



Basic

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workshop helps municipal clerks, treasurers excel

Situation:

Municipal clerks and treasurers serve crucial roles in many functions of municipal government. In 2009, the president of the Wyoming Association of Municipal Clerks and Treasurers (WAMCAT) approached the Community Development Education team to explore opportunities to train WAMCAT members. An introductory training session for new clerks and treasurers was identified as one of their educational needs.

In spring 2010, Community Development Education Team members and the WAMCAT board began planning for what became the WAMCAT Basics Workshop. Community development educators Juliet Daniels and Tara Kuipers worked with Karen Guidice and Cate Cundall from WAMCAT to organize training. Representatives from the Wyoming State Liquor Division, City of Casper, University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension Service, Wyoming Chapter of the Association of Records Managers and Administrators, City of Laramie, and the Wyoming State Auditor's Office provided expertise to speak at the workshop.

More than 60 registered to attend. Twenty-five percent had been in their positions as a municipal clerk or treasurer for less than a year.

Sessions included instruction on parliamentary procedure; ethics; liquor licensing; bidding and publication procedures; document retention; municipal finance and audit; ordinances, resolutions and proclamations; and meetings, agendas and minutes. Participants learned in extension educator Kimberly Chapman's presentation "Governing Ethically and Responsibly" how to promote an ethical culture in their organization, avoid the most common ethical dilemmas faced in local government, and apply an ethical framework to the decision-making process.

Impacts:

A workshop evaluation was distributed at the conclusion of the workshop. Thirty-six participants provided feedback.

- Ninety-four percent stated the sessions either provided them new information or reinforced what they already knew.
- Ninety-seven percent of participants reported they were motivated to think and do something different while 100 percent were motivated to learn more.
- One hundred percent of participants believed the workshop was valuable.

When asked "What was the most important thing learned?" participants responded:

- *The document retention course was very informative. I didn't know you have to document the destruction of your records.*
- *Parliamentary procedures, liquor licensing, basics of auditing, ordinances, etc. The ethics was a great workshop to refresh and remind me that morals and virtues need to stay in place. No matter what the issue!*
- *I learned that other towns have similar problems or questions.*
- *I am glad I am not the only one with questions. Thanks for all the info!*

When participants were asked what they would do differently as a result of the workshop, they responded:

- *Look closer at ordinances, set up a retention schedule and see that it is carried out, take medical information out of personnel files, share with the mayor about e-mails and bidding process.*
- *Look at liquor licensing applications better; add a little more to minutes.*
- *I will be updating my recordkeeping.*
- *I feel more comfortable in having the knowledge and the ability to find resources to make my job easier and to make better decisions.*
- *Check ordinances to see if what was discussed in the workshop is in our ordinances and train new council members.*

Eighty-nine percent of participants reported they felt more confident and capable in their position as a result of the workshop.

