



Every quarter we feature a photo of one of our member governments.

This quarter: Miami Twp (Montgomery Co)

Highlights of this Issue:

- **Trainings:**
 - Human Resources Luncheon
 - Administrative Professionals Luncheon
 - Elected Officials Training
- **10th CLG Leadership Academy Underway**
- **Innovation in Springboro and Montgomery**
- **Strategic Planning Process Begins**



Regular Features:

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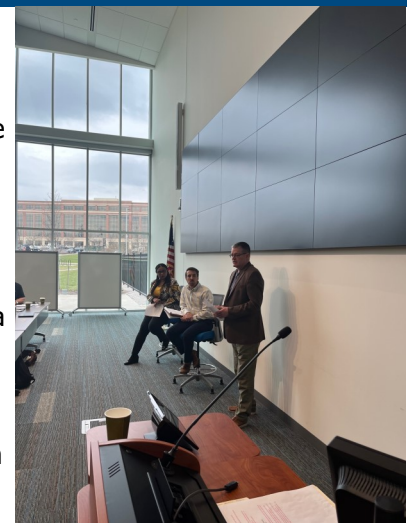
The Center for Local Government Spring 2023 Newsletter

MPA Programs to Assist with Grant Research in Hamilton County

Employees from Hamilton County recently reached out to us to identify methods to help small communities – especially those with limited staff capacity– more effectively obtain and leverage grant funding. We were able to facilitate a new partnership opportunity between Hamilton County, Northern Kentucky University's MPA program, and the University of Cincinnati's MPA program. Under this partnership, governments with limited staff capacity can be paired with MPA students to assist with writing or research for Hamilton County grant programs (e.g. Community Revitalization Grants, etc.).

This partnership was rolled out at our Effective Grant Writing training on March 23rd. In addition to a discussion of MPA program resources available to small governments, a panel discussion took place on grant writing best practices. This panel, which provided practical insights to governments of all sizes, featured Marc Von Allmen, Maria Collins, and Fred Schlimm from Hamilton County. The main takeaways were that an effective grant application will feature a project that is well thought out, a grant application form that is complete, and one where the story of why funding is needed can be demonstrated quantitatively and qualitatively in an efficient way.

In terms of the MPA program partnership, it is anticipated that it will debut during the fall semester. Next step is to finalize a system for parsing out projects to MPA programs. For this first semester, there will be a cap of 4 projects total, in order to ensure that the workload for the MPA students is appropriate. We at the Center look forward to continuing to provide our insights as this partnership comes to fruition.



The best practices panel answers questions



The Center for Local GOVERNMENT

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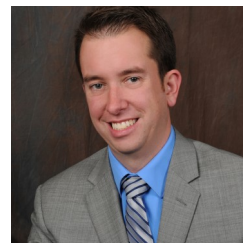
ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATION:

The Center for Local Government (CLG) located in Cincinnati, OHIO is a unique non-profit 501 (c)(3) corporation, created in 1990 as a clearinghouse for inter-governmental collaboration, training and information sharing.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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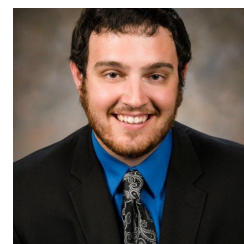
Effective Governance Through Collaboration



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Interesting Fact: Miami Township (Montgomery County) is our 62nd member government

CLG Electricity Consortium Bids 3 Year Contract

The CLG Electricity Consortium is going into its 13th year and 5th contract. This consortium aggregates prices for local government facility and street light accounts. Aggregation leads to a more competitive bid and potential savings for governments. 11 governments participated in the most recent bid, including new participants Blue Ash and Mariemont. The bid was conducted by our broker, AGE Energy. IGS Energy won the supplier bid, with a final contract price of \$0.06245/kWh for 36 months.

Unlike previous bids, this bid came during a time of global high energy prices. This is due to external factors like the war in Ukraine, as well as market factors such as the rise of natural gas as the country's main electricity producer- at the same time that the United States is exporting liquefied natural gas to Europe to make up for the lack of Russian exports. Although the price is higher than the \$0.0416 from our previous contract, a 36 month term provides participating governments with stability and predictability while the energy market remains volatile.

Although this bidding cycle is complete, there are still opportunities for governments to participate. If you are interested, AGE can conduct a bid on your behalf that will expire at the same time as the current consortium contract. Your community would then be able to participate in the full group bid at the expiration of this current contract in 2026. If you want to learn more, contact T.J. White (TWhite@C4LG.org), or Jordan Haarman (jordan.h@agellc.com).





10th Center for Local Government Leadership Academy Underway

The 10th annual CLG Leadership Academy kicked off on March 22nd. This is a six session program where selected leaders from CLG and Miami Valley Risk Management Association (MVRMA) governments cover topics such as "Local Government 101," Finance and Budgeting, Human Resources Management, Effective Communication Styles, Economic Development and Land Use, and leadership sessions from Xavier University. To date, there have been over 170 Leadership Academy graduates from over 40 communities across the region.

This year's class is our largest to date with 30 participants. We were able to expand the roster from our normal 20 due to unprecedented demand:

Emily	Asher	Miami Township (Clermont)	David	Miller	Colerain Township
Jacob	Bennett	Mason	Scott	Molnar	Beavercreek
Tana	Bere	Wyoming	Pete	Montgomery	Tipp City
Melanie	Branditz	Mt. Healthy	Scott	Morgan	Washington Township
Dave	Combs	Trenton	Eric	Pridonoff	Golf Manor
Ron	Freson	Indian Hill	Greg	Radziwon	Springfield Township
Mark	Fyffe	Union Township	Maggie	Rixson	Sharonville
Michael	Gabbard	Norwood	Rob	Runella	Springfield Township
Beth	Gunderson	Sycamore Township	Matthew	Szekeresh	Anderson Township
Dan	Guthrie	Blue Ash	Tim	Wagers	Norwood
Amanda	Hampton	Miami Township (Clermont)	Jason	Webber	Silverton
Sarah	Kirby	Deerfield Township	Devra	Wells	Middletown
Justin	Knight	Miami Township (Montgomery)	Jenna	Whitaker	West Chester Township
Michelle	Layman	Monroe	Christopher	Williams	Lincoln Heights
Thomas	McIntyre	Liberty Township	Elaine	Wittman	Clayton

The first session for this year's Academy was "Local Government 101" taught by Ohio Plan Director Mike Hinnenkamp. We look forward to another successful year of training current and future local government leaders!



2023 Leadership Academy students participate in a group activity during the Local Government 101 class

Interesting Fact: This year's Leadership Academy class will include our 200th graduate.



Spring Human Resources Luncheon Covers FMLA

The Spring CLG HR Luncheon was held in February at Cozy's Café in Liberty Township. The topic of discussion was the Family and Medical Leave Act, presented by Becky Leach of the ODOT Division of Human Resources.

The first part of the day was spent learning about the background and the framework of the law. Attendees were able to learn that the Family and Medical Leave Act enables employees to take up to 480 hours of leave per 12-month period for the purpose of caring for their own medical condition, or that of an immediate family member. Also discussed during the early portion of the morning was a 2013 report from the Department of Labor showing that businesses find it easy to comply with FMLA and that 90% of workers return to their employers after FMLA leave. Wrapping up the background portion of the presentation, we discussed what types of employers FMLA applies to, both employee and employer protections under FMLA, and eligibility requirements for employees.

The latter-half of the morning was spent hearing from our speaker on best-practices and avoiding mistakes when employees go on FMLA. The biggest takeaways from this portion of the morning were to a). Have a good understanding of the nuances of FMLA; b). Keep clear records and ensure clear communication and c). Have FMLA procedures in place for your organization and follow them. It is also important to ensure that everyone in the organization is aware of the availability of FMLA and that yourself and your managers are on the same page with policies and procedures.

The last section of the presentation included a deep-dive into properly processing an FMLA claim to ensure each organization and employee's compliance. Our presenter also shared a resource that can be utilized from the Department of Labor, [which you can find here](#), with a lot of helpful information when dealing with FMLA.

The Center for Local Government would like to thank all of the participants that attended our luncheon, as well as Becky Leach for being with us and providing a great learning session. If you would like a copy of the presentation, please reach out to Cody Smith at CSmith@C4LG.org.

CLG Conducts Elected Officials Training

The CLG Newly Elected Officials training series, comprised of four daily "lunch-and-learn" topics was recently presented via Zoom. To kick off the week's sessions, Mike Hinnenkamp of the Ohio Plan presented on the Ohio Records Retention Act, the Ohio Public Records Act and the Ohio Open Meetings Act. Attendees were able to get a deep-dive into records retention schedules and the importance of putting in place a strong records retention schedule. Mr. Hinnenkamp also covered Executive Sessions.

During our second session, Michelle Greis of Liberty Township gave an overview of local government finance and budgeting, starting with the basics of fund accounting and best-practices. From there attendees learned about various funding sources and revenue streams and the nuances of various types of taxes. Lastly, we learned about various expenditure categories and took away some best-practices on sound financial management.

The penultimate session was by Steve Johns of Hamilton County Planning + Development. He covered the Community Development Block Grant Program and its eligible uses, as well as the requirements for a successful project. He then transitioned into a presentation on the services of Hamilton County + Development, along with project examples and contact information. Lastly, he provided an overview of the planning process, as well as a deep-dive into why planning is important and how to complete and utilize a comprehensive plan.

To conclude the week's sessions, we heard from Village of Cleves Manager Mike Rahall and Village of Silverton Manager Jack Cameron on how to create a successful Council / Manager relationship. Some of the biggest takeaways from this session were the importance of establishing rapport between council members and the manager, as well as both parties understanding the roles that they play in their communities. In addition, there was a discussion on what the expectations should be of council members from the manager's perspective and vice versa. One of the other most important takeaways from this session was the importance of communication in both directions.

We would like to thank all of the attendees and presenters for making this a very successful Newly Elected Officials Training series!



Administrative Professionals Luncheon Covers Health Care

The Spring Administrative Professionals (AP) Luncheon was held on February 21, 2023 at Horan Associates. The presentation, "Healthcare Consumerism—Stretching Your Healthcare Dollars" was presented by Horan Associates Emily Lehn and Alison Ruehlmann. Both Alison and Emily are Benefit Consultants who specialize in providing employee benefit solutions and are part of the team that work with the Center for Local Government Benefit Pool. (CLGBP).



There are many ways that consumers and governments can maximize their healthcare dollars and healthcare benefits including: Utilizing Resources provided by your insurance carrier (i.e. website, mobile applications and Nurseline) Telemedicine, Negotiating Higher cost bills, using free standing facilities vs an Emergency Room, pill splitting, \$4.00 generics & free antibiotics programs and shopping around for the best cost for prescriptions.

The AP Luncheons are held twice a year. These luncheons are open to all CLG, MVRMA, and MVCC members. If you would like to receive email invitations, please send contact information to Lori Stuckey at lstuckey@c4lg.org.

New Faces/New Places

There has been a lot of transition recently with local government in our region. In this edition of New Faces / New Places, we track all of the people in new positions throughout the first quarter of 2023.

First, we would like to introduce our newest member government, **Miami Township (Montgomery County)**. Their Township Administrator is **Chris Snyder**. Please reach out to Mr. Snyder and welcome him. He can be reached at csnyder@miamitownship.com.

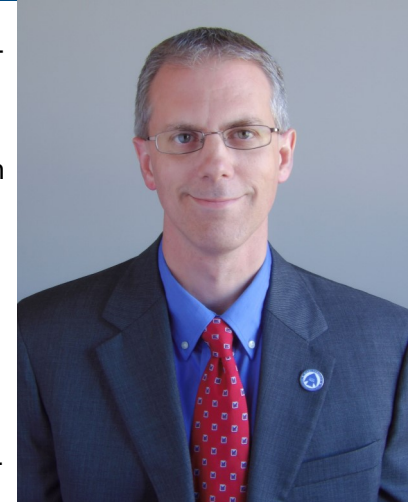
Next, we would like to welcome **Jennifer Ekey** back to the region. She recently took over as the City Administrator in North College Hill. Prior to her time at North College Hill, she was in Dublin. She has also spent time with Clinton County, Harrison and Middletown. Please welcome her back to the region. She can be reached at jekey@northcollegehill.org.

Jesse Lightle is also moving to a new role, taking over as the Township Administrator in Liberty Township. Prior to Liberty Township, she was the Township Administrator of Washington Township (Montgomery County), and has been a long-time CLG member. Please welcome her into her new position at jlightle@liberty-township.com.

With Jesse Lightle leaving Washington Township, **Mike Thonnerieux** has moved into the Administrator role. Prior to his time at Washington Township, he was the Administrative Services Director for Beavercreek. Please reach out and introduce yourself to Mr. Thonnerieux at mike.thonnerieux@washingtontwp.org.

Delhi Township recently hired **Skylor Miller** as their new Township Administrator. Locally, prior to his time in Delhi, he was with Sycamore Township as Assistant Administrator, as well as Fairfield Township in Butler County. Mr. Miller takes over for Jack Cameron, to took the Village Manager position in Silverton in 2022. Please welcome him to his new position at smiller@delhi.oh.us.

If we missed any CAO moving into a new position, please let us know by e-mailing TWhite@C4LG.org.



**Miami Township Administrator
Chris Snyder**



**Washington Township Administrator
Mike Thonnerieux**

Strategic Plan Process Underway

The time has come to begin the next CLG Strategic Planning process. The current strategic plan was put into place in 2017. We would like as much input from our members as we can gather in order to put into place the next Strategic Plan that will guide the Center's direction and initiatives for the next 5 years.

Since the last strategic plan was put into place CLG membership has expanded by 15%. In addition, we have more than doubled the number of Leadership Academy graduates, procured a new full virtual-reality simulator for our Justified Use of Force program, implemented the Traffic Calming Lending bank, bid 3 more contracts for our SWORRE program and much more.

A Customer Satisfaction survey will be sent out to our members soon. This allows us to gather data on the effectiveness of our services and helps us identify how we can improve service delivery, going forward. The results of this survey will directly affect our next strategic plan, so it is imperative that we have responses from as many members as possible.

Once you have received the survey, please ensure to fill it out as quickly and accurately as possible, as the survey will only be open for a short period of time. When we have the survey results in, we will identify trends and opportunities for the Center and draft those into tangible directives that will make up the outline of the next Center for Local Government Strategic Plan.

If you have any questions regarding the strategic planning process or the customer satisfaction survey, please reach out to Cody Smith at Csmith@C4LG.org or in the office at (513) 741-7999. Thank you!

City of Springboro Fiber to Home project receives Global Smart 50 Award

The City of Springboro is a recipient of the Smart 50 Award, honoring the 50 most transformative smart city projects in the world. Each year, Smart 50 Awards - in partnership with Smart Cities Connect and Smart Cities Connect Foundation - recognize global smart cities' projects, honoring the most innovative and influential work. Springboro's Fiber to the Home Plan, which includes joining with six local cities to build a fiber loop, building a 17-mile fiber optic network infrastructure within the City and selling conduits to two private Internet Service Providers, was selected as a top project from submissions across the globe. Awards will be presented in May.



"We are honored to have the Fiber to Home project selected as a Smart 50 Award recipient," says City Manager Chris Pozzuto. "Connectivity for home, schools and businesses is a necessity in today's world. Like most improvements, this project required construction and patience. We appreciate our residents' understanding as the infrastructure continues to be installed. Now our residents and businesses have the opportunity to choose from three internet service providers, at a competitive cost that works for their individual budgets."

The City of Springboro had already determined that offering universal broadband called for open access fiber infrastructure to nearly every major street intersection with an aggregation point in every neighborhood throughout the community, and soon thereafter, initiated the fiber construction project. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic brought stay at home orders and a new focus to the meaning of communication and connectivity. With only one internet service provider for the community, the lack of fiber infrastructure and internet service choices became more apparent to the City. Partnering with Point Broadband and altafiber to expand the availability of broadband service to homes and businesses, this project increases resident choices from one to three. After purchasing conduits from the City, each ISP ran its own fiber optic cables to provide high speed internet to every home and business in the City. In addition, the technology upgrade allows the City to provide better safety, communication and public works services. The project will also soon provide free Wi-Fi to City parks and buildings along with other indoor/outdoor spaces for public use.

Smart Cities Connect covers best practices, outstanding technologies, future trends and global projects. For more information, visit www.smartcitiesconnect.org.



City of Montgomery Focuses on Mental Health

News and social media feeds are full of stress-inducing topics these days. From 2020 through 2023, pandemics, inflation, crime, and international conflicts dominate the headlines. It's easy to see why many people say they feel more anxious than ever before. The heightened sense of anxiety shared by many people spurred City Manager Brian Riblet to create new opportunities in Montgomery to learn about and take better care of our mental health.

"This subject has been weighing on my mind for the past two or three years," said Riblet. "Many people talk about mental health and how they felt more anxious. And it breaks my heart how it is affecting our youth. I had some conversations with Montgomery City Council about it, and they were very supportive."

The City decided to take action. In 2021, funding was requested to be included in the annual City budget to begin the journey. A community survey was conducted in November 2021 in which residents were asked to report their most significant concerns regarding mental health. Residents reported topics such as depression, anxiety, and suicide prevention as their primary concerns.

The City started by utilizing a program called TIER 1 "Start the Conversation," and conducted 4-weeks of voluntary discussions with City staff around mental health. The main goal was that it's o.k. to talk about mental health and emphasize that there is a safe environment at Montgomery to assist if they are having issues. This program was successful, so the City decided to brand its own journey with staff and call it "Continue the Conversation," which includes Lunch-N-Learns with various topics and presenters.

The City also decided to begin hosting community forums and inviting the public to attend. Each forum includes a topic, presentation, and a Q & A segment. Several community meetings have been held.

Community presentations scheduled for 2023 include:

- Mental Health Fair - April 15. More information can be found at <https://www.montgomeryohio.gov/montgomery-to-host-first-mental-health-fair/>
- Anxiety and Depression in Youth - May 11.
- Three Part series on forms of dementia - August 10, 16, 24
- National Speaker Kevin Hines will share his story on October 23. Kevin Hines is a world-renowned mental health activist, award-winning filmmaker, and suicide prevention champion who attempted to take his life by jumping from the Golden Gate Bridge.

The City of Montgomery created an identifiable brand for its Mental Health awareness initiative. A bluebird was selected because it symbolizes hope, love, and renewal in many cultures.

City Administration was chosen to present at the ICMA Annual Conference in Austin, TX, this October on the mental health initiative and its importance to every community, organization, and individual.

As part of Hamilton County's WeThrive initiative, the City made mental health its core focus for that group and is leading the way in the local government arena. The City was awarded a \$3,700 stipend to assist with our efforts.

"As a small local municipality, we're not positioned to administer mental health services, but I believe we can be a facilitator to raise awareness and help connect people to resources," said Riblet. "There is often a stigma around mental health that makes people reluctant to talk about it. Our goal is to break down barriers and make this something easier to talk about so people can get help if they need it."

For more information about the City of Montgomery's mental health outreach, visit the city website, <https://www.montgomeryohio.gov/mental-health/>.





News Bits

Reminder—Membership Dues

Thank you to all Center members who have paid their dues so far in 2023. For any government who has not paid dues yet, a reminder was distributed on Tuesday April 4th. If you need a new invoice, please contact TWhite@C4LG.org. If you're the manager of a member government and you did NOT receive an e-mail on April 4th, you are paid up for 2023.

Membership payments are due by Friday May 5th. Thank you again for your continued participation in the Center for Local Government.

Outreach Visits are starting

As we move into the spring of 2023, we will be reaching out to member governments to schedule annual outreach visits. These are important as they provide us with information that can help us improve and deliver new programs. They also provide a chance for governments to give feedback and request services from the Center.

We hope we can schedule an outreach with your community in 2023. We will be conducting the visits from April through November.

New Membership Directory is out

An updated CLG Membership Directory was recently posted in the member log-in section of the CLG website. Although we conduct an annual request for personnel updates from our members, we also attempt to update the directory in-house as often as possible. Please feel free to download the directory at your convenience. Also please e-mail CSmith@C4LG.org if we missed any updates for your community.

CLG Calendar

Leadership Development- Learn Three Key Areas to Help Work With Others – June 8, 2023, 9:00-10:30 am, presented by Miami Valley Communications Council. [Please click here to register.](#)

Law Enforcement Driver Training Emergency Vehicle Operations - April 25, May 9, or June 1, 2023, presented by MVRMA at Professional Driving Systems (5335 Far Hills Ave, Ste 125, Dayton, Oh 45459) from 8:00 am-4:00 pm. Cost is \$200 for MVRMA, MVCC and CLG members and \$300 for non-members. [Please click here to register.](#)

Hamilton County Shared Services Summit - April 26th, 8:30am-12:30pm, presented by Hamilton County at the Hamilton County Educational Service Center (11083 Hamilton Ave. Cincinnati, OH 45231). [Please click here to register.](#)

The Supervisor Program - May 23 & 24, 2023, 8:00am-4:00 pm, presented by MVCC at MVCC (1195 Alex Bell Road, Centerville, OH 45459). The cost is \$200 for members, \$225 for affiliates, and \$250 for non-members. [Please click here to register.](#)