

LGA STRATEGIC PLAN, FY2010

as adopted by the board of directors, Aug. 28, 2009

Goal 1. Promote education in matters of common interest to local government attorneys and provide forums through which its membership may from time to time meet and exchange ideas and professional experiences of importance to Virginia local government attorneys.

Ongoing Objectives, Goal 1

- 1.1 Provide quality spring and fall conferences, following the “General Conference Guidelines” and “Curriculum Guidelines for Spring and Fall Conferences” developed by the board of directors, with program sessions that meet the Virginia State Bar’s requirements for CLE credits and include at least 2 hours of CLE ethics credits at each year’s fall conference. (See also objective 5.7 re. one-day seminars.)
- 1.2 Maintain LGA’s status as an accredited CLE provider of the Virginia State Bar.
- 1.3 Maintain a conference fee schedule that meets budget objectives and fosters maximum participation.
- 1.4 Maintain the financial viability of each conference through coordinated efforts of each conference committee, the conference coordinator at the Cooper Center, and the standing
- 1.5 Support and encourage regional meetings of attorneys by identifying regional groups and having the LGA president offer to attend those meetings.
- 1.6 Support the formation and operations of LGA practice groups, consistent with the policy guidelines adopted by the LGA board of directors; annually appoint (through action of the president) a board liaison to the practice groups. The LGA board will work with the practice groups to conduct periodic special-focus seminars, with topics and speakers selected by the practice groups. Practice groups as of September 2009 are Social Services, Local Taxation, and Workers’ Compensation.
- 1.7 Foster and encourage LGA support of the efforts of the Local Government Paralegal Association of Virginia to improve the continuing education of its members

2010 Objectives, Goal 1

- 1.8 Through the activities of the new committee on conference policies and procedures, adopt and implement new ways to ensure the financial viability of LGA’s spring and fall conferences and regional seminars, based on the final recommendations of the ad hoc committee on conference sponsorships.
- 1.9 Adopt a permanent policy for speaker benefits at the annual regional seminars and social service and other practice group seminars, with consideration of the policy adopted for year 2008-09.
- 1.10 Maintain the educational quality and fiscal integrity of each conference through the work of the new Standing Committee on Conference Policies and Procedures, which shall have as its ongoing objectives the following: (1) make recommendations to the board concerning LGA’s conference policies and procedures as set forth in the policies and procedures (P & P) catalogue; (2) routinely review all future conference hotel contracts and consult with the Weldon Cooper Center and UVA, as needed, on contract negotiations and recommended changes in any contract terms or conditions, while also developing a checklist for all hotel contract negotiations; (3) consider the potential expansion of, and other modifications to, the annual summer seminars; (4) working with the electronic services committee and the conference coordinator, develop and recommend policies and procedures for the possible use of online registration for annual conferences and seminars (5) make recommendations to the board regarding conference fees, expenses, and scholarships and evaluate opportunities for cost savings; (6) review and recommend ways to ensure quality speakers for all CLE presentations, including speakers from past conferences whose presentations were poorly received, as indicated by conference evaluations and/or comments; and (7) undertake other tasks as may be assigned or approved by the board

Goal 2. Furnish information to local government attorneys and departments, to enable them better to perform their functions. (publications, electronic services, pro bono materials)

Ongoing Objectives, Goal 2

- 2.1 Publish monthly issues and annual index of the *Bill of Particulars*, in both print and electronic format, in accordance with general guidelines and board policies published in the P & P catalogue.
- 2.2 Publish and annually update the *LGA Handbook of Virginia Local Government Law*, in a CD-ROM version, in accordance with established guidelines and board policies published in the P & P catalogue; maintain a marketing program for handbook sales, as recommended by the publications committee, to ensure that those sales subsidize the cost of the handbook's production.
- 2.3 Maintain electronic communications services to members, including a home page on the World Wide Web, a search engine for the website, and a members' email network, through an agreement with the Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia. Routinely publicize the LGA's electronic communications services through notices in the membership directory and brochure, *Bill of Particulars*, and other materials, as appropriate.
- 2.4 Contract with the NLRG to provide web management services, working with the board of directors, staff, and the electronic services committee in maintaining and improving the content of the LGA website.
- 2.5 Publish an annual salary survey of LGA members, soliciting salary information through the ListServ beginning in the fall of each year.
- 2.6 Publicize and support the work of the LGA pro bono standing committee, encouraging the committee to create programs and services that complement the award-winning *Users' Guide for Pro Bono Activities* and develop materials that LGA members can use for their individual pro bono activities; continue periodically to publicize appropriate pro bono activities in the *Bill of Particulars*.

2010 Objectives, Goal 2

- 2.7 Complete the implementation of an electronic brief/form bank for LGA members, under the leadership of the electronic services committee; explore ways to increase the posting of forms by capturing members' ListServ responses or other methods..
- 2.8 Working through the electronic services committee, in collaboration with the Cooper Center for Public Service, finalize and implement the enhancements to the website undertaken in FY2009.
- 2.9 Approve and publish the work of the ad hoc committee on procurement forms, charged with collecting and posting on the website, for LGA members' use, the existing procurement forms used by Virginia local governments and state agencies.
- 2.10 Complete and adopt the new real property chapter for the *Handbook*.
- 2.11 Review and recommend archiving procedures for LGA, through the work of the electronic services committee and the administrative director.

Goal 3. Initiate, support, or oppose, as conditions dictate, legislation, litigation, and research that, in the judgment of this corporation, are of significance to Virginia local governments, provided that any legislative activities shall not constitute a substantial part of the activities of the corporation.

Ongoing Objectives, Goal 3

- 3.1 Provide an amicus brief service, administered through a standing committee according to LGA's established policy guidelines, and following the process adopted by the board of directors.
- 3.2 Act as a resource for information and analysis to the LGA membership and the Virginia General Assembly, according to policy guidelines for legislative involvement, as adopted by the board of directors, that facilitate support for the Virginia Municipal League and the Virginia Association of Counties in working on matters faced by Virginia's localities.

- 3.3 Support the work of LGA's standing committee on issues affecting local government law, as a forum for in-depth study of issues affecting LGA members, following the guidelines developed by the board of directors and published in the P & P catalogue.
- 3.4 Maintain an ongoing liaison, through the LGA ethics committee, with the Virginia State Bar Legal Ethics Committee and the Virginia State Bar Department of Professional Regulation, including its standing committee on the Unauthorized Practice of Law.
- 3.5 Routinely post on the LGA website each LGA amicus brief filed by the LGA. Maintain a regularly updated historical listing of all amicus briefs in which the LGA has participated, posting the listing on the LGA website and also including it in the LGA's P & P Catalogue.
- 3.6 Support the Virginia Institute of Government at the Cooper Center for Public Service, UVA, by (a) routinely appointing an LGA member to the Institute's advisory; and (b) supporting Institute activities in areas of local government law as requested, when such activities are within the mission and objectives of the LGA.

2010 Objectives, Goal 3

- 3.7 Continue the LGA ad hoc committees that are following developments resulting from, (1) the Virginia Bar Association's Boyd-Graves Committee Studying Governmental Immunity, (2) the State Corporation Commission's utility line issues, particularly with regard to legislative proposals that may be introduced in the 2010 General Assembly; and (3) *Kelo* and the developments of the USB Real Property and Eminent Domain Subsection. These committees should update the board on any significant developments within their subject areas.
- 3.8 Continue to pursue appropriate venues for an LGA land use presentation.

Goal 4. Exercise all powers that are within the province of this corporation, organized and functioning as a nonstock, nonprofit corporation under the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Ongoing Objectives, Goal 4

- 4.1 Adopt an annual operating budget and a *Handbook* budget.
- 4.2 Maintain a financial reporting and investments system that incorporates the financial policies first adopted by the board on April 2, 2009 through the oversight of the finance committee
- 4.3 Maintain general liability insurance for LGA.
- 4.4 Periodically review LGA's dues structure to ensure that it is adequate to support a balanced annual budget.
- 4.5 Ensure that the annual nominating process and appointment of the nominating committee follow the "Nominating Committee Guidelines" approved by the board of directors and published in the P & P catalogue.
- 4.6 Provide for support and staffing of LGA administrative and financial operations, conferences, website, *Bill of Particulars*, and the *LGA Handbook of Virginia Local Government Law*.
- 4.7 Maintain and regularly update, through the work of LGA's administrative director, an LGA Policies and Procedures (P & P) Catalogue, which includes all relevant materials adopted by the board of directors.
- 4.8 Hold regular board of directors' meetings at least 4 times a year, with two of those meetings to be associated with the annual fall and spring conferences.
- 4.9 Publish an annual LGA membership directory, to be released during the first quarter of each year. Also maintain an up-to-date electronic membership directory on the LGA website.
- 4.10 Hold an annual board retreat and adopt goals and objectives each year, which are set forth in the strategic plan.
- 4.11 Maintain and support the work of LGA standing committees on amicus briefs, awards, conference policies and procedures, electronic services, ethics, finance, issues affecting local government, outreach, pro bono, and publications, following policy guidelines as published in the P & P catalogue for committee membership, appointments of committee members, and committee meetings (including regularly scheduled meetings at both spring and fall conferences).
- 4.12 Maintain and support the work of LGA ad hoc committees according to the guidelines published in the P & P catalogue.

2010 Objectives, Goal 4

- 4.13 Working through LGA's new committee on conference policies and procedures, analyze LGA's newly reduced reserve fund balances and long-term investment policies, to determine if LGA should reduce the further budgeted amount of net revenues to be received from each fall and spring conference.
- 4.14 Adopt a diversity policy for LGA to be published upon approval by the board, in the P & P catalogue and distributed in other appropriate ways, as decided by the board of directors.

Goal 5. Coordinate an outreach program to enhance the understanding of local government law and the role of local government attorneys.

Ongoing Objectives, Goal 5

- 5.1 Maintain LGA liaisons with state law schools for the purpose of enhancing the understanding of local government law and the role of local government lawyers among law school students and faculty.

Liaisons for FY2010:

University of Richmond: Ben Thorp (Henrico County)

Washington and Lee: Nora Dunn (Lynchburg City)

University of Virginia: Angela Scolforo (Gordonsville Town)

George Mason University: Peter Maier (Arlington County)

William and Mary: Leo Rogers (James City County)

Regent University: Rachel Allen (Virginia Beach City)

Appalachian Law School: John Rife (Linebarger Goggan Blair & Simpson)

- 5.2 Create stronger relations with the state's law schools through activities of the law school liaisons identified in objective 5.1, as coordinated under the auspices of the outreach committee. The liaisons are encouraged to identify and pursue opportunities to improve participation of law school faculty and students in LGA events and participation of LGA members in law school events. Activities of the liaisons include:
 - Annually providing to the editor of the *Bill of Particulars* by October 30 updated information as to procedures and contact information to hire law students from their respective contact school for employment in local government law offices.
 - Encouraging law schools to join the LGA as associate members and encouraging their professors to participate as speakers at the LGA spring and fall conferences and summer seminar.
- 5.3 Continue to appoint board members to serve as liaisons to the Virginia Municipal League (VML) and the Virginia Association of Counties (VACo), with their primary role being to increase local government officials' awareness of LGA and explore opportunities for systematic collaboration with VML and VACo, including identifying LGA members for possible speakers at their training programs for newly elected board and council members and the associations' annual conference programs.
- 5.4 Recognize outstanding contributions to local government law by awarding the Edward J. Finnegan Award for Distinguished Service in the fall and the Cherin Award for an Outstanding Deputy or Assistant Local Government Attorney in the spring, making the award presentations at the conference banquet.
- 5.5 Recognize members for meritorious service through (a) the annual Service Awards, for those attorneys from LGA active-member localities who have served local government in Virginia for 15 years or more, in 5-year increments; (b) retirees' awards, for any LGA member who has been a local government practitioner for at least 15 years and who is retiring from practice with his/her jurisdiction or from the full-time practice of law; and (c) the LGA Special Projects Award, which recognizes members who have performed work on an LGA project or a project of significance to the LGA or local government generally.
- 5.6 Continue, through the awards committee, to nominate an LGA member, wherever appropriate, for the Virginia Law Foundation Fellows program; explore new opportunities to nominate LGA members for other appropriate awards.

- 5.7 Continue involvement by LGA in assisting under-served areas of the state and those with limited resources, with an overall goal of helping to improve the administration of justice. In particular, conduct, through the leadership of the outreach committee, an annual day-long summer CLE seminar in geographic regions that are the focus of LGA's outreach efforts.
- 5.8 Identify and routinely carry out organizational practices that will (a) make new LGA members feel more welcome (e.g., recognition of new attendees at conferences and a welcome letter from the LGA president to each new member); (b) maximize the opportunities for all members to participate in LGA activities; and (c) focus more attention on the need to involve the newer members of LGA, from all areas of the state, in LGA projects and programs, as well as identifying any areas in which these newer attorneys think organizational improvement is needed.
- 5.9 Through the leadership of the outreach committee, in collaboration with the LGA administrative director, maintain an up-to-date LGA membership brochure, making this brochure available to prospective members at all CLE conferences, in response to individual inquiries, and by other means identified by the outreach committee and the VML-VACo liaisons.
- 5.10 Through the work of the outreach committee, maintain the LGA's geographic regions list and geographic regional map, as approved by the board. Demographic information will be updated periodically by the outreach committee, with the list focusing on localities in each region, and not on identifying individual LGA local government attorneys within each region. (However, this map will not be used to determine the geographic rotation for future conference locations.)
- 5.11 Continue the current LGA law student scholarship program, according to guidelines adopted by the board and set forth in the P & P catalogue
- 5.12 Continue to pursue collaborative opportunities with the Local Government Section of the Virginia State Bar.

2010 Objectives, Goal 5

- 5.13 Working through LGA's outreach committee in collaboration with its law school liaisons, investigate and recommend to the board of directors the most appropriate role and responsibilities for the law school liaisons within the LGA.
- 5.14 Revise the staff welcome letter to new members to explain the differences between the ListServ and ListGroup and how to navigate the archives; also include a copy of the Handbook table of contents.
- 5.15 Develop, through the pro bono and awards committees, criteria for new pro bono award recognition.
- 5.16 Create a "buddy system" with the law school liaisons or their designees for law students attending conferences through the LGA law student scholarship program.
- 5.17 Develop ways to introduce first-time conference attendees.