



Wyoming
Association of
Municipalities
Building Strong Communities

**WAM Region Meetings
Legislative Candidate Exchange
October 11, 4-6 pm
Platte County Library, 904 9th Street, Wheatland, 82201**

I. Welcome & Introductions, 10 minutes

Attendees – Erin O’Doherty, Klaus Hanson, Dave Derragon, Joe Fabian, Joe Michaels, Dan Kirkbride. Kelly Krakow, Thomas Mohrin, Juliet Daniels, George Siglin, Michele Sussex, Andi Summerville, Brian Boner, Rick Kaysen, Laurie Heath, Katie Waldner, Randy Adams, and Dicky Shanor

II. Wyoming Cities and Towns, 20 minutes

- a. WAM staff or a Board member will present on municipalities, i.e., what is a city vs town, basic overview of local government, fiscal framework, etc. Laurie presented PowerPoint on basic services and fiscal structure of cities and towns.

III. Legislative Candidate Conversation, 40 minutes

- a. Moderated by Region Board member, this will be an exchange to educate the candidates of current issues relative to Wyoming municipalities and to discuss issues that may be forthcoming into the 2017 Legislative Session. Andi Summerville moderated a discussion using the following questions as a guide. Take home points were the actual financial picture of current municipalities in Wyoming and where the cuts would come from in the future. Good discussion educating new legislative candidates and hearing concerns and recommendations from veteran legislators. Answers to the questions that were provided to WAM from legislative candidates attached.

1. What is your experience with local government?
2. What is your opinion on increasing the ability of local government control over taxes?
3. Would you change the state funding allocations to cities/towns? How and why?
4. Are you familiar with the requirements and expectations from an incorporated municipality?
5. Generally speaking if elected, how would you support local government in the upcoming legislative session?

IV. WAM Business, 30 minutes - Time did not allow for region business discussion, meeting

1. Updates from WAM

- a. Legislative Committee Updates
- b. Winter Workshop Promo

Wyoming Association of Municipalities mission is to advocate for cities’ and towns’ common interests and provide educational opportunities for WAM members.

2. Updates from Cities & Towns

What is happening in your community? What are your struggles and where are you finding successes?

3. Schedule for Next Meeting

WAM Winter Workshop

January 11-13, 2017

Cheyenne Radisson Hotel

Candidate Name	What is your experience with local government?	What is your opinion on increasing the ability of local government control over taxes?	Would you change the state funding allocations to cities/towns? How and why?	Are you familiar with the requirements and expectations from an incorporated municipality?	Generally speaking if elected, how would you support local government in the upcoming legislative session?
Linda Burt	Early in my career I served as Executive Director of Community Action of Laramie County. In that position I dealt exclusively with local government: both county commissioners and the mayor's office. As the Executive Director of the Wyoming American Civil Liberties Union I dealt with the county attorney's office, sheriff and jail administrators. As part of my duties with the ACLU I worked with the Wyoming Legislature as their lobbyist.	While the ability of local government to control local taxes is restricted by the state's revenue authority alternative options for local revenue must be explored. All affected parties (governor, legislative and local) should be involved in establishing a stable, streamlined process for all funding models. Established models should be easy to understand and flexible in responding to changing conditions within the state's economy.	Insure that the funding formula was adequate to sustain cities/towns services and predictable and stable for planning purposes. (some formulas i.e. sales tax, caps on severance tax could be increased)	Incorporated municipalities are charged with providing for police and fire protection, water, sewer and sanitation, maintaining and plowing streets, providing for growth, and economic development. Home rule status gives incorporated municipalities the power to provide for their own government and local affairs by the passage of ordinances. The power derives from state power and is limited by referendum and state statute.	By working to improve and streamline funding process, explore additional revenue streams and increase funding formulas.
Ken Chestek	I practiced law in Pennsylvania for 21 years. For 18 of those years, I was the chief counsel for Erie County, Pennsylvania, supervising a staff of four assistants. We handled all labor negotiations, contracting, inter-governmental matters (cooperative projects with cities and local governments, interactions with state government), county land use planning, tax assessments, litigation involving the county, and generally all civil legal matters facing the county. While the structure of local government and relationships with the state vary somewhat between Pennsylvania and Wyoming, I feel that I have a very good idea about the kinds of issues that face local governments, and experience in handling them.	The Pennsylvania county for which I was chief counsel was a Home Rule Charter county, which gave my county greater flexibility in some areas than other counties in the state. I am therefore highly attuned to the need for and advantages of local autonomy over as many aspects of local governance as possible. I believe in allowing local flexibility.	I would need to study the current, highly complex method of allocation in more depth to provide a definitive answer to this question. However, from what I know right now, it seems to me that the state has set up rigid formulas for allocating state revenue because such rules are easy to enforce and don't require hard choices. But those rules may not be fair to all parts of the state, especially areas that lack oil, gas or coal resources. I would advocate a close, hard look at the funding formulas to try to even out the allocations among all counties and municipalities, not favoring those with richer resources.	As I responded above, I am very familiar in general with the types of services provided by incorporated municipalities in Pennsylvania. There are likely some differences for Wyoming municipalities, chief among them the fact that there are many more unincorporated areas in Wyoming than there were in Pennsylvania. I will need to do some studying to get up to speed on Wyoming law, but I believe that, because of my prior experience in law practice in Pennsylvania, I will know what questions to ask and I will be a quick study.	I would work to insure fair allocation of state revenues to local governments, and to increase local options for revenue generation. Local governments are the governments closest to the voters, and therefore most responsive to the needs of the local constituents. I would empower them to make decisions on matters of local interest as much as possible, and to avoid imposing any "one size fits all" solutions from the state.
Bill Henderson	Active community involvement. Over the years, I attended numerous city, county, and state meetings to help promote a community project, organizational events and activities. Member of Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Committee, Wyoming Wranglers; Chamber Business Council; and Chamber Action & Advocacy Committee. Attend and support regular monthly meetings, including promoting local businesses. Recently traveled with Wyoming Wranglers group to Washington DC to help build funding support for our area military, including \$95 million ammo transfer facility at FE Warren AFB, and funding for our Wyoming Air National Guard (C130, replacement helicopters and training.)	Current statute provides local government with authority over fees for local services, such as water, sewer and trash collection. I am open to hearing from local government bodies regarding increasing local government control over taxes.	I am open to having a conversation about increasing the portion of the fourth penny share for our cities and towns. I believe we need to provide more fiscal stability for cities and towns to plan for and fund their infrastructure, road repairs and maintenance. We need a plan for our LSRA and we need to identify and provide more for funding support to cities and towns.	Yes	There is pending draft legislation for the upcoming legislative session that will impact local government, including: extra-territorial jurisdiction; road repair and maintenance; and funding support for cities/towns. If elected, I want to help develop a plan for our LSRA (rainy day fund). Having a plan will help local government too. When elected, I want to help draft legislation to increase the fourth penny share from one-third to one-half for cities/towns. We need to provide more funding stability for cities/towns to build, maintain and repair local infrastructure. This will help support local business, promote economic development and grow revenue. We've done well over the past six years bringing high speed broadband and connectivity to all 48 school districts. I want to help do more to improve broadband connectivity among our cities/towns to promote business and create jobs. We're known as a business friendly state, but more can be done. There are opportunities to diversify our state revenue with technology like carbon

Candidate Name	What is your experience with local government?	What is your opinion on increasing the ability of local government control over taxes?	Would you change the state funding allocations to cities/towns? How and why?	Are you familiar with the requirements and expectations from an incorporated municipality?	Generally speaking if elected, how would you support local government in the upcoming legislative session?
Dan Kirkbride	I have lots of experience from eight years as a county commissioner, working with other counties and municipalities at that time and continuing those relationships in four years as a state representative. I was also vice president of the Wyoming County Commissioners for two years.	At this point I don't have anything philosophical against it, but I'd have to hear more of the discussion. There could be reasons from the state perspective for proscribing it (beyond the additional sales and lodging taxes) that I'm not aware of. But again, I'm certainly open to the discussion.	I don't know that I would change them though the formulas proposed during a budget session tend to be blunt instruments that don't always benefit each individual municipality. I'm always concerned for some inclusion of hardship formulas as that has a big impact on Platte County. If WAM and WCCA want to make changes, they need to develop a formula during the interim and then come with it as a united front to the session. When we start to tinker with the formula on the fly, anything can happen.	I mainly know that a municipality is a corporation vs. a county which is a subdivision of the state. One of the main differences there is that a municipality can set up an enterprise (such as the way the Town of Wheatland sells electricity) in a way that a county can't. I'm sure there are other significant functions of municipalities that I'm not aware of. If there are differences with First Class Cities vs. the towns apart from just size, I could use education on that as well.	I typically support giving local governments all the supplemental funding that anyone wants to give them. Local governments distribute their money in services throughout the communities making them one of the best conduits for funding to the people. Of course, being generous with funding will be difficult in the era of the state downturn, so it may possibly look like the legislature is being niggardly with just about everyone.
Landon Brown	I currently serve on the Cheyenne Planning Commission and have been actively involved in Cheyenne's civic processes since I was 18. In my professional career I have worked with numerous municipalities throughout the state specifically Cheyenne, Jackson, Green River, and Laramie. Being actively involved in the city I grew up in has given me the knowledge and experience needed to become a state legislator and fight for the assistance of local governments.	There are many opportunities that the legislature should attempt to look into. I believe that many local governments are utilizing fees and other mechanisms as a form of taxation because it is their only form of making due with the current model developed by the legislature and provided under the State Constitution. The current model holds the municipalities accountable for their spending and actions, but it severely restricts the leaders of the community to make decisions without legislative oversight. I believe, as do many in Wyoming, that local control is generally more appropriate. I will not unequivocally support this change to our constitution, but I do believe that the discussion needs to be started, and soon.	In a perfect world, I believe that the municipalities throughout the state would be able to tax and spend at their own discretion. This would allow local control of taxation policies and would give more power to the local government. Unfortunately, we do not have a perfect world, and we must learn to live with what we have or start the conversation to change it. As a legislator, I will fight for more control at the local level and attempt to reduce the dependence on the State from local governments. I would like to see the funding model change but I would need more time and some leaders in this field to assist me in developing a plan that would be equitable to the state and the municipalities.	In general, I am aware of the overall requirements for municipalities throughout the state of Wyoming. I am sure there are a few nuances that I am not familiar with, but I do believe I have the core knowledge needed to make informed decisions regarding state and local laws that may be promulgated in the legislature.	If elected, I will work with local leaders and listen to them as to what is needed from the state to make the partnerships work in a more cohesive fashion. Dylan's Law provides a framework for state and municipal relations. I believe that the leaders of the community need to be the first "experts" heard on matters relating to municipal matters. I will work directly with local leaders to attempt to open funding to provide much needed cash flow to municipalities to perform infrastructure spending to provide the necessities to attract new businesses within the State.
Joe Michaels	10 years experience on the Guernsey Town Council; one 4 year election cycle as Mayor Pro Tem.	Cities and Towns should have no control over taxes as they are set by the State.	I would not propose any changes to funding allocations to Cities and Towns. One of the biggest challenges is the ability to fund what we currently have.	I am very familiar with requirements and expectations from incorporated municipalities. Refreshed my memory by rereading the Statutes.	I would support local governments by allowing them to operate by State Statute and not by imposing any additional requirements.
Mike Weiland	I have had generally positive experiences with local government. I was on the Citizen's Advisory Committee for the Cheyenne Metropolitan Planning Organization for about 6 years (ending in 2015). I also was a founder of the Cheyenne Greenway in 1991 and continue to work on the Greenway now. I also worked on getting a bandshell built in town and finally, I am a mentor with Special Friends (part of Cheyenne Youth Alternatives). I was also past presidents of the Cheyenne Soccer Association and Cheyenne Tennis Association. In all of those capacities I worked with city administration.	Funding for cities and counties is crucial and would support allowing local governments to be able to adjust their taxing. This would include sales tax, and lodging tax. The legislature could set upper limits and give local governments more freedom to raise money.	I believe that the cities and counties in Wyoming need adequate and consistent funding. It would be very difficult to plan if each biennium had uncertain and different funding. So, yes I would change the state funding allocations to cities and towns. Our cities and towns are the lifeblood of the state and need to have resources to increase their desirability to the young and business. Initially to do this would involve prioritizing our spending and then if cities and towns are made more liveable, more money would become available due to more business and residents.	I believe that I know the basic requirements and responsibilities. However, I do need to spend more time to be educated in those requirements and expectations.	I would make sure that local governments have adequate and consistent funding. I would work to allow local governments to have a greater ability to adjust taxes. I would also work to ensure that the state is doing what it can to help cities and towns thrive, attracting business and young people.