



Every quarter we will feature a photo from one of our member governments. This quarter: **Rec West at Washington Township (Montgomery County)**

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The Center for Local Government Newsletter

4th Quarter 2018

CLG Will Hit the Ground Running with 2019 Trainings

The Center for Local Government is partnering with the Hamilton / Clermont Cooperative Information Technology Center (HCC) and the Lindner Center for Hope to bring new, intensive and important training opportunities to local governments in early 2019. We will hit the ground running in January with a training session sponsored by HCC on cybersecurity policy in local government. According to a study by the University of Maryland Baltimore County, in partnership with ICMA, 44% of local governments say they experience a cyber attack each day. This session is designed not only for IT managers, but for CAOs or anyone who makes internal policy in your communities. Program Development Director Jeremy Worley dives deeper into this issue later in this newsletter.

The Health Foundation estimates that the economic cost of mental health issues was \$1.3 billion in Southwest Ohio in 2012 alone.

In February, CLG has partnered with the Lindner Center of HOPE to provide a series of training sessions on mental health. One session will feature mental health in the workplace and its hidden costs. Another session will focus on the “why’s” of addiction. The third session will focus on identifying mental health issues in the field. This session is focused on any individual who works with young people. According to the CDC, the suicide rate in the U.S. has increased by 25% since 1999. By identifying early risk factors, we can prevent many of these tragic occurrences. Invitations for these sessions will be distributed in later December / early January.

32.5% of governments have seen an increase in cyber attacks over the last year according to the University of Maryland Baltimore County and ICMA.

Both of these training partnerships reflect CLG’s continuing efforts to build partnerships with like-minded organizations across the region. In fact, establishing strategic partnerships is a large component of CLG’s current 2017-2022 Strategic Plan. Through building relationships with groups like HCC or Lindner Center, we are able to provide additional services and opportunities to our members. Indeed, future partnerships with HCC could include a joint data backup program. Working with Lindner Center, we may be able to offer tailored services both to EAPs and to the community at large. That said, we are excited in the short term to offer these training sessions to start off the year, and we hope you are able to attend one or all of the sessions.



The Center for Local GOVERNMENT

Effective Governance Through Collaboration

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ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATION:

The Center for Local Government (CLG) located in Cincinnati, OHIO is a unique non-profit 501 (c)(3) corporation, created in 1990 as a clearing-house for inter-governmental collaboration, training and information sharing. CLG membership consists of 54 local government in 6 counties.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Vicky Earhart, Anderson Township
Jim Lukas, City of Sharonville
Kristen Bitonte, Liberty Township
Michael Rahall, Village of Cleves
Jack Cameron, Delhi Township

Best Wishes from T.J., Jeremy and Lori for a Happy Holiday Season and a Wonderful 2019!

IMPORTANT CYBER SECURITY ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED IN TRAINING

In January the Hamilton Clermont Cooperative Information Technology Center (HCC) and the Center will provide a Cybersecurity 101 training. This training is focused on filling in gaps of cyber knowledge specific to local government on the existing threats, defense techniques and how to respond to a cyber incident. The training is a high-level session explaining to leaders what it is they may not know, expanding on what they already should know and providing tools, techniques and tips on how to secure your community's data now and into the future. We highly recommend communities to attend this event. Several speakers will be present to discuss issues around legal issues relating to cyber, cyber infrastructure, best practices and more.

There is a growing need for cybersecurity awareness, training and preparedness in local government. A breakdown of this need can be [explained through this article](#).

You may remember in the last newsletter HCC Director Tom Collins introduced his organization, this partnership is one we look forward to nurturing for the benefit of our members. HCC is a nonprofit entity providing technology solutions to school districts around the state including data backup, internet services, telephony capability and technical support.

If you need a copy of the invite or to RSVP please email Jeremy at jworley@C4LG.org

When: January 15th, 2019

Where: HCC Information Technology Center
1007 Cottonwood Drive, Loveland OH 45140

Time: 830-9am (Registration)
9am-1130 (Program)

Cost: \$25/person, to cover coffee and breakfast



MENTAL HEALTH TRAINING SERIES TO BEGIN IN FEBRUARY

CLG will be partnering with the Lindner Center of HOPE to conduct a series of intensive trainings on mental health issues in the workplace and in the community. Three training sessions will take place on consecutive Tuesdays on February 5th, 12th and 19th. All sessions will take place at the Sharonville Convention Center. Individuals may sign up for individual sessions or for the full series.

These three classes will each tackle a different hot topic within the mental health world as it relates to local government:

- **The Economic Impact of Mental Health on Business (February 5th)**
 - Target Audience: Chief Administrative Officers, HR Directors
 - Topics will include the fact that mental illness causes billions of dollars of financial losses each year, and strategies on how to better address employee mental health needs.
- **Addiction and the Brain (February 12th)**
 - Target audience: General local government (e.g. Chief Admin Officers, elected officials), as well as public safety officials
 - Topics will include understanding the physiological causes of addiction, including the fact that 85% of people with addiction issues suffer from other forms of mental illness.
- **Mental Illness in Children and Adolescents: How to Notice Warning Signs, Help, and Be an Ally (February 19th)**
 - Target audience: Any person who works with youth. This includes parks / recreation, first responders, school employees, and HR Directors.
 - Topics will include early detection of mental illness, signs and symptoms, and what to do.

All of these training sessions are designed to cover why it is important to focus on mental health issues, with practical takeaways that can be implemented in your communities. Experts from Lindner Center will conduct each training, and are also available for questions and follow-up. We hope you can make it to these important sessions. Sign-up information will be distributed in early January.

INFORMATION SHARING TASKFORCE UNDERWAY

Earlier this month the Information Sharing Taskforce was formed and met for the first time to discuss the upcoming revisions to the annual survey and to explore how communities are utilizing the data, looking at the data and comparing our datacenter to other options. The taskforce includes; Program Director Jeremy Worley, Jessica Chaney, Indian Hill, Melanie Hermes, Delhi Township, and Dan Wendt, Fairfield. We're hoping to add one or two more people for upcoming meetings.

The goals established at the meeting include; improving or replacing the existing datacenter, simplifying the annual survey by eliminating unnecessary questions, identifying information that governments are already statutorily required to provide (in order to eliminate survey questions), and generating feedback on how to more accurately obtain information. The Center received a \$5k grant from Duke Energy for this project which will be used to meet the our goals.

The first meeting has already provided us with great ideas including the sourcing of organizational charts by department that will allow communities to more accurately identify similar governments in terms of job titles, structure and will allow better comparisons of pay data. Thanks Melanie for such great feedback! If you haven't already sent your organizational charts to Jeremy, please send them using the email address below.

If you have great ideas or wish to join the taskforce we would love to hear from you, please send an email to jworley@C4LG.org expressing your interest or providing your idea for our taskforce to consider.



INVESTING IN YOUR EMPLOYEE'S MENTAL HEALTH IS GOOD BUSINESS

By Dr. Paul E. Keck, Jr. – President and CEO, Lindner Center of HOPE

Likely not visually apparent, your bottom line is bleeding due to a silent epidemic. Unaddressed mental illnesses are costing companies, whether they can see it or not. Mental illness is the #1 public health problem in the United States, more common than cancer, heart disease and diabetes *combined*. One in four people will face a serious mental health problem during their lifetime: that means you, a member of your family, or a close friend, an employee or a colleague.

Why should we, the business community, care? Of course, compassion and a desire to alleviate human suffering and save lives are paramount. But beyond the emotional costs, there is the financial impact of unaddressed mental illness.

Well-established research indicates that the cost of untreated mental illness far outstrips the cost of treatment. In the 15 counties including and surrounding Greater Cincinnati in 2012 alone, The Health Foundation estimates that the economic cost of mental illness was, conservatively, \$1.3 billion. Of these costs, the indirect costs of absenteeism, presenteeism (an employee is sitting at their desk, but not productive), and disability accounted for 70% compared with the cost of treatment (30%).

A 2008 landmark study from the Harvard School of Public Health examined overall costs to society of untreated mental illness (including the impact on the criminal justice system) and found that the direct costs of mental health care were 1/37 of the direct and indirect costs of untreated mental illness. In other words, the return on investment in provision of quality mental health services was 37: 1.

Why has business ignored this data? First, the economic impact of untreated mental illness may simply not be widely known. Second, many myths – and along with them, stigma – still surround mental illness. At least 3 myths about mental illness contribute greatly to the problem:

Mental illnesses are due to “weakness.” The fact is, like most other medical illnesses, the risk for mental illness is in part heritable, and in part influenced by life experience. Mental illnesses are brain-based, neurobiologic disorders that affect mood, energy, sleep, cognition and perception—the very things that make us unique human beings. Mental illness is not something that an individual can simply make disappear.

Mental illnesses are vague and ill-defined. Mental illness diagnoses are, in fact, as reliable and valid as in any other field of medicine.

Mental illnesses are not treatable. The truth is, over the last three decades, there have been more advances in the development of evidence-based, scientifically proven treatments with better effectiveness, than in any other field of medicine.

The public, business, and economic problem of mental illness in our community is not due to a lack of effective treatments, but rather a lack of access to treatment, driven by stigma (ignorance and fear about mental illness), and by poor reimbursement for services, limiting the number of and availability of treatment providers.

Yes, high quality mental healthcare bears a cost. But the cost to our community in lost business productivity, rising rates of suicide, homelessness, disability, drain on early responders and the criminal justice system, adverse impact on other medical illnesses and expenditures in consumption of other medical resources far outweighs the cost of accessible care.

This is the number one public health issue for our community, long neglected and largely kept in the shadows. And this is the number one health challenge for businesses and their employees. It is time to raise your understanding of mental illness and that of others, and take real action—for the health of your employees and your business.

Learn more [about services offered by Lindner Center of HOPE](#).

[Lindner Center of HOPE](#) in Mason, Ohio, a comprehensive mental health center providing patient-centered, scientifically-advanced care for individuals suffering with mental illness.



CLG TO BE INFORMATION SHARING HUB FOR MILL CREEK SPECIAL ASSESSMENT ISSUE

Flood control responsibilities for the Mill Creek Valley will transfer from the Army Corps of Engineers to the Mill Creek Valley Conservancy District (MVCD) in 2020/2021. The MVCD was established in the 1960s through court order to work on flood prevention in the Mill Creek, in an area designated by the Army Corps of Engineers. In order to take on this responsibility, the MVCD will be making a recommendation to the Hamilton County Court of Common Pleas to pursue one of variety of special assessment options or to dissolve the district. This obviously is of great concern and interest to local governments in the Mill Creek Valley, as both flood control and fair taxation are important issues. At a recent information sharing session, it was stated that the costs for ongoing maintenance of the Mill Creek may be in the range of \$4.8 to \$10.5 million (depending on project scope).

CLG has been approached by a number of member communities in the Mill Creek Valley about functioning as an information sharing hub for staff to get good primary source material to share with their elected officials and other stakeholders. To accomplish this, we have developed a web page that is accessible from the CLG homepage or can be [found here](#). CLG has also assembled an e-mail list of CAOs and/or their designees in each of the Mill Creek Watershed communities, so that information can be shared as it becomes available. David Lumsden from Greenhills and Jeff Agricola from Springdale have agreed to function as liaisons and report back to the CLG e-mail list and webpage on any developments as they occur. With that said, CLG strongly encourages governments in the Mill Creek watershed to continue to attend hearings on this topic as they happen in order to get the fullest picture possible.

CLG can be of the best value to communities as an information sharing hub for staff. We understand that there are a diverse array of perspectives and opinions between the different communities in the membership on how to tackle this issue, and we are happy to be a resource for the latest news on Mill Creek as it develops.

CLG CONDUCTS FALL HUMAN RESOURCES LUNCHEON

In November the Center held our annual Fall HR Luncheon at deSha's Restaurant exploring how to manage people with more experience than you. It was a very informative event thanks to our panelists; Geoff Milz of Colerain, Sheryl Long of North College Hill and Mike Blomer of Sharonville.

Each of the panelists brought unique first hand experiences and shared their stories, best practices and tips on how to navigate this challenging task. While each panelist utilized a unique skill set some common themes were identified. These included; building relationships with your team, relying on your team of experts, knowing who, how and when to ask for help, and understanding when to push or challenge and when to allow time for changes to take effect.

The Center would like to thank all participants. The next HR training will be in the spring and we are currently open for suggestions on topics. If you have an interesting topic idea or a burning question that needs answered please reach out to Jeremy and put your idea on the list at JWorley@C4LG.org.

Attendees listen to the panelists at the Fall CLG HR Luncheon



The Panel at the Fall CLG HR Luncheon



People enjoying their meals at the Fall CLG HR Luncheon



COURT RULES IN FAVOR OF BLUS ASH ON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RECORDS CASE

Recently, the Hamilton County Court of Appeals held that documents compiled and generated from an employee development, “360” feedback process were not public records. This landmark decision recognizes the importance of allowing even public employees to engage in informal professional development exercises, while maintaining their confidentiality.

In *State ex rel. The Community Press v. The City of Blue Ash*, 1st Dist. Hamilton No. C 170281, 2018-Ohio-2506, the Appellate Court examined documents generated from a professional-development exercise conducted by a third party for the benefit of Blue Ash employees. The project was designed to allow certain Blue Ash senior-staff to receive anonymous feedback from their peers in areas of managerial development. The employees were told the surveys would be confidential and that no one else from Blue Ash, except the evaluatee, would see them. The surveys would not be used to make personnel decisions, nor were the employees required to participate.

The individual surveys were collected and a summary form of the various responses was compiled by a third party for each employee. The survey summary report was provided only to that individual. No employee was given any other employee’s summary report. Neither the questionnaires nor the summary reports were placed in the individuals’ personnel files. Blue Ash did not take any action based on the feedback contained in the reports because no one else at Blue Ash saw them, much less reviewed them. They were not part of the formal evaluation process.

The local newspaper requested the questionnaires and summary reports. The trial court ruled in favor of the paper. But the First District reversed, holding the documents were not public records because they did not document “the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities **of the office**” – meaning the City of Blue Ash.

Rather, at most, the documents dealt with the public officials the office happens to employ. The appellate court recognized that critical difference, holding that “public officials” are separately defined than the “public office:” “While they may have assisted the ‘public officials’ (the employees of the city of Blue Ash as defined in R.C. 149.011) in better performing their jobs, this does not make them ‘records’ under the statute.” Simply put, when a public office does not use or rely on the documents, nor utilize them to carry out its duties and responsibilities, the documents are not public records subject to disclosure.

This is a significant decision for all political subdivisions in Ohio. First, though exceptions to the Public Records Act contained in R.C. 149.43 are construed liberally to require disclosure, the requester must still establish in the first instance that a document is a “record” under R.C. 149.011. In responding to any public record request, the subdivision should evaluate whether the requested document meets that statutory definition.

Second, R.C. 149.011 crafts an important distinction between “public office” and “public officials.” The mere involvement of governmental employees with or on a certain document does not, by itself, make it a “record.” To be a public record, the public office as a whole must use or rely on the document in carrying out its functions. .

Third, the *Community Press* decision affirms that public offices are permitted under R.C. 149.01 to put its employees through confidential professional individual development exercises, wholly separate from the standard employee evaluation process. This decision provides the roadmap to maintain confidentiality. Employee development feedback forms generated by a third party, not shared with anyone in the office except for the employee being evaluated, not kept in any personnel files, and not otherwise used or relied on by the office should not be subject to disclosure.

Finally, had the appellate court ruled differently, routine individual, professional development exercises, for instance those conducted during OCMA or ICMA meetings, would arguably be public record. Presumably, if those exercises were public record, they likely would no longer occur, to the detriment of the members’ personal development. This decisions explains why records generated from these exercises should not be public record.

Consult your respective legal counsel to ensure the ruling’s mandates are followed.



WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP RECIEVES FIRST PLACE AWARD

The Washington Township Recreation Department has received a first place Award of Excellence in Management Innovation from the Ohio Parks and Recreation Association for establishing diversified and sustainable senior programming. The award recognizes the township's creative solution to financial challenges faced by the non-profit Hithergreen Center.

In 2014, the center faced an unsustainable revenue source and an uncertain future despite its vibrant and varied programs. Washington Township and the City of Centerville had provided significant funding and were now responding, like other local governments, to state funding cuts, including repeal of the Ohio Estate Tax. The township had used its share to provide operating support and a physical home for Hithergreen. Adding to the strain of state budget cuts, the 50-year old facility faced nearly \$2 million in delayed maintenance.

Knowing that it must close the building, Washington Township offered to assume responsibility for senior programming in a newly-renovated section of the Rec West facility on its recreation campus. Hithergreen's leadership agreed to the proposal and the two entities successfully joined forces to ensure that local seniors would have sustainable access to public recreation and a designated home for physical, cultural and social enrichment.

The Rec West Enrichment Center for senior adults opened its doors in 2015 and by early 2017 was serving 2,000 members -- a 67 percent increase since its opening.

The community also has come together to support the center. In May 2018, the first levy increase in the 30-year history of the recreation department was placed on the ballot, in large part to support the successful transition of senior services. Community members approved the levy by a wide margin, with 60.5 percent voting in its favor.

The township initiative was among 14 projects and programs selected for first place awards from a field of about 150.



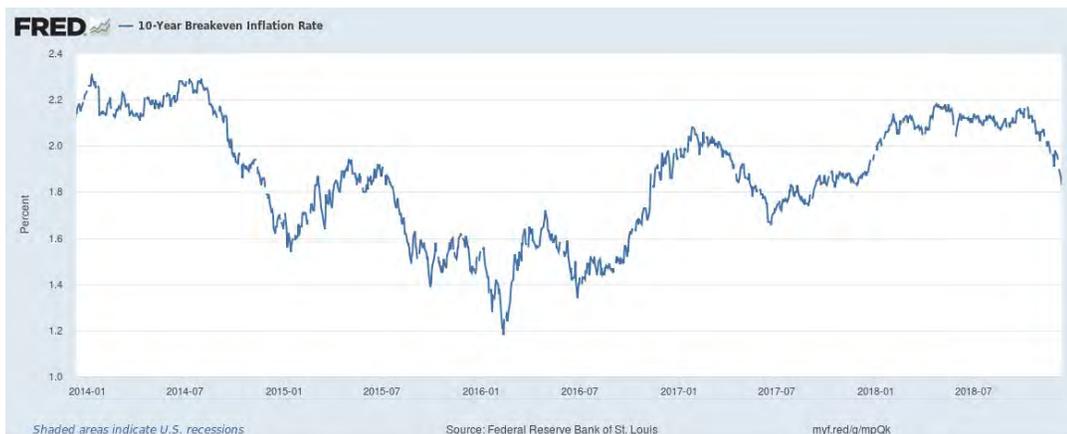


INVESTMENT INSIGHTS: FROM REDTREE INVESTMENTS

Investment insights appears in our Newsletter twice per year. Columns come from Redtree Investments and SJS Investment Services CLG's two partners for the Treasury Asset Management Program. To learn more about this program, [click here](#).

In recent years, your entity has likely enjoyed rising interest rates. The Federal Reserve has increased the Federal Funds rate eight times since their initial hike in December 2015. The next anticipated increase is around the corner, on December 18th. This has a direct effect on your cash and money market holdings which are very short-term in nature. This means when interest rates fall, rates on cash will quickly follow.

To that end, we appear to be approaching the late expansion phase of the business cycle. Typical characteristics of this phase are full employment, outsized economic growth, and upward pressure on prices (aka inflation). The latter two have shown signs of instability in recent months. Future economic growth is forecast to slow, projected to be 1.8% in the long run (per the Federal Reserve). Inflation has struggled to hold steady at the Fed's goal of 2%, with the recent reading of 1.8%. These issues cast doubt on our economy's trajectory and thus, the future path of interest rates.



With this in mind, it may make sense to examine your entity's financials to prepare for what might lie ahead. Interest rates will not increase forever; eventually they fall as part of the natural business cycle. Keeping abreast of your entity's financial situation will help mitigate the future unknown interest rate environment.

About RedTree Investment Group:

RedTree offers customized fixed income investment solutions for municipalities. We are experienced, approachable and will work with you directly to earn your trust and provide accountability. To learn more, please contact Jennifer Trowbridge, CFA® at 888-596-2293 or jennifer@redtreeinv.com.

Disclosures: This was prepared by RedTree Investment Group ("RedTree"), a federally registered investment adviser under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940. Registration as an investment adviser does not imply a certain level of skill or training. [For more information about RedTree, please visit <https://adviserinfo.sec.gov>](#). Form ADV Part 2A & 2B can be obtained by written request directly to: 4106 Allston Street - Suite 605, Cincinnati, OH 45209. Neither the information nor any opinion expressed constitutes an offer, or an invitation to make an offer, to buy or sell any securities. This is prepared for informational purposes only. It does not address specific investment objectives, or the financial situation and the particular needs of any person.



NEWS BITS

CLG is on Social Media

The Center for Local Government has entered the world of social media with a Twitter presence. We can now be found at [@C4LG2018](https://twitter.com/C4LG2018). We joined Twitter because we thought that was the best platform to provide information to our audience of local governments and local government staff members / officials. This will supplement our normal communications tools, and will be a good way to get insights from our trainings, meetings, and other initiatives as they happen. We will also use this platform to help inform you about interesting news from our member governments.

Mentors Needed

CLG has partnered with NKU, CAMA, and NKCCMA to provide NKU MPA students who are pursuing local government management careers with mentors in the field. This fall, we organized a pilot project to connect 10 MPA students with mentors, and we intend to continue to build these relationships and start new ones as the next semester rolls around this winter. If you are interested in being a mentor, please contact CLG. The time commitment is not overwhelming, and it will help build the next generation of local government leaders.

Information Taskforce:

Survey Request

Now that the CLG Information Sharing Taskforce is underway, we are trying to get more data on how and why CLG members use our Datacenter. [If you have not done so already, please take the time to fill out this short survey by clicking here.](#) The total time it takes to fill out the survey is roughly 3 minutes. This will help our Taskforce optimize the CLG datacenter for ease of use, and will help us make sure the most relevant information is as easily accessible as possible.

Thank you for your time.

CLG CALENDAR

Cybersecurity Awareness/Training for Municipalities, presented by CLG, January 15, 2019 at HCC Information Technology Center (1007 Cottonwood Drive, Loveland, OH 45140), registration 8:30-9:00am, program 9:00-11:30am. Cost is \$25.00, coffee and breakfast is provided. Please RSVP to JWorley@C4LG.org by 1/9/2019. [Click here](#) for more information.

Joint CAMA / NKCCMA Meeting: Friday January 25, 2019 (tentative) at the Mercantile Library in Downtown Cincinnati (information coming soon)

Mental Health Training Series Session 1: The Economic Impact of Mental Health on Business. February 5, 2019; Sharonville Convention Center (11355 Chester Rd. Sharonville, OH 45246) Registration 8:30am-9am; Training 9am-11am. Invitation Coming Soon.

Mental Health Training Series Session 2: Addiction and the Brain. February 12, 2019; Sharonville Convention Center (11355 Chester Rd. Sharonville, OH 45246) Registration 8:30am-9am; Training 9am-11am. Invitation Coming Soon.

Mental Health Training Series Session 3: Mental Illness in Children and Adolescents: How to Notice Warning Signs, Help, and Be an Ally; February 19, 2019; Sharonville Convention Center (11355 Chester Rd. Sharonville, OH 45246) Registration 8:30am-9am; Training 9am-11am. Invitation Coming Soon.