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On the Cover

Colorful bagpipe bands are a major feature of the Scottish Christmas Walk, held annually in Alexandria. Old Town Alexandria, which includes a number of 18th and 19th century homes, traditionally celebrates Christmas in the style of its Scottish founders. Photograph courtesy of the Virginia State Travel Service.

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Commentary

Room and Meal Taxes: Revenue Alternatives for Local Government

By Steven P. Hornburg

Within the Commonwealth, local governments are increasing their attention to room and meals taxes as potential non-traditional sources of new revenue. The revenue potential of these taxes is suggested by the fact that motels, hotels and restaurants currently account for 5.6 percent of the non-agricultural work force and 12.8 percent of taxable sales in Virginia.

While 22 cities, two towns and five counties currently levy a room and/or meals tax, not all localities possess the authority to impose such taxes. Cities and towns generally can draw upon the "general taxing powers" of their charters in order to levy room and meals taxes. Counties, in contrast, must seek special legislation from the General Assembly in order to use these taxes. Moreover, unlike cities and towns, which are free to establish whatever rates they might choose, counties authorized to levy a room or meals tax have been restricted to a maximum rate set by the state leg-

What happened in the 1982 session of the General Assembly may ultimately lead to general authority for all localities to impose room and meals taxes. House Joint Resolution No. 54, sponsored by Delegate Ralph Axselle, created a joint subcommittee to study local taxation of lodgings and meals. After a public hearing and working session, that subcommittee voted 6-to-5 to recommend to the General Assembly that the authority to tax rooms and meals be extended to all localities, with no ceilings on rates. Although this recommendation has encouraged optimism among proponents of these taxes, the House and Senate Finance committees historically have been unreceptive to the creation of general authority for localities to impose these taxes.

Thus, substantial disagreement exists over the question of allowing all localities to enjoy similar authority in imposing these taxes. Major

proponents of room and meals taxes are obviously the localities that realize revenue from the tax. They argue that this type is a local issue that should be decided at the local level. The existing patchwork of authority granted to levy the taxes is considered inequitable because it treats localities inconsistently. (This problem is especially evident in the differential treatment of cities and counties.) Another argument for the taxes is the need for the revenues to cover the costs to a locality that tourism imposes. Many argue that the taxes are progressive because the ability to dine out or stay in a hotel implies ability to pay the tax. Local residents benefit, it is argued, because "outsiders" pay the tax. Finally, proponents argue that room and meals taxes are good because they are relatively easy to administer. In addition, a low rate does not interfere measurably with business operations.

Principal interest group opposition to room and meals taxes has come from the hotel/motel and restaurant associations. These associations generally argue that even a modest tax puts those businesses in a taxed jurisdiction at a competitive disadvantage with those in a non-taxed locality. Local residents, it is claimed, bear most of the burden of the meals tax. Furthermore, because the meals tax is a flat percentage, it is regressive in that fastfood establishments are taxed as well as elegant restaurants. Opponents also hold that it is unfair to single out a particular industry for taxation, especially when inflation has had an effect on those industries. A final argument is that, although tourism does impose costs on localities, the industry also brings gains in the form of tax revenues and employment to an area.

The current structure of room and meals taxes is a patchwork of varying rates and authority. No statutory ceiling exists for the 18 cities that currently levy the meals tax, with rates varying from a low of 1 percent (Alexandria and Falls Church) to a high of 5 percent (Portsmouth, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach). No towns currently levy a meals tax. Seven counties, however, have special legislation allowing the imposition of a

room tax. To date only five counties have opted to impose the room tax; for four of those counties, the General Assembly has imposed a ceiling of 2 percent, while Arlington's ceiling was set at 5 percent. The 21 cities and two towns that levy a room tax have rates ranging from a low of 1 percent (City of Danville) to a high of 5 percent (City of Portsmouth).

Based on data contained in an initial staff report to the joint subcommittee by John Garka of the Virginia Division of Legislative Services, revenues from room and meals taxes, where levied, represent an average of 2.74 percent of tax revenues accruing to those localities. Reliance seems to be stronger on meals taxes, representing on the average 3.14 percent of tax revenues, versus room taxes which account on the average for less than 1 percent. The approximate revenue that could be realized through either a room or meals tax can be calculated from data in the Virginia Department of Taxation's Taxable Sales, published quarterly with an annual summary. This publication lists taxable sales of restaurants and hotels by locality. Multiplying these figures by whatever tax rate is being considered gives a rough estimate of potential revenues for a jurisdiction considering levying such a tax.

During the time this issue has been under consideration, many proposals have surfaced on how the General Assembly should handle local authority over the imposition of room and meals taxes, ranging from an elimination of taxing authority to full extension of the power to tax with no ceiling. One is to eliminate the two taxes and have the state provide additional revenue sources such as local option income taxes, an additional 1 percent local option sales tax, or an increase of the ceilings on other special taxes now in existence.

While further study is needed concerning the impact of tourism on local governments, two concerns need to be addressed in the upcoming session of the General Assembly. First, the current system of authority for the imposition of these taxes is inconsistent and

(Continued, page 8)

About the Author

Mr. Hornburg is affiliated with the Institute of Government at the University of Virginia.

John H. Foote was appointed the county attorney for Prince William. He had previously been deputy county attorney for five years and also worked for the United States Department of Justice. Foote is a graduate of Louisanna State University and the University of Virginia Law School.

Prince William County Supervisor James J. McCoart resigned in September. He had been a member of the board since 1976. John D. Jenkins was elected to fill the unexpired term of Mr. McCoart. Jenkins is a retired Army Lt. Colonel.

Fairfax City Council appointed Thomas L. Wright as director of real estate assessment. He had been a real estate appraiser for the City of Virginia Beach. He is a graduate of Hawaii Pacific College and is a member of the Virginia Association of Assessing Officers.

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department Chief George H. Alexander will retire effective December 24 after 25 years with Fairfax County. He has been in his present position as chief for nearly 12 years. He began his career in the volunteer service in 1948 and became affiliated with Fairfax County in 1957 as assistant fire marshal.

Fairfax County Supervisor Joseph Alexander was elected chairman of the American Public Transit Association. The association represents the nation's public transit systems. Alexander is director and former chairman of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

During the fall conference of the Virginia League of Social Service Executives, three local government social services directors were honored. Karen Morris of Albemarle County and Jerry Parrish of Newport News were given the Meritorious Service Award from the Virginia Department of Social Services. Emporia-Greensville Director Samuel Bush received the Most Outstanding Award for his contribution to the profession and for his leadership in the Emporia-Greensville office.

VML Staff Promoted

Margaret A. Nichols was appointed VML finance director. She will work more closely with the Virginia Municipal Group Self Insurance Association as well as having budget/investment duties. Joni Terry, administrative secretary, was appointed office coordinator and executive secretary of the Virginia Building Officials Association. The VBOA is an affiliate of the Virginia Municipal League.

Deaths

Carl A. Budwesky, a former Alexandria city manager and city attorney, who was the city's oldest practicing lawyer, died after a long illness. Budwesky, 91, begin practicing law in Alexandria in 1916. He served as city attorney from 1929 to 1938 and as city manager from 1938 to 1947

Clay A. Easterly, who served as Martinsville fire chief for twelve years, died. Easterly, 77, started his fire fighting career in Bristol in 1930 and became Martinsville fire marshal in 1949. In 1955, the city's fire prevention program, which Easterly organized, was judged best in the state for cities of 10,000 to 20,000 population. The city's program also placed twelfth in the nation. He became chief in 1957 and served until 1968. He was a past president of the State Fire Chiefs Association of Virginia.



De Bellis Elected

A. James De Bellis, director of the Department of Economic Development for the City of Virginia Beach, was elected president of the Southern Industrial Development Council during its annual conference last month. He has headed the division since 1970.

The Southern Industrial Development Council is an association of more than 1,500 professional industrial developers, dedicated to the economic advancement of 17 southern states.

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Seaside, California Manages With Less

By Roger L. Kemp

If you are recognized on national television, you've either done something right or something really wrong. So, what's the story behind Seaside, California?

A success story. When the *NBC TODAY SHOW* featured Seaside last December, the city was praised for its efforts to maintain public service in the face of state and federal cuts, not to mention the leftovers of Proposition I3.

A medium size city of 38,000 citizens, Seaside has come to grips with trying to maintain services without requiring more public funds. It is becoming more self reliant—making ends meet without relying on higher levels of government for financial support. The following paragraphs describe several good efforts to maintain, even increase, the existing level of public services in a city with a fairly static tax base. Many of these costsaving techniques illustrate a common sense approach to managing government.

Increased User Fees—Efforts are being made to make more services cost-covering, especially when specific program beneficiaries can be identified. California voters recently mandated, through the Gann Initiative (Proposition 4), that user fees and charges cannot exceed the cost of providing the service. This effort

has helped the city to balance its budget.

"Free Use" Periods—As fees have been increased, free use periods have been provided in some cases for those citizens who cannot afford to pay the added cost. The recent council-approved "Free Swim Day" is one example of this trend. This helps make fee increases more politically acceptable and does not exclude economically disadvantaged citizens from using public services.

Sliding User-Fee Scale—Different categories of fees are charged to various community groups that rent city facilities. Three categories of fees were created, with the costs ranging from free usage to the full charge. Nonprofit groups are not charged at all, while profit groups are assessed the full fee. This has increased usage of city facilities by nonprofit organizations and has made more programs available to the public at no expense to taxpayers.

"Private" Providers of Public Services—Various groups are given free use of city facilities to provide free services to the public. About 50 social and over 40 recreational programs are offered by private groups at little or no cost to the public—everything from bingo games to constituent times for state elected officials. The full-time staff acts as the middleman in making

space arrangements.

Special Employment Fund—The fund was created to hire part-time employees who do not receive regular fringe benefits although the initial purpose was to fill the service vacuum left by the termination of the federally-funded CETA program. The city can hire one-third more people because their pay excludes fringe benefits, which comprises about 30 percent of salaries.

Contract Employees—The city started contracting employees to perform specialized recreational programs. The regular recreation staff are primarily used to direct, coordinate and assist in advertising and implementing the programs. These employees usually re-

ceive a percentage of the revenues collected from their particular program. The remaining revenues go into the city's general fund.

Use of Volunteers—In order to provide a greater level of public service at no expense to the taxpayer, a volunteer program was created. Volunteers are used to perform nonessential and nonprofessional services. All are thoroughly screened through an application process prior to being placed and their skills are matched to available jobs.

College Internship Program—This program was created with a local two-year college. Students do not receive any pay but they receive academic credit and valuable work experience. Interns work various hours in different departments during the semester depending upon the academic credit they desire. The result has been expanded services at no cost to the taxpayers.

Decreasing Workforce—Seaside has adopted a policy of balancing its budget through employee attrition and by limiting the number of new positions. Two top management positions were recently eliminated at an annual savings of nearly \$100,000. A new telephone system eliminated the need for a full-time switchboard operator. New employees are hired at the entry level salary range. If at all possible, part-time employees are hired under the city's Special Employment Fund to perform services.

Civilian Police Positions—Police officers are relatively high paid when compared to "rank-and-file" public employees. Because functions can be more economically performed by civilians, animal control and traffic enforcement are now performed by civilian personnel. This has had a pay-off—the officers have been relieved of these routine tasks so more of their time is spent on the street fighting crime, and the routine tasks are now performed more efficiently.

Community Information Center—Many programs are available to young persons and senior citizens free of charge, but many people are unaware of them. This information was also fragmented because of the many private and public agencies involved. Seaside created a comprehensive listing of these services and made this information available to the public. This list has also been published in local newspapers free of charge as a community service.

Cost of New Services—Elected officials should know the costs of their decisions. All items appearing on the city council agenda now have a cost factor indicated so they know the cost prior to making a decision. This information is also made available to the public.

Energy Conservation Program—An all out effort is being made to reduce the city's energy costs. Free energy audits have been provided by a local utility company. Solar panel units are being installed at City Hall. The city's indoor swimming pool will soon be retrofitted with solar energy saving devices. Immediate savings are not realized because of the cost of installation, but long-term savings are projected through lower utility usage even though utility rates will be increasing.

Reuse of Existing Facilities—The city, rather than spend its limited funds on new construction, has reused existing facilities. For example, a vacant house is now a city attorney's office and an old fire station has been transformed into a municipal corporation yard. In both cases, only limited funds were spent to renovate the old structures to accommodate the new users, re-

About The Author

Dr. Kemp is the city manager of Seaside, California. He is the author of *Coping With Proposition 13* and a contributing author of *Managing With Less*.

sulting in considerable savings to the taxpayers.

Neighborhood Improvement Program—Council established the goal of cleaning up both public and private properties to enhance the image of the city. Under a new ordinance, city work crews can clean up privately owned vacant lots and bill the property owner for the work performed. Owners, if they so desire, may do the work themselves to avoid paying the city. This program has beautified the city at no expense to the taxpayers.

Deferred Capital Improvements—The city recently developed a multi-year capital improvement plan to determine what projects should be constructed assuming adequate funds were available. It is a sound management practice to know what you need even if you can't afford it. City staff has undertaken some projects because federal funds are no longer available for this purpose. In some cases, projects have been completed more economically by city work crews.

Revenues from Excess City Lands—At the direction of the council, staff prepared an inventory of all cityowned land. An assessment is being made on which parcels of land are not needed for city use. Those parcels not needed will be declared excess and either sold or leased through the competitive bidding process. The goal of this program is to rid the city of surplus property and, at the same time, help the city's financial posture.

Local Economic Development—The city is marketing several properties for commercial development to bring in additional sales and room tax revenues. Several incentives are available to attract development of these properties. The council will maintain control over the timing and type of development, as well as safeguard against any speculation. The goal of this effort is to concentrate more on self-reliance to improve the city's fairly static tax base.

Most local governments provide an entire range of services to their citizens and the public not only expects, but demands, that they be provided. As the fiscal times become tighter, the line between "hard services"



Using volunteers in recreation programs has freed up professionals to do other, necessary tasks. Volunteers in Seaside are carefully screened and their skills are matched to available jobs.

and "soft services" will become blurred. All services are "hard services" if they cannot be reduced because of political opposition among an elected official's constituents.

The "bottom-line" is that government will not be growing in the future as it has in the past. The use of creative management techniques, such as those described above, is essential in times of scarce resources. As the future unfolds, other creative management practices will undoubtedly be developed as government officials cope to maintain services to the public in an era of limited financial resources.

The Wallerstein Scholarship

The Wallerstein Scholarship was established by a gift from Ruth C. and Morton L. Wallerstein to the University of Virginia to foster interest and research in Virginia municipal government.

The scholarship is administered by the Virginia Municipal League and the Institute of Government, University of Virginia.

ELIGIBILITY: An Applicant must be:

1. An employee or official of a Virginia municipality who would like to spend a year at the University of Virginia engaged in research and study with the Institute of Government; or

2. A person, preferably an employee or official of a Virginia municipality, seeking to undertake graduate work at the University of Virginia in a field related to municipal government. It is hoped, but not required, that the recipient intends to enter or re-enter Virginia municipal government service upon completion of the graduate work.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

While an applicant must show promise of benefiting substantially from a year at the University and a degree applicant must meet admission standards, the selection committee will place heavy emphasis upon the individual's potential for public service in Virginia.

DURATION OF THE AWARD:

The award is made for a twelvemonth period, beginning, at the recipient's wishes, between June 1, 1983, and September 1, 1983, and may continue for a second year dependent upon the recipient's need and his or her first year record.

AMOUNT OF THE AWARD: The amount is \$5,000.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE:

Applicants for the scholarship may obtain the necessary forms by

writing to the Institute. Applicants seeking a graduate degree must fulfill all the requirements for admission to the graduate school of the University. Inquiries regarding graduate school requirements should be addressed to the Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, 438 Cabell Hall, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, 22903.

DATES FOR SELECTION:

Applications must be submitted no later than February 1, 1983. An applicant may be invited to attend a personal interview held either at the Institute or at the Virginia Municipal League offices in Richmond. The recipient will be notified no later than April 15, 1983.

For further information, please write to Dr. Timothy G. O'Rourke, Institute of Government, University of Virginia, 207 Minor Hall, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903.

deas

Employee Training

Members of the Frank E. Mann Municipal Educational Foundation Charitable Trust Committee agreed to contribute \$8,186 toward the training needs of the City of Alexandria employees. In 1968 then Mayor Frank E. Mann contributed his mayor's salary to establish this trust to educate municipal employees.

City Manager Douglas Harman proposed the expenditure to train employees how to use a new performance evaluation system and to purchase a transparency maker for training slides. Both of these proposals will bring educational benefits to every city employee.

Service Takes Care of Cash

For a five year period from 1976 to 1981, the City of Hartford, Connecticut offered its elderly and economically disadvantaged residents an option in the payment of their real estate and motor vehicle property taxes. Persons meeting certain economic eligibility requirements could elect to enter into a personal service contract to volunteer their services to the city, with the proceeds of the contract being credited against property taxes owed to the city. About 584 residents applied for the program and of these, 199 executed personal service contracts totaling a value of approximately \$165,000. It was reported to be successful by both the taxpayers/participants and city officials.

Utility Planning Helps Customers

The Public Power Weekly, the newsletter of the American Public Power Association in Washington, D.C., reported that a line crew foreman conceived the idea of tagging power poles and meters which serve customers who need first priority attention during outages. Richard Westner of the Santa Fe Coopers Myrtle Beach district proposed to label poles and meters "life line" in red ink so that the label will signal electric crews that a customer depends on an electrically operated piece of medical equipment.

Previously crew members working to restore power in a particular area had to contact the distribution substation manager by radio giving a location, number of customers affected and approximately how long the work would take. Then the substation operator would take a list of customers known to have life support systems in that area and report back to the crew.

"This was fine as long as the operator notified the crew before the work was started, but that was not always the case," Westner said.

In addition to tagging poles and meters, a list of persons on life support sytems would be distributed to each line crew and service representative

Rezoning Notices

The City of La Follette, Tennessee (pop. 8,301) has adopted a unique system of delivering written notices of all proposed rezonings to property owners and tenants within 200 feet of the property being considered for rezoning. La Follette Fire Department personnel are hand delivering the notices and, if necessary, briefly answering questions about the rezoning. Citizens have reacted favorably because they feel the local government is doing more than just publishing required notices in the newspaper. To date, two key "spot rezoning" measures considered harmful to the continuity of residential areas have been turned down, primarily because of citizen input. For more information, contact John White, City Administrator, 205 South Tennessee Avenue, La Follette, Tennessee, 37766, 615/562-4961. (ICMA Newsletter)

Environmental Planning Service for Richmond

Richmond hopes it will be able to analyze quickly and efficiently the environmental impact and associated costs of proposed industrial and residential development, after it initiates an environmental advisory planning service made possible by the Virginia Environmental Endowment. The organization awarded a \$30,000 grant to the city to initiate the service. The University of Virginia Systems Engineering Depart-

ment will also participate in the study.

The computerized service will have the capability of simulating the relationships between natural and urban environments and testing alternatives to provide a better understanding of the potential environmental opportunities and problems posed by development.

The primary advantage of the service is to allow consideration of environmental impacts and issues as part of the city's overall planning and decisionmaking process to a degree not possible today.

Directing the project are Charles T. Peters, Director of the City Department of Planning and Community Development and Dr. Andrew P. Sage, Chairman of the University of Virginia Systems Engineering Department. The university will assist Richmond by providing the conceptual design and development of the computer system. Contact Gerald McCarthy, (804) 644-5000 or Charles T. Peters (804) 780-4346 for further information.

(Commentary, from page 4)

should be redesigned so that all localities are treated equitably. Second, and more important, local governments are in need of alternative revenue sources both to lessen dependence on the property tax and to deal with inflation and massive revenue cutbacks. (Local revenue sources, along with state mandates and state/local responsibilities, are the subject of a study, authorized by HJR 105, currently being conducted by the Virginia Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission.) One outcome that would satisfy the need for consistency and additional revenue sources would be the extension for localities to have the authority to impose the room and meals taxes, with no ceiling on rates.

VIRGINIA TOWN AND CITY

Local Officials Must Disclose Holdings In December, January

Each December, specified local officials representing localities over 3,500 persons shall disclose all their real estate interests or holdings in the locality which they serve (and their holdings in any firm whose primary purpose is to own or develop real estate and which has real estate interests in such locality). The disclosure shall be filed with their circuit court on forms provided by the Secretary of the Commonwealth. The Conflicts Act requires filing by "members of boards of supervisors, city and town councils, planning commissions, boards of zoning appeal, and real estate assessors, county managers or executives and city or town managers and their immediate families (or spouse or any other relative who resides in the same household)." Chapter 22, Title 2.1, Section 353.1, Code of Vir-

Each January, any officer or employee of a local government who has a material financial interest "which he believes or has reason to believe may be substantially af-

fected by actions of the governmental or advisory agency of which he is an officer or employee" shall make written disclosure of the existence of such interest to his or her agency and to the Commonwealth's Attorney. Individual members of an advisory agency will be exempt from filing if (1) the advisory agency has not been specifically provided for by state law and (2) the agency creating the advisory agency files with the Commonwealth's Attorney a statement that the members of the advisory agency may have material financial interests which may be substantially affected by actions of their agency. Chapter 22, Title 2.1 Section 353 and 353.01. Code of Vir-

REMINDER: In addition to these two annual filings, local government officials have substantial disclosure requirements under the Conflicts Act at any time during the year when they discover they will be involved in a conflict of interests situation.

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Localities Use Quality Circles

By James L. Mercer and Robert J. O'Neill

After being created by the private sector, many municipalities have used the concept of the quality circle to improve productivity. Although only a handful of Virginia localities have put the procedure in practice, there's no reason why more localities could not use them.

A quality circle is a group of workers talking among themselves in a relaxed environment about concepts for improving the quality and/or productivity in a work environment. The discussion may evolve around management approaches or problem solving techniques.

A typical quality circle consists of a small group of volunteers, usually about seven persons, who perform similar work such as in an accounting office or maintenance shop. Quality circles should meet regularly and on local government time. The circle leader may be the group's normal work leader, such as a foreman or supervisor, or circle members may select their own leader from among their group.

Dallas Takes Action

As cited in his 1981-82 management plan, Dallas, Texas City Manager Charles S. Anderson wanted to provide efficient, quality service at a low cost and also, utilize the creativity and resourcefulness of his employees. By incorporating the quality circle program, Dallas has improved productivity.

Currently, departments which are using the process are the convention center, data services, equipment services, housing and urban rehabilitation, management services, parks and recreation, police and water. The teams in Dallas meet about once a week for about an hour. With one exception, the circles meet during regular working hours but for the exception, the participants receive one hour of overtime pay.

Quality circles provide communication from the people who have actually performed the job to the management of the city. The employees have the opportunity to describe those obstacles that prevent



"If management doesn't take productivity seriously, there is no reason to expect labor, government, or anyone else to. I think nothing less than a revolution in your attitude is needed. You have to make a commitment to improve your productivity."

Dr. Carl W. Noller, Director of the Productivity Center of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce

them from performing their jobs. Those problems are analyzed and employees make recommendations to management about the best way to solve them. If management approves, the employees do the actual implementation and monitoring of their proposed solutions.

Some of the problems that have been identified and solved by using quality circle teams in Dallas in-

clude the following:

- —The Department of Housing and Urban Rehabilitation tackled the procedural problem of rewriting notices of violation for each individual unit in an apartment complex. The quality circle team recommended that a cover letter be developed that eliminates the rewriting of the notices.
- —The Convention Center was consistently misplacing or losing supplies. When supplies such as mops, brooms and dustpans were issued from the

storerooms to contract laborers, no procedure to keep track of these items existed. The team developed a checkout and followup procedure for these supplies and to date, the system has worked flawlessly.

-The police officers at the Southwest Patrol in Dallas realized that they were not familiar with another officer's beat when they were responsible and did not know who the at-large criminals were, or where key buildings and alarm systems were located. To aid the officers, the Southwest Patrol, through the use of a quality circle, developed a comprehensive crime and information booklet which is used to identify the criminals on a particular beat and to describe the buildings, alarms and hot spots. The officers see this as a tremendous aid in preventing crime and apprehending criminals.

The Ramsey County, Minnesota Community Human Services Department began a pilot program of five quality circles.

The quality circles are operating in three different divisions within the department and involve various classifications of personnel. Three of the circles are located in the income maintenance division: two are in the AFDC case management section and one is in the medical assistance in-take section. The people participating are classified as financial workers and clerk typists.

One circle is located in the child protection section of the social services division and another comprises secretaries of the mental health clinic. There are about 45 people participating in the quality circles with the size of the circles ranging from five to 11 members. With the exception of the mental health clinic quality circle, members are from various work units within the same section.

After six months of operation, all the quality circles have either completed one or two projects, or are at the proposal presentation phase of their first project. All project proposals were accepted by management for implementation. In general, the first projects focused on procedural improvements and areas close to the workers' day to day job responsibilities and did not require extensive changes outside the scope of the workers. Currently, the circles are selecting their next projects and appear to be interested in tackling more complex issues.

It is obvious that quality circles are a long-term process but are a vehicle for employees to find solutions to the problems they experience on their jobs. The key to success is not to mimic what is being done by other localities, but rather to evaluate how quality circles can be used in your environment.

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Is Your Police Department Ready For Accreditation?

By Bob Martinez

How good is your law enforcement agency? Does it measure up to the best in modern police procedure, or is it suffering from outdated and possibly illegal policies (or more likely, lack of policies) that could devastate your community?

As a community leader, you should know how your law enforcement agency stacks up against national norms. As a taxpayer, you should be very concerned that they have procedures in place that comply with the latest legal opinions affecting law enforcement agencies.

In just one area of affirmative action in police hiring practices, departments in Atlanta, New Orleans, Los Angeles, Boston and New York City are among many suffering law suits in the past three years. Some have cost the taxpavers considerable amounts of back pay and damages, others resulted in freezing policy hiring; Atlanta's four-year hiring suspension is credited by some with hampering the murdered children investigation.

The problem is not so much that police agencies don't want to comply with equal opportunity rulings, it's that they don't have the management tools to do so. "There are many agencies, including my agency, which got into trouble because they didn't know what to do," Atlanta's former Public Safety Director Lee P. Brown said last January.

Taxpayers in the South Tucson, Arizona area probably would not rate their police highly. Four years ago a policeman from a neighboring community was shot accidentally and paralyzed by three of a fellow officer's 17 bullets fired during a disturbance at a shotgun-wielding man barricaded in his home. He sued the city, which carried only \$100,000 in liability insurance because of an earlier incident where a city policeman killed a citizen and the city was forced to pay \$150,000. Now South Tucson owes nearly \$4 million to the paralyzed officer, nearly 50 percent more than its annual budget, and the entire town may be forced into bankruptcy.

About the Author

Mr. Martinez is the mayor of Tampa, Florida and a member of the Board of Director of the National League of Cities. He has been a member of the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement agencies since 1980.

The war against crime has been fought with dollars and bullets, law suits and legislation, studies and initiatives too numerous to list. Now, however, the law enforcement community is well on the way to arming local police agencies with what could be the most important weapon yet: national standards to measure the effectiveness of every facet of police work-1,200 standards in 48 different areas.

These are the product of the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, a federally funded effort initiated by four national professional law enforcement groups to establish a national voluntary program for accrediting police agencies.



The four law enforcement associations-the International Association of Chiefs of Police, National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, National Sheriffs' Association and Police Executive Research Forum-began work in 1979 to create a body of standards which promote good management practices. More than a thousand standards have been prepared, some mandatory and some whose applicability will depend on an agency's size and duties. After testing and revision, the standards will appear in final form, though they will be updated as time passes.

Without usurping local autonomy, accreditation promises to standardize police procedure, facilitating interdepartment crime solving. Citizens nationwide will know what to expect from accredited agencies such as identical arrest procedures and identical policies

on the use of deadly force (only when life is in jeopardy). Police personnel will be assured of fair and standard hiring, disciplinary and promotion policies.

But perhaps the greatest beneficiaries will be the taxpayers of towns who will avoid the nightmare plaguing South Tucson and dozens of other communities losing damaging law suits. Accreditation in itself will not guarantee victory in court for police departments, but it will help greatly in two ways. First, police managers will have guidelines available to establish policies that will stand up in court on sensitive issues like selection of officers and use of deadly force-and accreditation will force them to implement them. Second, the odds are accredited agencies, having applied for and received accreditation after an exhaustive, on-site audit, will be able to convince judges and juries their policies comply with standard national norms.

How can you as a leader become involved? First, make sure your local sheriff's and police departments are aware and involved in the accreditation program. The testing of the program will be completed by the end of 1982, and the time for expressing your community's needs and concerns is now.

Second, become involved. The commission has materials available so you can review the standards. Get on the mailing list. Talk with members of the commission who oversee the program. While 11 of the 21 members are from law enforcement, the remaining 10 represent local and state government-a mayor, a state senator, county administrator, county commissioner, municipal elected officials and managers.

Accreditation is at least eight months off; the draft standards approved by the commission in May must be field tested by representative agencies before the process begins. But the time is not far off when every citizen will be able to easily find out if his town's police department measures up by asking: Is it accredited?

Edward J. Weld, building official of Culpeper County, was elected President of the VBOA for the 1982-83 year. Other officers include First Vice President Clarence Diersing, director of code compliance, Newport News; Second Vice President Edward M. Williams, building official, Virginia Beach and Sgt.-At-Arms Emory Rodgers, inspection services division chief, Arlington County.

John H. Byrd, Jr., president of the Virginia Building Officials Association, presided over the 1982 School and Conference in Harrisonburg on October 10-13. Byrd is the building official for the City of Harrisonburg.

Delegates and guests were welcomed to Harrisonburg by Mayor Roy H. Erickson during the Opening Session.

Conference topics included the Impact of the Revised Architect/Engineering License Law on the Building Official, Provisions for the Physically Handicapped, the 1981 Uniform Statewide Building Code, Relationship of the State Registration Board of Contractors and the Building Official and State Regula-

tions Affecting the Building Official. Delegates also viewed a presentation on the MGM Grand Hotel Fire.

Dr. James Anderson of the Nexus Group gave a presentation on Handling the News Media and Jack Proctor, building code director, gave a report from the Department of Housing and Community Development.

During the Business Session on Wednesday, D. Bain Reed, commissioner of buildings the City of Roanoke, presented retiring president John H. Byrd a plaque of appreciation and a past president's certificate.

The 1983 School and Conference will be held December 4-7 in Hampton, Virginia.

Three Localities Honored

Norfolk, Arlington County and Lynchburg have all been honored in the past few months.

Norfolk received the 1982 Mayors' Award from the U.S. Conference of Mayors for the city's outstanding efforts in public-private partnerships. The partnerships included the city's involvement with

Harborfest, Inc. for Harborfest, the Greater Norfolk Corporation for relocating the Cousteau Society's national headquarters and the Mayor's Committee for the development of Waterside. Mayor Vincent J. Thomas accepted the award at the 50th U.S. Conference of Mayors meeting.

The Arlington County Economic Development Division announced that the county received an award of outstanding achievement from the American Planning Association. The award was given jointly to the economic development division and the planning division in recognition of the planning and implementation efforts for the courthouse plaza. County Board Chairman Stephen H. Detwiler and Board Member Walter Frankland accepted the award on behalf of the county board.

The City of Lynchburg is one of the recipients of the Virginia Mental Health Association's first annual "Employer of the Year" award. The awards are presented to various employers for their involvement in the growth and development of an employee assistance program in the central Virginia area.

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As Action Shifts To The State, Local Level, Is D.C. Obsolete?

By Neal Peirce

Just as the national media prepare to read vast import into Democratic or Republican gains or losses in the Nov. 2 congressional elections, a voice suggests they're cov-

ering a non-story.

"In politics," says trends analyst John Naisbitt, "it does not really matter anymore who is president, and Congress has become obsolete." The inability of Washington to deal with the nation's gut economic problems, he suggests, has caused America to be transformed "from the bottom up." While congressmen flail around with petty constituent services and cater to special-interest groups, Americans in cities, states and neighborhoods are seizing political power and forging a wave of local solutions to national problems, ranging from energy to transportation to economic development.

Downgrading Washington is just one of the generalizations crafted to shock in Naisbitt's new book, *Megatrends*, published Oct. 18 by Warner Books. It is a book of sweeping statements. Many of them are, to put it mildly, exaggerations: It would seem a little foolhardy, for example, to disregard the president and Congress as long as they tax us, raise armies, print money and manage Social Security.

Even so, Megatrends likely will be remembered as a landmark volume of the early 1980s. It breaks the molds of conventional thought; it identifies several vital trends transforming American society that many politicians seem unable—or

unwilling—to grasp.

Naisbitt's lead megatrend is the fast-shifting complexion of our economy. Though we continue to think and plan as if we still lived in an industrial society, we have in fact entered an economy based on creating and distributing information-from financial services to high technology. Our economic future lies not in such "sunset" industries as steel and autos, but rather "sunrise" fields such as electronics, gene splicing, alternative energy sources, mining of the seabeds and robotics. The company or community that fails to recognize this fundamental change and shift accordingly, says Naisbitt, is doomed to a bleak future.

We are shifting "from institutional help to self-help," becoming increasingly disillusioned with every large institution from government to the medical establishment, from corporations to the school system. Instead, we are doing for ourselves-in medicine, for instance, embracing the hospice movement, natural childbirth, home births and "wellness" programs. Instead of counting on the police alone, citizens are forming crimewatch and crime-stopper programs across the country. Fifty thousand self-help groups have sprung up as people counsel their peers on coping with such disparate problems as retirement, widowhood, weight control, drug abuse, divorce and child

Self-help, says Naisbitt, is best symbolized by burgeoning entrepreneuralism, a rejection of large corporations in favor of self-employment and small business. New business starts are up from 93,000 a year in 1950 to 600,000 yearly now.

The great American migration "from North to South," amply illustrated by the 1980 Census, "is stronger than first thought, and irreversible in our lifetime," Naisbitt asserts.

But the Sunbelt "explosion," Naisbitt concludes, "is really the story of three emerging megastates" which have a vast preponderance of the new wealth and population-Florida, Texas and California. "For economic growth, give me Texas, California and Florida, and you can have the other 47," he writes somewhat cavalierly. He identifies 10 "new cities of opportunity" and all are in the Sunbelt-Albuquerque, Austin, Denver, Phoenix, Salt Lake City, San Antonio, San Diego, San Jose, Tampa and Tucson.

This unqualified endorsement of Sunbelt growth leaves one a little breathless—and wondering. San Jose, for example, is already choking on its own growth, its "Silicon Valley" industries expanding to states with less congestion and pollution and more housing in the less-than-\$150,000 range. I asked Naisbitt if he sees any hope for older Frostbelt cities and he replied yes—but only if they show extraordinary skill in "reconceptualizing"

their economic role and carving out special "niches" in high-technology or information industries.

The most troubling megatrend which Naisbitt identifies is "from representative democracy to participatory democracy." His evidence is the vast outpouring of citizen initiative measures—on every issue from tax lids to nuclear arms—which swelled up in the 1970s and in fact will reach an historic high. Naisbitt rightly notes that initiatives draw substantially higher voter turnouts than elections for officeholders.

His suggestion that "we have outlived the usefulness of representative democracy" is worrisome. If every decision of substance has to be referred directly to the voters, then careful weighing of competing claims, civil rights—and indeed the thin web of consensus that holds a pluralistic society together—could give way to raw majoritarianism.

But Naisbitt should be read for the questions he raises, not final answers. Not to note the trends he identifies is to move into the future—blindfolded.

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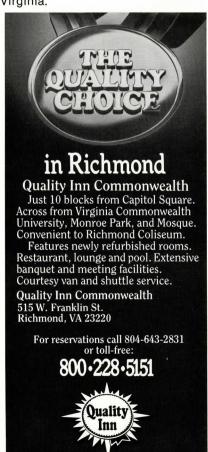
MUNICIPAL ELECTRIC POWER ASSOCIATION OF VIRGINIA AN-NUAL CONFERENCE, June 1-3, 1983, Holiday Inn 39th Street, Virginia Beach, Virginia.

STATE FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION OF VIRGINIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE, July 13–16, 1983, Holiday Inn Airport, Richmond, Virginia.

VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE ANNUAL CON-FERENCE, August 21–24, 1983, OMNI, Norfolk, Virginia.

VIRGINIA MUNICIPAL LEAGUE 78TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE, September 18-20, 1983, Hilton, James City County, Virginia.

VIRGINIA BUILDING OFFICIALS ANNUAL CONFERENCE, December 4-7, 1983 Holiday Inn, Hampton, Virginia.



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The Virginia Department of Highways and Transportation has adopted new Road and Bridge Standards, which will be effective with the December, 1982, construction bid advertising schedule. Copies are available from the Department at \$13 each, including state sales tax. Policy provides free copies to qualified counties, municipalities, and governmental agencies.

Copies may be obtained by sending request, with check made payable to Treasurer of Virginia, to H. M. Shaver, Jr., State Location and Design Engineer, Department of Highways and Transportation, 1221 East Broad Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219.

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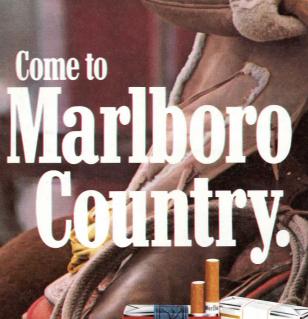
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