need for police officers to spend long hours unnecessarily supervising prisoners in the ED. This application of telepsychiatry effectively minimizes the potential for prisoners to hoax an illness in order to delay admittance to jail and enables police officers to have a prisoner safely evaluated



in a fraction of the time and at considerable cost savings to the taxpayer.

This telepsychiatry system is innovative not only in the way in which it efficiently addresses a difficult problem but also in the way in which it brings together the municipal police departments to share resources.

Data from Hayducka showed more than \$75,000 in savings to the municipal police departments within the first 5 months of the program.

After the success of the program in Middlesex, decision makers in Bergen County and Gloucester County have worked with CFG Health Systems to develop and implement similar programs.



## Telepsychiatry in Corrections & Law Enforcement

Telepsychiatry is not a new concept within the world of law enforcement and corrections, but a surprising number of experienced administrators and officers are unfamiliar with this technology and the myriad benefits it offers in reducing unnecessary costs and decreasing risk exposure.

continued on Page 36



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# Hardwick Township

By: Mayor Kevin Duffy, Hardwick Township

Hardwick Township is a rural community located in northwest Warren County. The municipality was chartered by royal decree in 1749, and at 37 square miles, is the largest land mass town in the county. In 1997, Hardwick and Pahaquarry, our neighbor to the west, partnered to execute the most recent successful municipal consolidation in New Jersey in the last 50+ years.

Pahaquarry was located within the boundaries of the Tocks Island project and as such, was under Federal jurisdiction. Over time, as the number of Pahaquarry residents decreased to a level too low to sustain a municipal government, an agreement was reached to merge with Hardwick Township. As a result, approximately half of Hardwick is located within the boundaries of the Delaware Water Gap Recreation Area and managed by the National Park Service, with whom we have a strong relationship. And with 65% of the Township in some form of preservation, Hardwick offers an abundance of tourist friendly outdoor recreational activities, such as hiking, canoeing, bird watching, fishing, cross country skiing and cycling.

In the March 2010 edition of NJ Monthly Magazine, Hardwick was identified as the 23rd best place to live in the state and #1 in Warren County. There are 577 single family homes in the Township and approximately 1,800 residents. All of our residents have private wells and septic systems and pay for private trash pick-up. Law enforcement coverage is provided by the State Police. We have two full time employees (DPW) who receive medical benefits and 14 part-time staff, who do not.

As a matter of necessity, the North Warren municipalities have historically partnered with each other to share services for fire, first aid and recreation. We have also teamed to provide shared DPW support and equipment to construct ball fields and parking lots for local schools, and in the process, saved many thousands of dollars in construction costs. The North Warren Mayors (Hope, Knowlton, Frelinghuysen, Blairstown and Liberty) meet periodically to discuss issues of mutual concern and identify additional opportunities for teaming and sharing of ideas and services.

Hardwick is also unique in that we have no commercial ratables. In the face of declining state aid, our primary revenue stream is now more dependent than ever on residential property tax receipts. That being the case, the current one size fits all approach to property tax reform mandated

**Kevin Duffy** is Mayor of Hardwick Township, currently serving his fifth annual term. He has been a member of the Township Committee since 2004. Mayor Duffy was elected to the NJCM Board of Directors in 2009 and is employed by PricewaterhouseCoopers as a Project Manager.

To be clear, this is not an appeal or argument in support of home rule, but a discussion of the potential impact and consequence (intended or not) of this legislation, especially in light of the fact that the state has not provided any tested or proven financial model that demonstrates with certainty, that municipal consolidation is in fact more cost effective, or in the case of municipal government, that bigger is better.

The article entitled "Top Ten Reasons Why Everyone Should Stop Trying to Merge Towns" by Mayors Nancy Malool and Colleen Mahr that appeared a recent publication articulates why sharing of municipal services is greatly preferable to



by the 2% hard cap is of serious concern to Hardwick and other small municipalities, who, out of necessity, have been managing their limited dollars and budgets responsibly and efficiently. Because of that realistic approach to budget management and cost containment, our options for further reducing costs are severely limited, as there is no fat to cut and our budgets already include only "must have" items. The current legislation offers minimum relief to smaller towns, and as constituted, will almost certainly result in a slow but inevitable path to fiscal distress and forced consolidation.

forced consolidation and where communities should continue to focus their efforts to become even more efficient, both operationally and financially. Now that the cap is a reality, those reasons need to be considered and fully vetted by the Legislature as they explore how the cap will be implemented and enforced. The operational model (sharing services and demonstrating fiscal responsibility) that smaller towns have been successfully utilizing for decades is not what is broken in New Jersey. ♪



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# Some History in Westampton

By: Mayor Sidney Camp, Westampton

In an effort too connect with our past, we've decided to do a little digging!

For years many have wondered about the significance of a location in town called Timbuctoo, rumor had it that it was a stop on the under ground railroad. This site also has a Civil War Cemetery located less than 100 feet away where Buffalo soldiers are buried dating back to the 1800's based on the markings of their head stones.

Two years ago the town had the opportunity to meet with Bill Bolger of the National Park Services and Dr. David Orr of Temple University Archeological department. In that discussion we discussed performing a dig there.

Based on a couple of the test digs in 2009 and our month long dig this summer, there's the possibility that this site could be one of the most significant African American sites to be found in New Jersey.

Below I've included brief commentary from Chris Barton the project leader from Temple that managed our month long dig.

*Timbuctoo, in Westampton, Burlington County, was founded in the early 1820's by African Americans freed through the gradual emancipation law of 1804. Timbuctoo became a destination along the Greenwich line of the Underground Railroad. Fugitive slaves utilized the Rancocas Creek as a highway to reach the village and obtain freedom. Timbuctoo at its peak was inhabited by 125 persons including several houses, a school, a church and a cemetery. Today only the gravestones of the cemetery remain above ground yet research continues at Timbuctoo.*

On June 4th thru July 3rd 2010, a team of descended community, volunteers, and archaeologist from Temple University engaged in archaeological investigations at Timbuctoo. Through the utilization of a geophysical survey (paid for by Westampton Twp.) the team was able to pinpoint the location of an underground structure, titled Feature 13.



*During the field season several thousand artifacts were recovered from Feature 13. The time range of the artifacts recovered span from the 1820's into the 1930's. This time range is of particular interest in that it spans from the period of slavery through the era of Jim Crow Laws. In the fall on 2010, the team will begin to analyze the artifacts as they attempt to recreate the past lifeways of the people of Timbuctoo.*

**Sidney Camp** is the Mayor of Westampton

*One of the important aspects of the team's work at Timbuctoo is the incorporation of descended community as well as the public into the archaeological process. Given that historical documentation of Timbuctoo is limited, the team must rely on the oral histories of the public as to gain insight on the past. Through working in concert with the descended community (many of whom still live in the area) the team is not only able to recreate the past for academic endeavors but also see how such histories have tremendous value and meaning for the people in the present.*

The shovels and shifters of the archaeology field team may have been put down for this season but the team will be back out next summer to continue their research. One of the largest problems for such investigations is finances. Given the hardships of the economy, the team



is always looking for financial support. During the Great Depression, under FDR's New Deal, archaeological programs were greatly funded in hopes that through understanding our past we could empower our future. We hope that given the importance of Timbuctoo that grants and monetary contribution will aid us in our attempt to retell such an important part of our states history. 🇺🇸



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# Reversing the Trend of Higher Energy Costs

By: Dr. Edward H. Salmon & Raymond Pasteris

Over the past year, the pursuit of energy savings has become a major focus for municipalities across New Jersey. Between declining revenues, a struggling economy and the cuts in State aid that were solidified in this year's budget, local governments are scrutinizing every aspect of their operations, and monthly utility bills represent a significant challenge. The State Board of Public Utilities, along with its Clean Energy Program, has made a number of helpful tools available to Mayors for the purpose of reducing their energy costs. These include Local Government Energy Audits and Smart Start Guidelines for energy efficient building upgrades, renovations and new construction. Municipalities that have enough roof area and open space can also invest in solar energy installations that power their government buildings with clean, renewable energy at a lower cost.

The problem is that most of these energy saving measures take time, commitment and taxpayer dollars. There is, however, one simple option available to public entities that is completely free, requires no commitment and could potentially save you hundreds of thousands of dollars on your energy bills annually without making a single energy efficient upgrade.

The savings method is known as a "Reverse Energy Auction," and one of the leading companies in New Jersey providing this service is World Energy Solutions, Inc. Under the deregulated energy market in New Jersey, all energy consumers have the option of purchasing their electricity from third party vendors as opposed to the larger wholesale provider. In a reverse auction, these energy suppliers compete to win a customer's business. The process takes place online and begins when your municipality posts a request for energy service bids. The auction is slated for a specific time and usually lasts about an hour, during which four or five energy vendors compete for the lowest bid. The process is called a reverse auction because the winner is the lowest bidder, as opposed to the highest bidder in regular auctions. At the end of the hour, the energy vendor with the lowest bid wins the auction and is

immediately entered into a contract with the customer. However, if the customer, in this case the municipality, is not pleased with the results of the auction, they can walk away without any penalty and continue to be billed by their current provider.

Last year, World Energy and Salmon Ventures helped the Toms River School District secure over \$250,000 in first year savings and budget certainty through a reverse auction held on April 7, 2009. World Energy provided the School District numerous scenarios based on the outcome of the auction, including various term lengths, meter groupings and mixes of

**Dr. Edward H. Salmon** is Chairman of Salmon Ventures, cofounder of the NJ Energy Coalition and former President of the NJ Board of Public Utilities



**Raymond Pasteris** is President of Pasteris Energy, and an Associate of Salmon Ventures with over 30 years of experience in energy engineering, operations and development.

green and traditional energy. Two suppliers were awarded contracts for 24 months.

More recently, World Energy conducted a reverse auction on July 8, 2010 for the Jackson Township Board of Education. The Jackson Township School District consumes 17.6 million kilowatt-hours of electricity annually, which costs the district \$3.2 million a year. The District secured a lower price with the winner of the auction, Direct Energy, at 0.091223 per kilowatt-hour for a two year contract. The annual savings generated by this reduction will be \$388,000 in the first year and a \$776,000 savings over the two years as a whole. This represents a 12.2% cut to the District's electric costs.

areas. Part of the request for service can include a stipulation that a percentage of the purchased power be provided from green energy sources.

Your energy costs are unavoidable and only going up. Instead of treating your monthly electric bill as an inevitable burden, you can turn it into a strategic asset. In addition to realizing significant cost savings, reverse auctions provide a positive public relations opportunity to show your constituents that you and your local government are pursuing identifiable measures that will keep your budget balanced and taxes down. By performing a reverse auction for your municipal operations, you as Mayor can take proactive steps to securing lower electric contracts that fit your needs and your budget.

For more information on World Energy you can visit their website at [www.worldenergy.com](http://www.worldenergy.com).

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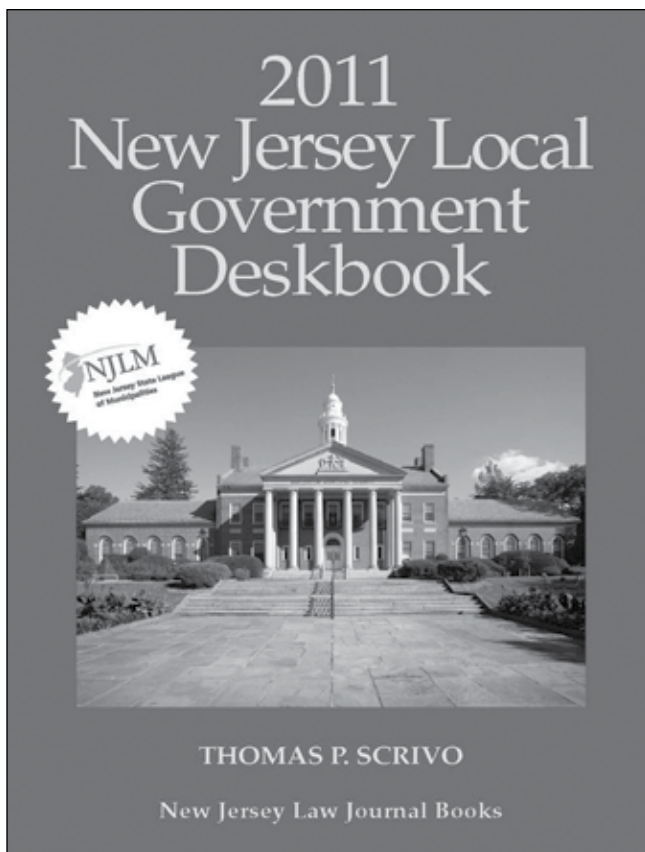
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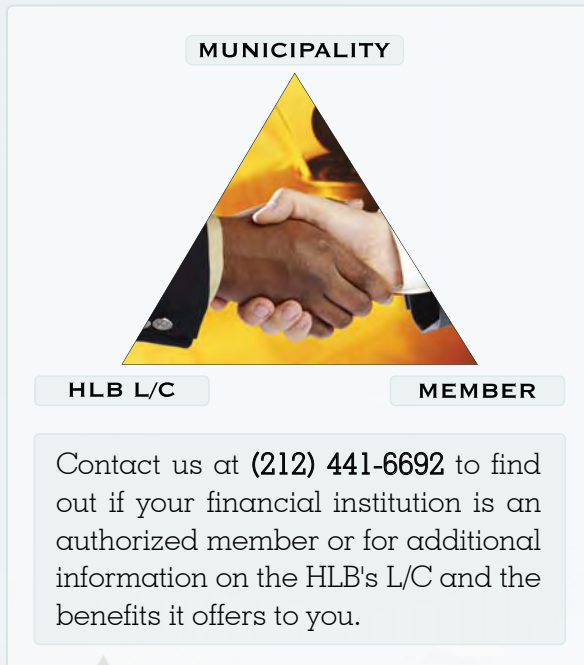
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## Erin Lieber - continued from Page 13

While “Dependent to 26” officially takes effect in September 2010, many carriers, including AmeriHealth New Jersey, chose to meet this new standard earlier, helping many families to prevent coverage gaps for their children who would no longer be eligible under the prior standard.


### What is “100 percent preventive services” coverage?

This provision requires carriers to cover certain preventive services in their entirety. Check with your carrier for specifics as it relates to your group coverage.

Public-sector plans might be tempted to view the newly required 100 percent preventive service coverage as representing nothing more than additional cost, estimated at between 0.5 percent and 1 percent. However, emerging research on preventive care suggests that over time, providing employees with easier access to preventive care may actually reduce costs and increase employee productivity by encouraging a healthier employee population.

### Gaining clarity on reform

Clearly, this article touches only on certain components of reform and doesn’t provide all of the information required to make the wisest choices for your municipality.

Consult with your experts – such as your insurance carrier, general agent, or broker – to get the additional clarification and guidance you need. And do your own research. 

Specific information on grandfathering and changes that may affect your group’s status can be found at:

[http://www.healthreform.gov/newsroom/keeping\\_the\\_health\\_plan\\_you\\_have.html](http://www.healthreform.gov/newsroom/keeping_the_health_plan_you_have.html)

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## Geoffrey Boyce - continued from Page 23

In fact many prisoners may be more intimately familiar with the basic operation of a telepsychiatry system than civilians. The fact is that at its core telepsychiatry is simply live videoconferencing just like the video court systems used throughout the country for initial appearances, arraignments, and pretrial hearings. The idea is the same; the reasons are the same; the technology can be the same; the only real difference is that instead of a judge on the end of the video transmission – telepsychiatry offers a psychiatric clinician to evaluate a prisoner’s mental status remotely through an interactive video evaluation.

The specific result is a high quality evaluation that appropriately assesses the mental health needs of the individual to determine the most appropriate level of care and custody. In the bigger picture, we find an innovative model of municipalities working together to share services and ultimately save tax payer dollars.

### CFG’s Telepsychiatry Background

CFG Health Systems, LLC is a comprehensive, broad based organization dedicated to providing quality medical mental health service. Along with its sister companies Center for Family Guidance, PC and InSight Telepsychiatry Services, CFG now employs over 750 professionals and is one of the few non-hospital healthcare organizations that is structured to employ and supervise both psychologists and psychiatrists. Telepsychiatry Services was formed upon a belief that high-quality and affordable psychiatric healthcare should be available to anyone, anywhere, at any-time, CFG pioneered a service delivery

mechanism for psychiatric evaluations that is changing the way its clients think about behavioral healthcare

Very shortly after its inception, CFG began to address a growing need for healthcare providers to lower costs by approaching the State of New Jersey with the proposal of telepsychiatry as a remedy for a publicly funded behavioral healthcare provider that was struggling to meet the needs of its patients and comply with state regulatory requirements. In 1999, CFG established its first telepsychiatric system with the Psychiatric Emergency Screening Services Center in Southern New Jersey to great success. Building on the success of CFG’s first venture in a rural area of the state, CFG continued to work with other state funded agencies facing similar challenges. CFG now has over nine years of solid experience in utilizing telepsychiatry and sees over 3,200 patients annually within its telepsychiatric systems.

Highlights of CFG’s vanguard success in telepsychiatry within NJ and PA include:

- Being the first to get approval from regulatory bodies to provide telepsychiatry.
- Being the first to work with advocacy groups regarding telepsychiatry.
- Being the first to do telepsychiatry physician training.
- Being the first to do involuntary commitments (302s) via telepsychiatry.


### Screening Center and Hospital Coverage

CFG has successfully employed the use of a telepsychiatric evaluation system to augment its coverage of many screening center and hospitals including the Psychiatric Emergency Screening Center many counties though out NJ.

### CFG’s Correctional Background

CFG has been providing emergent and routine psychiatric services via telepsychiatry in correctional settings for more than seven years.

CFG’s proven systems and methods in telemedicine offer 24/7 psychiatric coverage to institutional customers via tele-video evaluations that ensure high quality and timely care at a fair price. Now performing more than 8,000 telepsychiatric consultations annually via its around the clock network of physicians and Advanced Nurse Practitioners, InSight tailors its services to meet the individual needs of each client. InSight is physician owned and has provided telepsychiatric services to numerous states for more than eleven years from its base in New Jersey.

CFG’s network for emergent care can either supplement or replace in-house psychiatric services for fulltime or after-hours coverage by facilitating appropriate and timely dispositions remotely. For correctional facilities and police departments InSight’s system leads to drastically reduced costs, lower overtime hours, faster prisoner processing, and substantially decreased risks by eliminating costly and dangerous outside transports for psychiatric evaluations. 



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*A Look Back at 2005*





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