



# CIVIC LEAGUE For New Castle County

*Informed Citizens for Sound County Growth*

P.O. Box 11523 - Wilmington, DE 19850

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**May  
2010**

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### STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE

Monitor and selectively evaluate government actions including laws, regulations and policy.

Provide appropriate forums for informing as well as soliciting input from the public.

Establish positions based on responsible studies and consistent with the aims and purpose of the organization.

Advocate these positions.

Founded in 1962, the Civic League is non-profit volunteer organization, which studies and illuminates County and State government actions concerning comprehensive developments and the quality of life and is a vocal advocate of relevant positions.

County Comments is the official publication of the Civic League for New Castle County.

Dan Bockover,  
President

WWW.  
CivicLeagueforNCC.ORG

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# COUNTY COMMENTS

CIVIC LEAGUE FOR NEW CASTLE COUNTY  
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## MEETING

**Tuesday, May 18, 2010**

7:00 PM at the Paul Sweeney Public Safety Building  
3601 N. duPont Hwy  
(Rte 13 South of DMV, North of Gracelawn Cemetery)

## AGENDA

Annual Meeting

Election of Officers and Directors  
Speaker - To Be Announced

## NOMINATIONS

### Officers Term - July 2010/2011

President	Charles Mulholland
Vice President	William Dunn
Vice President	David Carter
Treasurer	David Bailey
Secretary	Ronni Romanelli
Immediate Past President	Daniel Bockover

### Directors 2010-2013

Daniel Bockover  
Richard Davis  
William Dunn  
Fritz Griesinger  
V. Eugene McCoy  
Charles Mullholland  
Frank Sims  
Marion Stewart  
Frances West  
Christine Whitehead

### Directors 2011

Michael Barbieri  
William Franey  
Connie Georgov  
Michael McDowell  
Victor Singer  
Eugene Snell  
Charles Stirk \*  
Charles Weymouth  
Nancy Willing

\* - New Director

### Directors 2012

David Carter  
Edmund Cohen  
Philip Doering  
Barbara Finch  
Dianne Kemski  
Philip Lavelle  
Kenneth Murphy  
Gary Warren

## What an Extra \$100 Million for Schools Will Buy

Detailed for attendees at the April 20 Civic League meeting is what the new \$100 million "Race to the Top" federal grant will do to improve education in Delaware's public schools. At our April meeting, guest speaker Linda Rogers, Associate State Secretary of Education, reviewed Delaware's school status today and then shared specific plans for employing the competitively-earned grant money over the next four years. An integral part will be regular measuring and reporting of achievements to document sound utilization of the funds.

## New Way To Pay Dues

Starting now you can pay your 2010-2011 membership dues by either check or credit card. The addition of payment by credit card is simply to provide convenience for those desiring it, but traditional payment by check is still welcome! Whether paying by either method, please remember the importance of including information for your listing in the 2010-2011 membership directory. Also recall that while full information is needed for the Civic League confidential data base, you can specify what details you choose to have shown in the directory. See your membership form or visit on line: [www.CivicLeagueForNCC.Org](http://www.CivicLeagueForNCC.Org) for details.

You'll be pleased to note that while consideration has been given to increasing dues to cover increased operating costs - decision has been made to hold the line at this time - and dues will remain the same for 2010-2011.

In accordance with the by-laws, nominations for directors and officers may be made from the floor at the annual meeting.

## **County Council: Reduce It, Speed It Up, and Save \$1.5 million**

Ever sit through a County Council meeting and listen patiently while the clerk calls 15 names, hears 15 comments, and records 15 votes - for every one of the items on the evenings agenda?

Ever wonder what this is costing you in direct expense. And did you ever ask how did we get into this cumbersome and costly situation in the first place?

Look back to 1967 when county government went from a 3 man Levy court system to a 7 member County Council and then in 2003 to a 13 member County Council. Even after what seemed like exhaustive research about better representation, the then existing County Council voted in a unanimous resolution to keep council at 7. Governor Minner and the legislature didn't see it that way and voted for the extra 6 councilmen. Senator Karen Peterson led the effort in the legislature to reduce council back to 7 which in an unusual alliance, the Executive Director of the Committee of 100 stated "expansion of County Council will add to the difficulty of bringing new business to New Castle County".

At various public meetings, the very skilled politicians in New Castle County have posed the question - where do you think the county can reduce costs? The predictable response is everyone wants the same levels of service such as police, paramedics, libraries and parks - but they refused to ask the question about reducing the size of County Council back to 7. If that were done, the savings - calculated to be \$1.5 million - would be sufficient to add 12 new police officers or paramedics. Instead Council has had 17% and 25% tax increases while simultaneously drawing down the one time large county reserves.

County Council members generally have unlisted home phone numbers, but if they don't, it is a recording to phone their aide. If you phone one of the 13 aides, it is not unusual to get a recording, and reportedly, many calls are never returned. Thus County Council becomes insulated from taxpayers. With the 2010 census, now is the time to act to streamline the size of county government.

Fritz R. Griesinger  
Community Advocate

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## **Proposed By-law Change**

In accordance with Article X - Alteration of Bylaws - the following amendment is proposed for presentation and adoption at the May 18, 2010 meeting of the CIVIC LEAGUE FOR NEW CASTLE COUNTY.

ARTICLE III , Section 3. Term of Office  
Directors shall begin their terms as of July 1.

ARTICLE 1V, Section 2.  
Officers shall begin their terms as of July 1.

Previous wording was terms as of June 1.

Terms will coincide with the fiscal calendar, the calendar of the General Assembly and annual membership dues notices - (July 1 - June 30)

## **WILMAPCO to Revisit Sidewalks Issue**

Leave that car in the driveway and walk to nearby destinations - shopping, school, recreation - is the aim of a resolution passed by the Public Advisory Committee of the Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO) at their April 20 meeting. Actually, the aim is to take a fresh look at all forms of non-automotive transportation including walking and bicycling.

The frustrating reality is that while citizens are implored to walk and bike, and given endless reasons for doing so, there are few safe places to engage in these activities. Given the potential benefits however, it seems timely to again explore ways and means of moving forward. Success elsewhere will be examined and even alternatives to conventional sidewalks will be evaluated. One of these has been labeled contextual pathways - to express an ability to blend walking surfaces into the environment by bending around trees, and other obstacles.

How to pay for the sidewalks will be part of the review and innovative ideas will be welcomed.

Dan Bockover,  
Committee Member

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## **Forget Snow, Remember Money**

It's OK to forget snow right now, but it is important to prepare for what it will cost you up ahead.

This is the time of year when many Civic Associations and Maintenance Corporations are holding their annual meetings and formulating budgets for the 2010-2011 financial year. The biggest budget item for many will be for snow removal. Painful though it may be, the reality is that on that first evening of snowfall - someone in your organization will be charged with calling your snow plowing contractor and initiating the costly dialogue- can you come now and plow us out and what will you charge us.

It's always a challenge, getting your members to pay their dues. The eternal question asked is, what are we getting for our money? Some may want an annual picnic. But all will want assurance that they will be plowed out immediately when snow begins to fall and they are faced with the real possibility of being snowed in - marooned! Plus the impossibility of fire and medial assistance reaching them.

The reality of this situation should embolden you to do two things immediately. Bring the facts to the attention of your members and collect the money you will need. And contract now with a reliable snow plower.

We suggest you re-read the Snow Plowing article in the March issue of County Comments, archived at our website - [WWW.CivicLeagueForNCC.Org](http://WWW.CivicLeagueForNCC.Org) and build on the ideas you will find expressed there. Many organizations have forwarded copies of their current contracts and they are now on file. The thought of having a sample contract for guidance is intriguing but not practical in real life, as a reading of the many contracts reveals. This is because of all the varied circumstances of individual communities and the differing wishes and equipment of snow plowing contractors.

The important thing is take action now when you are under no pressure requiring instant action and hoping for instant results. In all this, remember to choose carefully who will be empowered to act on behalf of your organization, specify any limits on their range of authority, and then - always - have a "Plan B" in readiness.