



# **Mayor Tom Hoechst's November Report: The Importance of Networking to Achieve the Common Good**

November 8 2010 3:40 PM

Part of my job as Mayor is to stay abreast of all legislation and determine its impact on our community. To this end, I am a member of Southwest Illinois Conference of Mayors (SWICM) and the Metro Mayors organization. The SWICM covers three counties, with approximately forty mayors and several associate members, all in the area of municipal work. Monthly meetings are held to discuss issues impacting our communities and how to handle these various issues. The Metro Mayors are a local contingent of surrounding communities, including Grafton and Elsah, that meet bi-monthly with the Riverbend Growth Association. We serve the same purpose of keeping the local communities up-to-date on the activities of each community, problems we are experiencing, how we can help each other, and improve the economic vitality of our region.

The importance of participating in these types of organizations cannot be underestimated. On many occasions, one community will have already faced and overcome a given issue and can offer advice to other communities. At times we all share the same difficulties and a consensus is formed on how to proceed.

On a statewide scale, I was recently honored by being asked to serve on the Illinois Legislative Committee of the Illinois Municipal League (IML). There are over one thousand municipalities, of all sizes, in Illinois and only forty people serve on this Committee. As a member, my duties are to be the eyes and ears for the IML in my community and surrounding area.

Members of the Illinois General Assembly are lobbied constantly. The purpose of the IML is to represent cities, towns, and villages of Illinois, looking out for your best interest and welfare.

Our state legislators will be going into the fall veto session next week and it is important that we have their ear on such important issues as the pension crisis, new rules pertaining to arbitrators when dealing with public safety unions, historic preservation tax credits, amending the Publication Act providing online notification, collection of debts for unpaid building code violations, and deadlines for payment of monies owed communities. These were just a few of the items on our agenda for discussion.

During the week of November 15<sup>th</sup>, many mayors from around the state will be in Springfield talking with our Representatives and Senators looking out for your best interest. It will be my objective to represent Alton and other communities across the state on all matters of concern. Being a participant establishes a medium through which our organization may join with like minded groups to solve mutual problems at all levels of government. The importance of my participation in SWICM and Metro Mayors is I will be able to share view points and experiences in matters of local government. Alton will be at the forefront of discussions and input on policies affecting all of Illinois. Working with other mayors and our other elected leaders, I hope to be an advocate in achieving commons goals for everyone in the Riverbend.