

Report (September 18, 2008) on CML Conference in Steamboat Springs, June 17 – 20, 2008

Peggy Cole, Council Member at Large

Attending gave me keener insights into many issues that the City Council faces. I got extra copies of PowerPoint presentations and other handouts that were provided at the sessions and gave them to Jim Woods to share with the relevant City departments.

June 17

6:00 – 7:00 Arrived about 3:30 to register and visit some exhibits
free buffet reception

June 18

7:00 – 8:00 Tai Chi (This was free and led by a local Tai Chi master; every morning I do the simple hand exercises I learned.)

8:00 – 10:00 Visited exhibits and talked to vendors and conference participants

10:00 – 11:30 *Keynote Speech: Mastering the Art of Influence* (David Rabiner)

“If people don’t find you credible, they will resist you and only do as much with and for you as they have to.” The session focused on “three principles of influence and credibility: interacting positively [rather than defensively or hostilely], establishing an atmosphere of trust, and building a track record of success. By practicing those principles and persevering, you can become the kind of leader that others want to follow, especially during tough times when we need people to do more with less.” The goal is to create a want-to environment that will attract and retain outstanding employees. Dr. Rabiner defined several key concepts; for example, *value*—“something that is important to you all by itself (e.g., *health, profit*)”—and *principles*—“the natural laws or laws of the universe that generally predict what happens.” He examined (1) what ethics are, what ethical leaders do that sets them apart and why we sometimes behave unethically, and (2) the sequence of principled behavior. The session was well grounded in real-world examples.

11:45 – 1:00 Visited exhibits and talked to vendors and conference participants (ate free munchies)

1:15 – 2:30 *Ethical Leadership: Earning and Keeping the Public Trust* (David Rabiner)

This session built on ideas introduced in the keynote speech. Dr. Rabiner posed outstanding real-world situations for municipal employees and elected officials, which also required the audience to consider larger questions, such as

- Is it ever ethical to vote different from the position on which you campaigned?

Because Dr. Rabiner’s presentations were grounded so well in the real world, I have suggested that the 2009 CML conference bring him back for several small group sessions (about 20 people each). I also communicated with him by email after the conference and read an outstanding article that he recommended: “The Discipline of Building Character (management decisions),” Joseph L. Badaracco, *Harvard Business Review* (March-April 1998): 114-125. The examples relate not just to managers but to employees at all levels and to elected officials. The examples illustrate the consequences (some negative, some positive) for real individuals and their companies.

2:45 – 4:00 *Legal Short Shots for Elected Officials*

- *Power to the people: Introduction to initiative, referendum and recall.* This half of the session was mainly review for me.
- *Show me the money: Introduction to sales and use tax.* This half of the session refined my understanding of these taxes in terms of home-rule cities vs. other municipalities.

4:00 – 5:00 Visited exhibits and talked to vendors and conference participants

7:00 – 9:30 Attended 2 free buffet receptions

I met the Mayor of Ft. Collins and had an extensive discussion about Ft. Collins’ budget process, which is all goal-based and indicates whether the request was funded, and if so, for how much. He later e-mailed me the URL (www.fcgov.com/budget). I have studied their budget format and would like Littleton to consider a similar approach.

June 19

8:30 – 11:30 *Emergency Preparedness* (speakers from Vail, Aurora and Colorado Springs)

Outstanding presentations; the speakers grounded their presentations with meaningful real-world examples in their respective cities (major fire requiring coordination of police and fire, and the 2008 church shooting in Colorado Springs, citizen-initiated emergency management organization in a mainly senior residential development in Aurora, etc.). The speakers answered many questions, including the pros and cons of whether a person affiliated with the Fire or Police Department should be in charge of Emergency Preparedness. The mayor of Windsor was in the audience and provided much insight into the tornado that struck a couple weeks earlier. This session gave me a stronger foundation for upcoming discussions of emergency preparedness in Littleton.

- 12:00 – 1:30 *General Lunch: Gov. Bill Ritter* presented his views on local and state government, as well as a major legislative action during in 2008. The presentation and pointed questions from the audience were good, the food was mediocre (but we couldn't hear the presentation without paying for lunch in advance).
- 2:15 – 3:30 *Utilizing GIS and Asset Management Software for Public Infrastructure* (Quint Pertzsch, Golden GIS coordinator and Carrie Vogt, Golden asset management coordinator)
How asset management and GIS can work together to dramatically improve long-term maintenance and management costs for public infrastructure. The presentation, for non-technical audiences, highlighted how these tools help policy makers determine investment needs. Excellent presentation, with data before and after implementation.
- 4:00 – 5:00 Visited exhibits and talked to vendors and conference participants
- 7:00 – 9:30 Ate dinner with most of the Littleton attendees (\$30 or less for me)

June 20

- 9:00 – 10:15 *Green Building and Sustainability: Highlighting Municipal Best Practices* (3 speakers, all leading experts in the fields of green building and sustainability)
This was an outstanding session with discussion of specific projects. Regrettably, it was restricted to new construction. I have suggested that the 2009 CML conference include a session on retrofitting existing buildings. I have also suggested to Jim Woods that plans for proposed police facilities consider LEEDS standards (preferably at the platinum level) to minimize long-term costs.
- 10:30 – 11:45 *Emerging Issues: The Future of Municipal Finance* (Phyllis Resnick Terry, municipal finance and CML consultant; Rep. Bernie Buescher, D-Grand Junction)
Focused on one of CML's two-year initiatives—examining the future of municipal finance in Colorado and the nation. A new report was distributed. (We've discussed much of this in Littleton.)
- 12:00 – 1:30 Ate free munchies and followed-up on a few questions I had about various presentations.
- 1:45 – 3:00 *Engaging Different Demographic Segments* (Elizabeth Garner, state demographer; Todd Swanson, Colorado Division of Aging and Adult Services; Karen Roney, Longmont community services director, and Carmen Ramirez, Longmont community relations coordinator)
An overview of the state's population trends (which we have discussed in Littleton), a look at what they call the silver tsunami and ways to engage a representative sample of the population in municipal government in volunteer service and on councils and boards. The Longmont speakers discussed the ways that they had engaged a representative sample of their population. The success of their efforts has led me to explore possibilities in Littleton.

<u>Cost</u>	<u>\$680.65</u>	
Preregistration	\$208.00	(includes \$38 for luncheon with the Governor and a \$5 charge for a walking tour of Historic Steamboat Springs, which I wanted to go on since I am the City Council liaison to the Historical Preservation Board, but I could not go because the luncheon ran significantly overtime)
Travel	\$67.00	(I rode with 1 person, Jim Taylor, on the way and with 2 people, Suzanne Staiert and Doug Clark, on the way back. My portions of the mileage costs were paid directly to the drivers.)
Hotel	\$355.65	
Gratuity for hotel	\$20.00	
Dinner June 19 th	\$30.00	(the maximum I estimate that my meal cost. Kelli Nardi used the City credit card to pay for dinner for the members of the Littleton contingent who ate dinner together.)
Other meals	\$00.00	(I packed my lunch to eat on the way and some food to eat for breakfast each morning.)