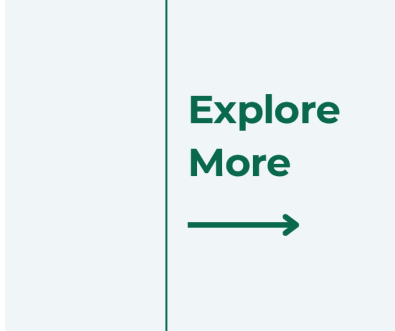
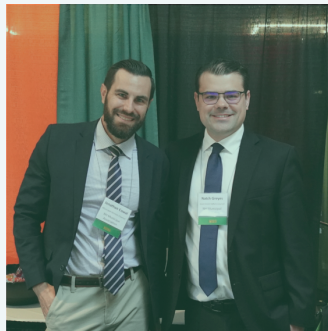
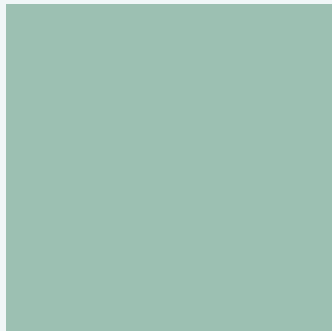


New Hampshire Municipal Association

# 2024 Annual Report



# Executive Director Message

Welcome to NHMA's Annual Report! The enclosed is a highlight of NHMA's activities and services in 2024.

Although admittedly every year is a busy year, 2024 felt like a true whirlwind as we ushered in several exciting changes and new initiatives for NHMA. Among those were the creation of NHMA's 2024-2027 strategic plan, a new partnership with UNH Carsey School of Public Policy, and several new staff, including a brand-new Advocacy Team and a new Communications Coordinator.

And the changes don't stop there: With implementation of the strategic plan underway, members should expect a variety of changes and improvements to our services as we work to achieve our strategic goals. Review the plan here!

NHMA was established in 1941 for cities and towns by cities and towns. All of this would not be possible without your support, engagement, and membership.

Read on for more details.



## Finances at a Glance



# Advocacy

2024 was a relatively good year for New Hampshire's cities and towns at the legislature. Although there wasn't much available for state surplus, the legislature dedicated some additional money toward issues that affect cities and towns, including \$26 million to the Retirement System's Actuarial Accrued Unfunded Liability, \$2.5 million for homeless shelters, and a half-a-million dollars for a firefighter cancer screening pilot program.

However, for the third year in a row, NHMA spent a significant amount of time fighting a slew of bills that would hurt local government or strip local authority, including working to defeat another effort that would have deprived you of your voice at the legislature. Still, we were able to work collaboratively with many legislators to pass important legislation helping provide a local option for cost recovery on the Right-to-Know Law, formulate a pilot program to resolve a longstanding liability issue for local elections, expand state support for dealing with cyanobacteria blooms, reduce the amount of PFAS polluting our environment, clarify appeal authority for local land use decisions, and help protect our state's historic covered bridges. Our victories were due in major part to the local officials who were willing to speak to their legislators about important municipal issues.

This year, 80 bills affecting municipalities became law, a lower-than-usual count that reflects the careful consideration legislators in Concord gave to local government issues. You can read a summary of all the bills enacted into law last year in the 2024 Final Legislative Bulletin.

As 2024 was an election year, that means we met a whole new crop of legislators this winter and said goodbye to some long serving ones. In late 2024, we also brought on an entirely new legislative staff, including two Legislative Advocates and one Policy & Research Analyst, pictured below from left to right Sarah Burke Cohen, Brodie Deshaies, and Marty Karlon. With the 2025 session underway, we encourage you to connect early with your new legislative delegation to discuss issues important to your municipality. We look forward to working with you throughout the year.



# The Year in Numbers

**234**

NH cities and towns are members equaling 100%

**53**

Associate Members

**36**

Affiliate Groups

**17**

On Demand Workshops

**42**

Workshops & Webinars

**1,175**

Workshop Registrations

**1,633**

Webinars Registrations

**1,000**

Member views on Archives

**1,128**

NewsLink Subscribers

**1,297**

Legislative Bulletin Subscribers

**31**

Municipal Marketplace Advertisers

**3,325**

Municipal Marketplace Visitors

**57,014**

Town & City digital impressions

**2,519**

Town & City subscribers

**406**

Annual Conference Attendees

**105**

Annual Conference Sponsors & Exhibitors

**483**

Bills followed

**1,930**

Member posted classified ads

**19**

Outside guest speaking presentations

**3,175**

Legal Inquiries



# Legal Services

In 2024, the New Hampshire Municipal Association (NHMA) Legal Services Department responded to a total of 3,175 legal inquiries from municipal officials across the state. These inquiries covered a broad range of topics, with the most frequently asked questions focusing on:

1. Right-to-Know Law
2. Planning Board
3. Zoning Board of Adjustment
4. Budgeting
5. Public Meetings

NHMA's Legal Services Counsel and Municipal Services Counsel provide guidance and general legal assistance to elected and appointed officials from NHMA member municipalities through email and telephone inquiries. In addition to addressing daily legal concerns, NHMA attorneys author handbooks and publications, deliver educational presentations, and offer customized On-Demand training for members. Legal presentations are available in person, online, and at various locations throughout the state.

# Sustaining Sponsors



# Board of Directors & Staff

Margaret M.L. Byrnes, Executive Director

Stephen C. Buckley, Legal Services Counsel

Jonathan Cowal, Municipal Services Counsel

Sarah Burke Cohen, Legislative Advocate

Brodie Deshaies, Legislative Advocate

Marty Karlon, Policy & Research Analyst

Judith Pellowe, Business Administrator

Miranda Augustine, Communications Coordinator

Ashley Methot, Events Coordinator

Pam Valley, Administrative Assistant

Chair: Dennis Shanahan, Deputy Mayor, Dover

Vice Chair: Jeanie Forrester, Select Board Member, Meredith

Secretary: Joanne Haight, Select Board Chair, Sandwich

Treasurer: Joseph R. Devine, Assistant Town Manager, Salem

Immediate Past Chair: Elizabeth Fox, Asst. City Mgr./HR Director, Keene

Laura Buono, Town Administrator, Hillsborough

David Caron, Town Administrator, Derry

Shelagh Connelly, Conservation Commission, Holderness

Philip A. D'Avanza, Planning Board Member, Goffstown

Stephen Fournier, Town Manager, Newmarket

Dale Girard, Mayor, Claremont

Bonnie Ham, Planning Board Member, Woodstock

Jennifer Kretovic, City Councilor, Concord

Holly Larsen, Finance Director/Tax Collector, Berlin

Patrick Long, Alderman, Manchester

Conner MacIver, Town Administrator, Barrington

Jim Maggiore, Select Board Member, North Hampton

Jim Michaud, Chief Assessor, Hudson

Judie Milner, City Manager, Franklin

David Moore, Town Administrator, Stratham

Shaun Mulholland, City Manager, Lebanon

Lori Rautiola, Town Administrator, Rindge

Thomas Seymour, Moderator, Hill

David Stack, Town Manager, Bow

As of 12/31/24



# New this Year!

- **Expanded Our Digital Presence** - NHMA joined LinkedIn, strengthening our ability to connect with members, share updates, and highlight key initiatives.
- **Successful Launch of the Sustaining Sponsors Program** - In its first year, this program brought in \$69,000, helping to enhance NHMA's services and resources for municipalities.
- **Growing Our Team** - We welcomed four new staff members, adding fresh talent and expertise to better serve our members.
- **Refined Our Mission** - NHMA's new mission statement reflects our commitment to supporting effective municipal government by leveraging the collaborative strengths of New Hampshire's cities and towns through education, training, advocacy, and legal services.
- **Legislative Policy Updates** - NHMA members came together in September to review, amend, and readopt legislative policies and principles, shaping our advocacy efforts for the next biennium as we approach another state budget year.
- **Strategic Growth for the Future** - One of our biggest achievements was completing and adopting NHMA's 2024-2027 Strategic Plan. This plan prioritizes:
  - o Enhancing member services and programs
  - o Expanding communications and outreach
  - o Strengthening staff development and capacity
  - o Increasing revenue to support new initiatives and improvements
  - o Driving innovation to keep NHMA relevant and sustainable to our members

## Looking Ahead to 2025

We're excited to implement our strategic plan and introduce new member benefits, including:

- Free digital publications
- A Women's Leadership Institute
- Educational discounts for local officials at UNH Carsey School of Public Policy

It's been a year of growth, and 2025 promises even more opportunities to support and empower NHMA members. Stay tuned for what's ahead!

