

NORTHWEST MUNICIPAL CONFERENCE

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www.nwmc-cog.org



*A Regional Association of Illinois
Municipalities and Townships
Representing a Population of Over One Million*

MEMBERS

Antioch
Arlington Heights
Bannockburn
Barrington
Bartlett
Buffalo Grove
Deer Park
Deerfield
Des Plaines
Elk Grove Village
Evanston
Fox Lake
Glencoe
Glenview
Grayslake
Hanover Park
Highland Park
Hoffman Estates
Kenilworth
Lake Bluff
Lake Forest
Lake Zurich
Libertyville
Lincolnshire
Lincolnwood
Morton Grove
Mount Prospect
Niles
Northbrook
Northfield
Northfield Township
Palatine
Park Ridge
Prospect Heights
Rolling Meadows
Schaumburg
Skokie
Streamwood
Vernon Hills
West Dundee
Wheeling
Wilmette
Winnetka

President
Rodney Craig
Hanover Park

Vice-President
Donna Johnson
Libertyville

Secretary
Eric Smith
Buffalo Grove

Treasurer
John Lockerby
Skokie

Executive Director
Mark L. Fowler

NWMC Board

Minutes

Wednesday, April 16, 2025

6:00 p.m.

NWMC Offices and Via Videoconference

I. Call to Order

President Craig called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

President Craig led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Roll Call

Ms. Durso called the roll.

Members Present:

Arlington Heights, Mayor Tom Hayes
Barrington, President Karen Darch
Buffalo Grove, President Eric Smith
Des Plaines, Mayor Andrew Goczkowski, Manager Dorothy Wisniewski
Elk Grove Village, Manager Matt Roan
Hanover Park, Mayor Rodney Craig
Hoffman Estates, Mayor Bill McLeod
Kenilworth, Manager Kathy Thake
Lake Zurich, Manager Ray Keller
Libertyville, Mayor Donna Johnson
Morton Grove, Administrator Chuck Meyer
Mount Prospect, Mayor Paul Hoefert
Niles, Trustee John Jekot
Northbrook, Manager Cara Pavlicek
Northfield, Trustee Matt Galin
Palatine, Manager Reid Ottesen
Prospect Heights, Administrator Joe Wade
Rolling Meadows, Manager Rob Sabo
Schaumburg, Mayor Tom Dailly
Skokie, Manager John Lockerby
Streamwood, Manager Sharon Caddigan
Wheeling, Manager Jon Sfondilis
Wilmette, President Senta Plunkett

Others in Attendance:

Ben Schnelle, Metropolitan Mayors Caucus
Pat Eaves-Heard, Nicor
Mark Fowler, NWMC Executive Director
Larry Bury, NWMC Deputy Director
Eric Czarnota, NWMC Program Associate for Transportation
Ellen Dayan, NWMC Purchasing Director
Marina Durso, NWMC Executive Assistant

IV. Approval of Meeting Minutes – March 12, 2025

Motion to approve the minutes of the March 12 meeting was made by Mayor Johnson. The motion was seconded by Mayor Dailly and unanimously approved.

V. President's Report – Rodney Craig, NWMC President and Mayor, Village of Hanover Park

A. Membership Request – Village of South Barrington

President Craig reported that the Executive Board recommended approval of South Barrington's membership petition.

Motion to approve the recommendation was made by Mayor McLeod. The motion was seconded by Mayor Johnson unanimously approved.

B. FY2025-2026 NWMC Officer Nominations

President Craig reported that the NWMC Nominating Committee met on March 24 and recommended the following individuals to serve as NWMC officers for FY2025-2026:

President:	Donna Johnson Mayor, Village of Libertyville
Vice-President:	Eric Smith President, Village of Buffalo Grove
Secretary:	Paul Hoefert Mayor, Village of Mount Prospect
Treasurer:	Scott Anderson Manager, Village of Barrington

He asked if there were any additional nominations from the floor. There were none and President Craig therefore closed the nominations. He said that, per the NWMC Bylaws, the election of the officers will occur at the May 14 Board meeting.

C. NWMC Annual Gala

President Craig said that Save-the-Date postcards and sponsorship information were sent for the Northwest Municipal Conference Annual Gala, scheduled for Wednesday, June 11, at the Chicago Marriott Northwest in Hoffman Estates. He said the evening will serve to celebrate the NWMC's 67th anniversary and the inauguration of the organization's FY2025-2026 officers. He noted that invitations will be sent on Friday.

D. Newly Elected Officials Workshop

President Craig reported that the NWMC, in collaboration with the DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference and other regional councils of government, will host a workshop for newly elected officials on Saturday, June 14 at 8:00 a.m. at the Hilton Doubletree in Lisle. He expressed support for this collaborative initiative and encouraged members to attend.

Mr. Fowler said that six councils of government were participating and thanked the DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference staff for coordinating the event. He reviewed the draft agenda and said an invitation email with registration link will be sent tomorrow. He encouraged newly elected and current officials to attend.

E. NWMC Spring Surplus Vehicle & Equipment Auction

Ms. Dayan reported that the first live NWMC Surplus Vehicle and Equipment Auction of the year is scheduled for Tuesday, April 22 at America's Auto Auction (AAA) in Crestwood. She thanked Evanston, Flossmoor, Hazel Crest, Lake Bluff, Lincolnshire, Lincolnwood, Oak Lawn, Palatine, Skokie and Thornton for signing up to participate.

VI. Priority Issues

A. Legislative Committee – Eric Smith, President, Village of Buffalo Grove, Co-Chair and Greg Lungmus, President, Village of Northfield, Co-Chair

1. Legislative Update

Mr. Bury reviewed key deadlines for the remainder of session. He reviewed the status of active bills and issues of concern including HB2490 (Firefighter Paid Leave), HB1085 (mandated reimbursement rates for mental health/substance abuse) and HB 2336 (lift assist fees for non-home rule municipalities). He noted that the deadline for consideration of HB2264 (crime free housing) was extended to May 9 in the Senate and said staff would monitor its status.

Mr. Bury said key issues such as pensions, state shared revenues and transit legislation are expected to move closer to the end of session and requested that members be ready to respond very quickly as these issues emerge. President Craig noted that NWMC leadership met with Speaker Welch on March 18 and discussed pensions, the state budget/LGDF and transit legislation. He also discussed the IML mandate/preemption report and encouraged members to review the documents.

2. Pension Fairness for Illinois Communities (PFIC) Coalition Update

Mr. Fowler reported that the Coalition continues to meet biweekly. He said that legislators are receptive to the union's argument that Safe Harbor has to be fixed for all systems. He said that Senator Martwick published an op ed in Crain's Chicago Business calling for changes to all pensions. He said that municipalities will need to work hard to separate police, fire and IMRF from any legislation. He said that no specific bills altering Tier 2 pensions are currently viable as the bills did not meet the required deadlines; however, he noted that there are hundreds of shell bills that can be quickly amended to include pension changes.

He reviewed potential discussion topics identified by the IML CEO Brad Cole that may arise in final proposals or negotiations, including a Safe Harbor fix, cost of living increases, final salary calculations, lowering the retirement age or retirement after thirty years regardless of age. He said that the IML has requested actuarial research to obtain estimated costs for each of the items. He said that the Coalition discussed pension reamortization legislation at length and concerns with efforts to leverage the bill in exchange for enhanced benefits.

Mr. Fowler said the Coalition also discussed how/who would be involved in potential negotiations. He said the Legislative Committee met this morning and recommended identifying negotiating resources and individuals from the Coalition depending on how the issue shapes up and if we are called on to negotiate. He reiterated that members will need to be prepared to act quickly as there is only one month left of session. Mayor Dailly said that the consensus regarding reamortization was to not bring it to the forefront but maintain it as an option depending on how the discussions progress.

Mr. Fowler reported that the NWMC/DMMC has been working with Serafin and Yellow Box to revise and streamline the digital messaging campaign, with a target launch date of April 26. He said Yellow Box has captured accounts on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter/X, Rumble/Truth Social on which to advertise and staff is working to verify the accounts under the Invest in Communities banner. He said the general campaign themes are that municipal public pensions are not the problem, they exceed Safe Harbor and taxpayers will bear the increased costs of any enhancements. He said that the campaign will run thru the end of May and staff will send a solicitation to the region's councils of government to help defray the costs. He also said that a response to Senator Martwick's op ed will be sent to Crain's on behalf of the Coalition.

Mayor Johnson asked for clarification of the legislative committee's recommendation regarding negotiating resources. Mr. Fowler replied that it is envisioned as a team of lobbyists, staff, key member officials and other stakeholders, similar to the team created when Tier 2 was negotiated in 2010. She expressed support for a combination of resources and the importance of needed expertise in any further discussions.

3. NWMC Legislative Positions

Mr. Bury reported that the Executive Board and Legislative Committee recommended approval of the bill positions outlined in the attachment.

Motion to approve the recommendation was made by Mayor Hoefert. The motion was seconded by Mayor McLeod and unanimously approved.

4. Metropolitan Mayors Caucus Legislative Priorities

Mr. Fowler reported that the Executive Board and Legislative Committee recommended approval of the 2025 Metropolitan Mayors Caucus Legislative Priorities.

Motion to approve the recommendation was made by Mayor Hayes. The motion was seconded by Mayor Hoefert and unanimously approved.

B. Finance Committee – John Lockerby, Manager, Village of Skokie, Chair

1. Proposed FY2025-2026 Budget

Mr. Lockerby reported that the Executive Board and Finance Committee recommended approval of the proposed FY2025-2026 NWMC Budget. He said the Conference is in a very strong financial position, with significant reserve levels dedicated to specific purposes including rent payments to Oakton College that begin in October. He said the budget begins a transition process that addresses staffing and operational needs while incorporating the planned use of operating reserves. He noted that the Finance Committee further recommended, as part of the budget, completion of a strategic planning process and consideration of future dues scenarios. Finally, he said that while the budget does not increase dues for the twelfth consecutive year, Finance Committee discussions are ongoing about future dues recommendations.

Motion to approve the recommendation was made by Mayor Hoefert. The motion was seconded by Mayor Johnson and unanimously approved.

2. Budget Reports and Purchase Journals

Mr. Lockerby reported that the Executive Board and Finance Committee recommended approval of the Budget Report and Purchase Journal from February 2025.

Motion to approve the recommendation was made by President Smith. The motion was seconded by Mayor Dailly and unanimously approved.

**C. Transportation Committee – Donna Johnson, Mayor, Village of Libertyville, Co-Chair and Rodney Craig, President, Village of Hanover Park, Co-Chair
Proposed Transit Reform Legislation**

Members discussed the status of legislative discussions to address the transit fiscal cliff and governance issues. President Darch said she believed progress was being made and she and Mr. Bury reported on the April 3 Senate Transportation Committee hearing in Springfield. Members also discussed the April 15 Transforming Transit Summit hosted by the RTA.

VII. Other Business

None reported.

VIII. For the Good of the Order

President Craig thanked Mayor Hayes, President Darch and Trustee Jekot for their service to the Conference as this was their last Board meeting.

IX. Next Meeting

President Craig announced that the next NWMC Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 14, 6:00 p.m. at the NWMC Office and via videoconference.

X. Adjournment

There being no further business, Mayor Hoefert moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mayor Johnson and unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 6:56 p.m.