

Dennis Robinson. Trip report 2017 Alaska Municipal League Newly Elected Officials Training. November 13th-15th, 2017 in Anchorage

Day one. Registered at about 0810, long line. Ate breakfast with a diverse group from Delta Junction, Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Juneau and others.

The first topic of the Day was the **“Roles and Responsibilities of Municipal Officials”**. This was moderated by Linda Murphy, just happens that she has an extensive background in Municipal Government, a well-respected individual in the State of Alaska. She has been involved in the Newly Elected Official training since 1999. There was an in-depth overview of the different types of Municipal Governments and their respective responsibilities. Covered were the following types of Municipal Governments. General Law, Home Rule Second Class Boroughs, First Class Cities (that is us) and Second-Class Cities. Covered was Title 29 of the State Statutes. The rules that govern municipalities. Linda pointed out explicitly what the responsibilities were of elected officials for each type of government. She went over **“Who is an Elected Official”**. Covered were Mayor, City Council Member, Borough Assembly Members, Municipal Clerks, Municipal Managers, Municipal Attorney, Municipal Treasurer and School Board Members. Each had a very explicit description of the Roles and Responsibilities that Title 29 requires. This was a very informative refresher session.

The second topic dealt with **Budgets and Governmental (Fund) Accounting**. This covered Budgeting Basics and Fund Accounting. Covered were topics such as the essence of budgeting, Fund Accounting, Fund balance Post GASB 54, (an accounting rule) and some municipal budgeting which all lead to the question: In one Word, What are your municipality’s budgeting and finances really about? Buckets...

Our lunch speaker was our City lobbyist Ray Gillespie. Ray covered the **Imbalance of Power** in the Legislature and provided materials on the Legislative Process in Alaska of how an **“idea”** becomes law.

The State Assessor, Marty McGee covered the different types of taxes that are levied in Alaska, what it takes to impose them as well as the relationship between budgets and taxes.

The topic for the rest of the afternoon was **The Open Meetings Act**. Attorney Rene Broker of Cook Schuman & Groseclose and Attorney Michael Gatti of Jermain, Dunnigan and Owens were the speakers. This is something that I think every council member should attend every 3 years. Covered were the requirements of the Open Meetings Act (OMA), who is bound by the OMA, when notice of a meeting required, Serial Meetings, Electronic meetings, Quorums, Emergency Meetings, and Executive Sessions.

Driven home all afternoon was that the Governing body bound by the OMA should NEVER require an action on anything that hasn’t been properly noticed or discussed previously in a properly noticed meeting.

Day 2 in the morning the topic of **Quasi-Judicial Role and Ex Parte Contact** was covered by Attorney Michael Gatti and Ethics and Conflict of interest by Rene Broker.

Linda Murphy wrapped up the afternoon with **Parliamentary Procedure** and **Conducting Effective Meetings**.

The last thing of the day was a **“Mock Meeting”**. Overall it was an incredible amount of refreshing Information.