

The Collector Treasurer

A publication of the Massachusetts Collectors and Treasurers Association

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Spring 2007

NO. 4

Certified Members May Earn Credit in Two Days at Sea Crest

The agenda for MCTA's 58th Annual Conference on Local Taxation and Finance has been adjusted this year to allow Certified members to achieve their Re-Certification requirements in just two days – Monday and Wednesday or Tuesday and Wednesday.

Responding to concerns of Certified members who are finding it difficult to schedule both themselves and their assistant(s) to be at Amherst at the same time, so that they can be re-certified and their assistants can earn their own Certification, the MCTA Education Committee has scheduled Course #201 for Wednesday morning and has added academic work throughout the Conference more than sufficient for Certified members to earn the required five additional hours of credit.

We hope that this program change will increase the number of Certified members who renew their Certification and that some of the overcrowding of classrooms at UMass will be alleviated. It is a tribute to the eagerness of the MCTA membership to learn and become better professionals that over-crowding at Amherst has become a problem.

Please note that this alternative educational opportunity is only for members who are already Certified and are seeking re-certification. Members and Assistants who are seeking initial Certification are required to attend classes at UMass Amherst, Aug. 14-17.

Check out the Cape Conference invitation letter, program and registration information included in the package with this mailing. And if you did not make your room reservations at the Sea Crest back in January, do it now before the rooms are sold out.

New Collectors and New Treasurers School in Westborough May 23

We have many newcomers entering the profession every year, and we know that the degree of expertise and knowledge demanded of the Treasurer and the Collector is increasing daily. For newcomers especially, New Collectors and New Treasurers School represents the first step in your formal learning as a Collector or Treasurer. You will find this day to be a good orientation for the Association's Annual School at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst in August, and to our educational program that leads to designation as a Certified Municipal Collector or Certified Municipal Treasurer.

All New Collectors, Municipal Treasurers and District Treasurers are urged to attend. Collectors attending will receive Annual School credit for Course No. 160, Duties & Responsibilities of the Collector. Treasurers attending will receive Annual School credit for Course No. 101, Duties & Responsibilities of the Treasurer. Officially appointed assistants are welcome, but clerical staff are not permitted to attend. The Association conducts a separate school program for Staff in September.

A copy of the Program can be accessed at MCTA's web site www.MassCTA.com, with directions to the Forbes Municipal Building in Westborough and a registration form. The registration fee of \$30.00 includes a continental breakfast on arrival, all classroom materials, and lunch.

37th School in Amherst, August 14 - 17, 2007

Please note the dates. New Student Orientation, the School General Assembly and the Annual MCTA Legislative Program will be on Tuesday. Review of New Legislation (Course #201) will be on Wednesday, with the Certified Track on Tuesday and Wednesday. **Examinations will be held on Friday.**

Executive Director Search Commences

MCTA President Ellen McKay has organized the Executive Director Search Committee. From this side of the process, it seems like an impossible task to fill the shoes of our Executive Director, Nils Nordberg. But our objective is that a few years hence we will all be saying "Nils who?." Just kidding, Nils.

Search Committee members are President McKay (Boylston, Shutesbury), 1st VP Nancy Holt (Marshfield), 2nd VP Joanne Savignac (Westborough), David Laplante (Leominster), Education Committee member Don Kaminski (Oxford), and past presidents Joe Collins (Danvers), Jayne Ross (Taunton) and Tony Logalbo (Concord).

The position advertisement appears elsewhere in this newsletter. Copy it. Send it to persons you think might be interested and excellent candidates. It is being advertised and posted in numerous venues by the Committee. The application deadline is May 25th. The Search Committee has set a timetable to conduct interviews and submit its top candidates to the Executive Board by early July. It is our hope that a selection will be made by the Executive Board in time for the choice to be announced at Amherst in August.

The President's Page

By

F. Ellen McKay

Spring has come (or has it?). I am very happy that we didn't get snow on our three meeting dates during what could be considered winter.

It was a pleasure to see so many members at our April meeting at the Basketball Hall of Fame. Thanks to everyone who invited District Treasurers to attend. It was great that several of them took us up on our invitation. We hope they will continue to attend our meetings and participate in our education program.

We welcome all new Collectors and Treasurers to our ranks and look forward to seeing many of you at our annual New Collector and Treasurer Day in Westborough in May.

Now that the snow has melted, we start anticipating our Cape Conference in June. →

**Association Calendar
2007**

- May 23, 2007 New Coll/Treas Day
Forbes Municipal Bld
Westborough
- Jun 10-13, '07 **58th Annual Cape
Cod Conference
Sea Crest Hotel
North Falmouth**
- Aug 14 17, '07 **37th Annual School
University of Mass.
Amherst**
- Sep x & x, '07 Annual Staff School
Location T B D
- Oct 24, 2007 Fall Conference
The Log Cabin
Holyoke
- Dec xx, 2007 Holiday Meeting
Location T B D
- February xx, '08 Winter Meeting
Location T B D
- April xx, 2008 Spring Meeting
Location T B D

Your Education Committee has been very busy planning the agenda for this conference as well as our school at Amherst. We hope that as many of you as possible will attend both of these educational meetings.

Your Legislative Committee, with our Legislative Liaison Steve Roche and the assistance of many of our members, has been hard at work lining up sponsors for our bills and working with their legislators to gain passage. When you receive an e-mail notice from our office to contact your legislators, please do it right away. The more backing we can get for our bills, the better the chance they will be enacted and our professional lives will become that much easier.

As I prepare to retire as your President, I want to thank everyone whose cooperation, participation, and friendship has made this year so special. I urge everyone to become involved in the committees and programs of MCTA. It is a valuable experience to work with the dedicated professionals who make up our membership.

Ellen

**Job Postings on The
Internet at MCTA Website**

As we continue to expand the services available to MCTA members on the MCTA website at www.MassCTA.com, we have added a site for cities, towns and districts to post job openings.

The Collector-Treasurer

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|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
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**POSITION AVAILABLE
Executive Director
Massachusetts Collectors
and Treasurers Assn.**

The Executive Director oversees all aspects of the Association's educational, legislative and professional components.

Qualifications include: bachelor's degree in business management, public administration, marketing or a closely related field and five years' professional and supervisory experience; or any equivalent combination of education and experience. EOE.

For job description, please see our website www.masscta.com.

Resumes should be forwarded to Anthony Logalbo, Search Committee Chairman, Town of Concord, 22 Monument Sq, Concord, MA 01742; e-mail alogalbo@concordnet.org or fax (978) 318-3093 by May 25, 2007.

**Comings - - - - -
And Goings - - - - -**

(This feature in *The Collector-Treasurer* is intended to help our members keep abreast of changes taking place within our professional community. With your help in sending us late-breaking changes by fax or e-mail, we will be able to keep current on the whereabouts of our members and friends.)

Jane Lepardo is the new Treasurer/Collector in the Town of Scituate, replacing Paul Donlan.

Cheryl Kelley is the new Treasurer/Collector in the Town of Norfolk, replacing Jane Lepardo.

James Dunbar is the new Treasurer in the Town of Brookfield, replacing Barbara Mundell.

Jennifer A. Yarid is the new Treasurer/Collector in the Town of North Andover, replacing Linda Casey.

Sally Zettel is the new Treasurer in the Town of Royalston, replacing Brenda Putney.

Angela M. Park is the new Treasurer in the Town of Yarmouth, replacing Wally Lundstrom.

Education Committee Report

By First V-P Nancy Holt

Its springtime and that means its time for renewal of mind and spirit. With that in mind, I would like to remind you of the upcoming educational opportunities offered by the Association as well as review recent meetings. For all those new Treasurers and Collectors, please come to the New Collectors and New Treasurers School on May 23, 2007 in Westborough for an introduction to your new profession. This is a great opportunity to get a broad overview of your responsibilities as well as meet other new and veteran Treasurers and Collectors.

The February 13th meeting in Boxborough provided valuable information about investment policies and changes in veterans' exemptions to those brave souls who risked attendance at a winter meeting.

Unfortunately, those who gambled on a sunny April day for our next meeting in Springfield on April 5th were met with rain, slush and snow. But those hearty souls who attended were met with an excellent panel discussion on understanding municipal financial statements as well as a tour of the Basketball Hall of Fame.

The 58th Annual Conference at Sea Crest from June 10-13th is just a few weeks away. We will again provide an opportunity for Certified Collectors and Treasurers to meet their continuing education requirements, in part or completely, by attending five hours of educational seminars plus the required "Review of New Legislation" (Course #201). The courses have been scheduled in such a manner that the annual requirement can be met by attending either Monday and Wednesday or Tuesday and Wednesday.

Based on the feedback received from the April meeting about Municipal Financial Statements, the Education Committee is splitting the same topic into two courses at Sea Crest on Monday, June 11th. The first course will be instructional in nature and go over the different components and schedules in the financial statements. The second course will be in an open forum format with a brief presentation focusing on understanding the audit process.

Close on the heels of the June conference is the Association's 37th Annual

School at UMass Amherst from August 14-17th. If you are already certified and have met your continuing educational requirements at Sea Crest, consider sending your Assistant to Annual School. Additional information about course schedules for Annual School and about Staff School in September will be forwarded in the coming months.

I look forward to seeing all of you in Falmouth in June.

Nancy

Treasurer/Collector City of Somerville TREASURER/COLLECTOR

The City of Somerville is seeking an experienced professional for the position of Treasurer and Collector. The Treasurer/Collector is an integral part of the City's financial team. Under the direction of the Finance Director, the Treasurer/Collector performs all statutory duties including collection of Real Estate, Personal Property, Motor Vehicle Excise, Water & Sewer and other revenue; tax title and foreclosure activities; acting as custodian of tax title properties; administration of all city funds including short and long term investments; borrowings; cash analysis; employee benefits administration; payroll administration; reconciliation of bank accounts; and reconciliation of cash and receivables. Supervises and manages a staff of ten employees. Applicants should have a background in progressively responsible financial management positions with at least three to five years experience in municipal financial management. Experience as a municipal treasurer or collector as well as certification preferred. Applicants must have a Bachelor's Degree in accounting; business administration; finance; or related field. Successful candidate must have a working knowledge of municipal finance laws, DOR Regulations; and other applicable federal and state laws; supervisory experience; demonstrated knowledge of data processing and applications, excellent verbal, written, and analytical communication skills. Candidate must be bondable. Starting Salary Range: \$60,000-\$80,000. Please submit cover letter, resume, and three references to Richard Tranfaglia, Director of Personnel, City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, Ma. 02143. Open until filled.

City of Worcester Deptmt of Administration and Finance CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

The City of Worcester, the second largest city in Massachusetts with an annual budget of \$500M, is seeking a dynamic professional for the position of Chief Financial Officer. This high profile executive position serves as a member of the City Manager's Executive Cabinet and plays a pivotal role in developing and presenting financial and operational policy. The City requires an experienced leader to be responsible for the financial management and long-range fiscal planning, preparation and administration of an annual operating budget and a five year capital budget. The position directly oversees the City's financial departments which include Budget, Treasurer/Collector, Assessing, Purchasing, Technical Services, and the finances of the Worcester Redevelopment Authority.

Minimum qualifications: BA/BS in Accounting, Finance, Public Administration, or related field; at least five years of related finance experience of which three years have been in a supervisory role preferably in a municipal finance setting, or an equivalent combination of education and experience; Master's Degree preferred; CPA desired. Successful candidate must have extensive administrative and supervisory experience in governmental budget and finance. Equivalent private sector experience in a multifaceted company can be substituted for municipal experience.

Please send resume, letter of intent, references and salary requirements by May 9, 2007 to the Office of Human Resources, Room 109, 455 Main Street, Worcester, MA 01608. An EEO/AA Employer.

Town of Littleton

The Town of Littleton seeks a qualified person to work 15 to 25 hour a week that has municipal payroll experience. The person will report to Ann Essman Assistant Treasurer and the duties will be to assist in the conversion of the current payroll to a new system from Softright and to process a weekly and bi-weekly payrolls and to assist in personnel administration and benefits enrollment. Starting salary range is \$14.50 to \$17.00 an hour. Send resume to essman@littletonma.org or the Ann Essman, Assistant Treasurer, PO Box 1305, Littleton, MA 01460

Legislative Committee Report

By Second V-P Joanne Savignac
MCTA Legislative "Road Show"

Your MCTA Legislative Committee is busy crisscrossing the Commonwealth, bringing the Association's legislative proposals directly to the legislators in their districts.

his direct approach adds a personalized touch to our proposals and allows for straightforward dialogue between MCTA members and those legislators who will be voting (hopefully favorably) on our requests. We all know what a personal property tax is – yes, even you "pure" Treasurers have to admit you know about this tax – but does your legislator? Unless he or she has been involved in municipal government, owned a vacation home within the state, or ran a small business, they probably have no idea what this tax is. Perhaps some of our proposals have failed due to simple lack of understanding.

Recently, meetings were held for central districts at the Leicester Town Hall and for western districts at the West Springfield Town Hall. The meetings were well-attended by MCTA members (we even had a West Springfield assessor in attendance!), legislators, and legislative aides. Both Representative John Binienda and Senator Edward Augustus were at the meeting in Leicester. As you recall, last year they were involved in an effort to amend our proposal regarding notices on real estate tax bills.

When your Legislative Committee visits your area, please consider attending and help explain our concerns. Not all of the proposals may affect you, but your input could go a long way in support for your peers.

Thanks again to Janet Pierce, Treasurer/Collector, Leicester and Kathleen Moore, Treasurer/Collector, West Springfield and their staff for hosting our recent meetings. The next area Legislative Committee meeting will be Friday May 11th in Mattapoisett. If you do not live or work in a Cape or South Coast district but will be traveling to that area for the weekend, do join us!

Joanne

Report From Beacon Hill

By **Steve Roche**, MCTA Legislative Agent

It's been a year of "firsts" on Beacon Hill as we have our first African American Governor – Deval Patrick - and our first female Senate President - Senator Therese Murray.

One of Governor Patrick's most important tasks is to put forth an annual state budget, **House 1**. He released his budget on February 28th along with several initiatives to assist municipalities and taxpayers, including adding 1,000 new municipal police officers and increasing Local Aid by 5.5%.

He also submitted for consideration two substantial legislative packages:

House 3756 – An Act Improving the Fairness of Tax Laws – This bill would provide property relief to an estimated 100,000 citizens by enacting a Homeowner Circuit Breaker. This bill would also close tax loopholes to ensure sufficient revenues to fund state government agencies and programs.

House 3749 – An Act Establishing the Municipal Partnership – This proposal would eliminate utility corporation loopholes for telecommunications companies, allow communities to join the state's Group Insurance Commission for health care for their employees, toughen the standards for public pension systems, allow local meals and hotel taxes as a local option, permit invitations for bids to be posted online, provide more flexibility for municipal borrowing, and create a Director of Municipal Affairs position in his Cabinet.

These proposals have been forwarded to various legislative committees for review and consideration.

The House of Representatives will release its version of the FY2008 state budget on April 11th. Amendments must be filed by April 13th for consideration during the House budget debate that begins the week of April 23rd.

It is unclear what, if any, of the Governor's proposals will be adopted by the House or Senate during their budget deliberations. We expect the Senate budget to be released and debated in late May. →

One issue that we continue to work on is the requirement to post various delinquent matters on real estate tax notices. As you may know, we have been able to secure postponement of the effective date for these requirements several times. However, the requirements are presently set to take effect in Fiscal Year 2008.

One option that we have to soften the impact of this mandate is to seek language in the FY2008 state budget to limit the application of the notice requirements. We almost secured passage of limiting language at the end of the last legislative session with the help of Representative John Binienda and Senator Ed Augustus. Senator Augustus has filed legislation to accomplish this objective this session – see **Senate 1691**.

We are also exploring whether any of the MCTA proposals can be incorporated into the Governor's Municipal Partnership proposal - **House 3749** – since our bills would be compatible. For example, the Governor has proposed to make municipal borrowing easier and we have a bill to authorize borrowing for new purposes – dredging and environmental cleanups (**Senate 1205**).

With a later bill filing deadline this session¹, we are a bit behind in starting legislative committee hearings on the MCTA 2007-2008 package. The Municipalities & Regional Government Committee recently held a public hearing on two MCTA bills – **Senate 1205** (municipal borrowing) and **House 1928** (prudent investor rule).

NOTE: Remember that you can find the MCTA 2007-2008 legislative package and the text to the above-referenced legislation by visiting the MCTA website (MassCTA.com).

***Mailing Address for
MCTA Changed to 510
King Street, Littleton***

After eight years of having to pick up our mail at the Littleton Post Office, the U. S. Postal Service is now delivering to our building.

Our correct mailing address is 510 King St., Littleton, MA 01460.