

## LEGISLATIVE POLICY COMMITTEES

The business of the League is conducted by its Board of Directors, but the League's legislative policies are shaped through a grass roots process beginning with recommendations from "Legislative Policy Committees" and culminating in adoption of a "Legislative Action Agenda" by the League's general membership. While each Legislative Policy Committee has an appointed "Board Liaison", the Board is not otherwise involved in the legislative policy development process and Board members are not eligible to serve on the Legislative Policy Committees.

Legislative Policy Committee members, their chairs, vice-chairs, and board liaisons are appointed each year by the League president. Any city official is eligible to serve on a Policy Committee, and appointments are usually based upon a city official's support and advocacy of the League's adopted Legislative Action Agenda, participation at meetings, Legislative Action Day, and other legislative-related activities. The Policy Committees meet in August, September, October and November to discuss potential legislative priorities. There are currently five standing legislative policy committees:

### The City of Belleair Bluffs Commission and staff have been appointed to the following Legislative Policy Committees for 2011-2012

**COMMISSIONER JACK NAZARIO - Energy and Environmental Quality Committee:** This committee addresses policies specific to municipal concerns with coastal management, energy, environmental permitting, hazardous and toxic wastes, recycling, solid waste collection and disposal, stormwater, wastewater treatment and reuse, water management, water quality, water quantity and wetlands permitting.

**COMMISSIONER TAYLOUR SHIMKUS - Finance and Taxation Committee:** This committee addresses municipal roles in general finance and tax issues, Home Rule revenues, infrastructure funding, local option revenues, revenue sharing, tax and budget reform, and tort liability.

**Growth Management and Transportation Committee:** This committee addresses policies specific to municipal concerns with annexation, community redevelopment, growth management and land use planning issues, transportation and zoning.

**COMMISSIONER JOSEPH BARKLEY - Intergovernmental Relations Committee:** This committee addresses municipal concerns relating to affordable housing, consolidation and service delivery issues, economic development, education, emergency management, regionalism, relationships among the state, counties, municipalities, special districts, and other regional governmental units, and special districts.

**CITY CLERK DEBRA SULLIVAN - Urban Administration Committee:** This committee addresses municipal concerns with building and fire safety codes, building codes and construction, code enforcement, elections, eminent domain, homeland security, personnel and collective bargaining issues, public meetings, public property management, public safety, sunshine law, utilities and telecommunication. The League encourages every city to participate in legislative policy committees and strives to balance the committees' with respect to geographic location and the size of the cities represented. In reality, not every city is able to participate and, therefore, it is possible the policy committees may not be truly reflective of the full diversity of the League's membership. The Legislative Committee can help balance any potential imbalances in policy committee representation.

### **The Legislative Committee**

A key component to the final adoption of the League's Legislative Action Agenda is the Legislative Committee, which the League president appoints in October prior to the November Legislative Conference. The Legislative Committee is comprised of each legislative policy committee chair and the chairs of the other standing committees; the president of each local and regional league; the presidents of several other municipal associations; chairs of the municipal trust boards; and several at-large members. These officials meet at the Legislative Conference to review the recommended priorities of the Legislative Policy Committees. The role of the Legislative Committee is to provide a "big picture" perspective to ensure that issues are truly representative of statewide municipal interests, not duplicative or in conflict, and are timely and properly presented. The Legislative Committee may limit, reject, prioritize or rank recommendations. The policy priorities as adopted by the Legislative Committee are then recommended to the general membership for approval as the League's Legislative Action Agenda.

### **The Business Session**

The proposed Legislative Action Agenda is brought before the full general membership for consideration, possible amendment and adoption at the Business Session of the Legislative Conference in November. The Business Session is held on the final day of the Legislative Conference.

### **Focusing on Municipal Issues**

More than 3,000 bills are filed each year and League staff typically tracks more than 800 for potential impact on municipalities. Florida's legislative session is regularly scheduled for 60 days a year. Because of this compressed timeframe, it is important for city officials and League staff to focus on a limited number of legislative priorities and ensure the priorities:

- Adhere to the League's paramount goal of preserving municipal home rule powers;
- Are issues that directly affect the functions of municipal government (as opposed to affecting municipal citizens generally);
- Are issues of statewide, rather than local or regional, interest;
- Require state legislative action rather than seek changes to constitutional or federal law;<sup>[1]</sup> and
- Do not seek legislative authorization for something that municipalities already possess the power to do under their home rule powers, if they so choose.

### **\*The Resolutions Committee**

The Resolutions Committee is appointed by the League president and meets during the League's Annual Conference in August. The composition of this committee is similar to the Legislative Committee. The League's by-laws provide that only state legislative issues are to be considered by the Legislative Policy Committees and federal and state constitutional and commemorative issues are to be considered by the Resolutions Committee. Resolutions are often suggested or submitted by the League's Board of Directors, local and regional leagues, individual municipalities or municipal associations.

### **\*Federal Issues**

The Federal Action Strike Team (FAST) is a standing committee that addresses federal issues that affect municipalities. FAST members are appointed by the League president according to congressional district and each member works closely with the League and the National League of Cities to influence federal legislation affecting cities in Florida.