



QUARTERLY UPDATE

SPRING 2018

Upcoming Events:

Spring Training

Friday, April 13th, 2018 7:30 am—
4:00 pm
Cottage Grove City Hall,
12800 Ravine Parkway S
Cottage Grove, MN 55016

“Calm & Collected Communication”

“Case Studies in Pro-active Code
Enforcement”

“Hoarding Response – A Multi-
disciplinary Approach”

Monthly MAHCO Executive Board Meetings

2nd Thursday of every month
10:00am
Location Varies
Contact a Board Member if you are
interested in joining us!

A look inside...

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“A Few of Things!” From Your President

Members of MAHCO my name is Greg Smith and I am your 2018 MAHCO President. It is my great pleasure to step into the roll of President of this Association. My mission and vision are to continue and improve the excellence that previous presidents and board members have provided to MAHCO.

I have worked within the realm of code enforcement for the last 12 years starting my career in California. I moved to Duluth Minnesota in 2010 and joined the City of Duluth Life Safety Division as a Housing Inspector in 2011. Having worked in government since 1998 I can tell you that some of the most dedicated, educated and professional people I have worked with have been in code enforcement and inspections.

I am a big supporter and advocate for professional certification and education. Obtaining and maintaining professional certifications shows dedication to your field, your education and your professional career. Towards that effort I have conducted two free study groups to help members prepare for the 2012/2015 IPMC Housing and Property Maintenance Inspector Certification. MAHCO plans to continue these groups and create other small educational groups throughout the year. If you or your jurisdiction would like to host a study group please contact me at gsmith@duluthmn.gov.



We recently had our February MAHCO Board meeting to discuss Association business.

2018 is going to be a busy and exciting year. In 2018 we will continue to provide excellent and relevant courses and work towards marketing MAHCO and its members to government stakeholders throughout the state.

At the ICC Region III Conference this year the 1st Vice President of The American Association of Code Enforcement, Kelvin Beene, announced that in 2019 AACE will be bringing their national conference to Bloomington Minnesota in October!! MAHCO has been working with AACE for several years to bring this conference home. This is our chance to showcase our incredible state and the excellent jurisdictions that keep it beautiful and safe. Preparing for this event will take many hands and MAHCO will be calling for planning committee members later this year. Please consider becoming an active part of the planning process for hosting the 2019 Annual AACE conference.

Finally, to ensure MAHCO is providing excellent service to its members we have sent out a survey to the membership. Please take time to fill out the survey. We will review your submissions and discuss changes that can be made to improve our service to you our members.

Thank you all for your membership and for making MAHCO a first class Association.



MAHCO Spring Training 2018

Friday, April 13th, 2018 7:30 am—4:00 pm

Cottage Grove City Hall,
12800 Ravine Parkway S
Cottage Grove, MN 55016

“Calm & Collected Communication”

Most professionals are faced with difficult interactions where their integrity can be compromised. Explore how to effectively communicate, especially when functioning in the role of a group facilitator and leader. Leading with your assertive voice allows you to be clear and concise across diverse audiences while maintaining a professional tone. You will learn how to balance your personal appeals and better understand how to structure a message that best suits your communication style. Step by step methods for dealing with intense conversations will also be discussed. Most people want to live their life so they can look in the mirror at the end of the day and like who they see.

Dr. Jody Janati

Trainer, speaker, conference facilitator... Jody Janati has an Ed.D. degree in Organizational Leadership, and a M.A. degree in Speech Communication. During her academic career she held a number of administrative positions in higher education, taught over 10 years for the University of MN and continues to work with the MN State Prison system. She offers a variety of public and professional workshops on conflict reduction tactics and effective communication skills throughout the year. She is the author of DailyOm's best selling online class "Protect Yourself from Control Dramas and has authored five books. She is also the co-owner/publisher of Natural Awakenings Magazine Twin Cities.

This event will fill quickly!

Register by April 2, 2018, to guarantee availability.

“Case Studies in Pro-active Code Enforcement”

This course will examine approaches, lessons learned, best practices for a pro-active approach to code enforcement. The presenter will share case studies from his experience with City of Burnsville.

Christopher Forslund, City of Burnsville, MN

Christopher Forslund is the Code Enforcement Manager for the City of Burnsville.

“Hoarding Response – A Multi-disciplinary Approach”

By exploring four perspectives from members of the Minnesota Hoarding Task Force, attendees will learn about the public health and environmental implications to hoarding, how a clean-out company assists clients in problem cases, and the experience of a family member of someone who hoards. The panelists believe in a multidisciplinary, collaborative approach that satisfies housing codes for safety of individuals and the public while maintaining a respectful relationship with the resident. The panel will consist of an Environmental Health Supervisor from Hennepin County, Joe Jurusik, a Public Health Nurse from Scott County, Brittani Schmidt, Jenny Burg, Community Relations and Outreach Manager for a clean-out company and Dale Fine, whose interest comes from a family connection. They will also update us on the restructuring of the task force over the past year and where they are headed in the future.

Speakers

Jenny Berg, Community Relations and Outreach Manager for Scene Clean
Co-Chair Minnesota Hoarding Task Force

Brittani Schmidt MPH, MN, RN, Scott County Public Health Nurse

Joseph W. Jurusik, Hennepin County Environmental Health

Dale Fine, Western Great Lakes Region Account Executive for iHeartMEDIA

PROGRAM

7:30-8:00 Registration and Network-
ing

8:00-8:15 Welcome Opening Com-
ments

8:15-9:45 Calm & Collected Communica-
tion

9:45-10:00 Break

10:00-11:30 Case Studies, Burnsville

11:30-12:30 Lunch

12:30-2:00 Hoarding Response

2:00-2:15 Break

REGISTRATION FORM

[Complete both sides, detach
and mail with your payment]

***“Calm & Collected Com-
-munication”***

&

Case Studies, Burnsville

&

“Hoarding Response”

Sponsored by

**Minnesota Association of
Housing Code Officials**

Friday, April 13th 2018

7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Location:

Cottage Grove City Hall,
12800 Ravine Parkway S
Cottage Grove, MN 55016
Registration includes morning
breakfast,

2:15-3:45 Hoarding Response

3:45-4:00 Q/A & Discussion

Join us for a Happy Hour!

When:

Immediately following the training!

Where:

Las Margaritas Restaurant 7750
Harkness Ave S #101 Cottage Grove,
MN 55016

Why:

To enjoy quality networking with like
minded professionals in a social at-
mosphere!

Details:

MAHCO will cover initial round of appe-
tizers!

Register Today!

Member Spotlight

Carri Levitski

By: Shannon Rohr, Bloomington

This quarter I would like to introduce you to one of our newest MAHCO Board Members, Carri Levitski from the City of Cambridge. Carri is a Community Development Administrative Assistance and wears a lot of hats in her position, she administers City licenses, the City's Sign code, zoning, subdivision, housing, nuisance and other codes. She also manages the City website and social media presence and is the back-up GIS coordinator. She has been with the City of Cambridge for 12 years. Before working at the City of Cambridge, Carri worked for the City of Lino Lakes as a Permit Technician for nine years. Carri has been a MAHCO member for the past three years.

Carri grew up in Blaine and attended Blaine Senior High School. In high school she managed the varsity hockey and football teams and was the Vice President of the Business Professionals of America group. After high school she took some Building Inspector Technology courses.

Carri currently resides in Fish Lake Township. She has been married 13 years to her awesome husband Alex, she says he puts up with all of her extra-curricular activities. They have 2 sons, Xander who is 10 and Nico who is 8. Their family is rounded out by two cats, Tigger and Taz and two Chesapeake Bay Retrievers, Cooper and Cody.



Carri is very busy in her free time. She enjoys camping, fishing, hunting and spending time with family and friends. Volunteering is also close to Carri's heart. She has taught faith formation, served on her Parish Board, served as a Den Leader and Cub Master for Cambridge Cub Scouts. Lastly she was elected to the Cambridge-Isanti District #911 School Board in 2016.

When asked why you love your job, Carri said "I have a great mix of duties which brings challenges and surprises each and every day. I appreciate the lives of the citizens that we serve." Well said Carri!

Board Member Contact Information

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In the News (Local)

Originally by: Randy Furst; Star Tribune, December 22, 2017 — 10:25pM

In unprecedented move, Minneapolis seeks an administrator for 23 apartment buildings housing 1,200 tenants

The city of Minneapolis on Friday asked a court for authority to seize control of 23 apartment buildings in south Minneapolis that are illegally renting to tenants, in what could be its most aggressive intervention ever in the operation of residential rental property.

An estimated 1,200 tenants, many of them with low incomes, could be affected by the city's tenant remedies action, which seeks to have a Hennepin County housing court referee appoint an administrator to run the properties, recently sold under contracts for deed by embattled landlord Stephen Frenz.

"If it was not clear before, it should be clear now that the city will enforce its ordinances and look out for the rights of tenants," Minneapolis City Attorney Susan Segal said. Had the city not filed suit, its alternative would have been to shut down the buildings and evict the tenants.

Frenz bought the properties from Spiros Zorbalas in 2012 after Zorbalas was banned from renting in the city for five years. But in 2016, it was discovered that Zorbalas and Frenz shared a financial interest in the properties. The revelation led the City Council on Dec. 8 to revoke all 60 of Frenz's rental licenses for five years.

Seeing the revocation coming, Frenz sold off most of the properties in late summer on contracts for deed. The city refused to grant the new owners rental licenses because under such contracts, Frenz and Zorbalas would reassume ownership if the buyer defaulted on payments.

Nonetheless, many of the new owners were collecting rents anyway, putting tenants in a quandary about whether to face eviction or pay rents to landlords who lacked authority to collect them.

"What's historic here is the city is realizing that tenant remedies actions [are] a tool they ought to be using in addition to inspections, fines, license revocations and condemnations," said Larry McDonough, director of pro bono work at the Dorsey & Whitney law firm and an expert on housing law who is not involved this case.

"It's a big deal" that the city is back doing tenant remedies actions, he said, and "it's a big deal because of the scale on which they are doing it."

Segal said she expected that a court hearing on the city's suit will be scheduled for early January, when the city attorney's office will make its case for the appointment of an administrator.

The city's request has two recent precedents. On Monday, in response to tenants represented by pro bono attorneys from Faegre Baker Daniels, referee Mark Labine appointed an administrator for 42 properties owned by Mahmood Khan, whose rental licenses were revoked in 2015. Khan recently exhausted all his appeals.

In the News (Local)

Continued

On Tuesday, at the request of Faegre attorneys, housing referee JaPaul Harris appointed an administrator for five properties owned by Misco Holdings, which purchased them from Frenz and Zorbalas on contracts for deed. The city had refused to grant Misco a rental license. Harris ordered rents returned to tenants for September through November.

If the housing referee grants the city's request, most of Frenz and Zorbalas' 60 apartment buildings will be under an administrator. Besides the five Misco buildings, a mortgage lender foreclosed on 17 other Frenz properties and had an administrator appointed after discovering Frenz and Zorbalas were partners, in violation of mortgage papers Frenz signed.



Stephen Frenz, right, and attorney Douglas Turner walked through City Hall in Minneapolis in September.

Frenz has about 15 other properties; their status is not clear, but the city believes most were properly sold.

Segal said the city has been in discussions with Faegre attorney Michael Cockson, who has been in continuous litigation against Frenz since January 2016. Cockson said Friday he anticipated filing suit on behalf of tenants in the 23 buildings to get recent rents rebated. He's also overseeing a class-action lawsuit against Frenz and Zorbalas.

"I am very happy the city has joined the fray in vindicating the rights of tenants," Cockson said. "I can only bring a lawsuit on behalf of individual tenants whereas the city can sue

in its own name."

Segal indicated that it would recommend to a housing referee the appointment of Lighthouse Management Group, the same administrator named by both Labine and Harris. It will have authority to collect rents, provide services and make repairs as needed.

The administrator would remain until the properties have a qualified owner, Segal said. That would occur if the buildings were sold, but not on contracts for deed.

Neither Frenz or Zorbalas returned phone calls Friday.

The city has been under pressure for some time to file a tenant remedies action against the Frenz and Zorbalas properties. Segal said that because the City Council serves "in a quasi-judicial capacity" regarding its power to revoke rental licenses, her office did not file suit earlier. "So we are only initiating this action now," she said.

Roberto de la Riva, an organizer with Renters United, which has been mobilizing tenants at Frenz properties to press for repairs, said Friday that "it's about time."

"We need the city to defend tenants and stand with tenants," he said. "There is imbalance of power between landlords and tenants in the city and this is one way that moves toward a more just city for everyone."

Special Announcement

Scholarship Announcement - AACE Conference

The MAHCO Board is excited to announce a scholarship opportunity for our members to further promote education and networking within the profession. The member chosen will be awarded free attendance to the American Association of Code Enforcement's Annual Conference in Colorado this fall. This exciting opportunity is a result of continued financial strength of our organization.

The scholarship will cover costs for conference registration, flight, and accommodations at the conference hotel. The intent is to sponsor this educational opportunity for a MAHCO member who would otherwise not be able to attend the AACE Conference due lack of funding from their employer. We encourage all MAHCO members interested in this opportunity to submit written requests (email is acceptable) to the board via email to gsmith@DuluthMN.gov by **Thursday, May 11, 2017**.

Written requests should consist of 3 paragraphs detailing the following information:

1. Who you are! Including information such as the organization you work for, position, how long you have held this position, roles/responsibilities, etc.
2. Reason for your interest in attending the AACE Conference. Specifically, how this experience will benefit you professionally and what you hope to gain!
3. Summarize briefly the need for such a scholarship.

Recipient of the scholarship should be able to provide confirmation to the Board that their attendance will be supported by their employer. The recipient will be selected based on need for financial assistance and their overall appeal. Applicants who would otherwise be sent by their employer will not be considered. The recipient of this year's scholarship will be announced in the summer issue of the **MAHCO** Newsletter.

Important Information

***MAHCO is excited to continue offering the IPMC Certification Study Group. Join fellow members in preparing to take the certification exam for IPMC Property Maintenance and Housing Inspector. The following books are required for reference: 2012 or 2015 International Property Maintenance Code, 2012 or 2015 International Residential Code and Legal Aspects of Code Administration. If you or your jurisdiction are interested in hosting a study group please contact President Greg Smith to at gsmith@duluthmn.gov.

***MAHCO'S LinkedIn Discussion Board

<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8494507>

***MAHCO is conducting research on the how well the Board is serving the membership, the quality of educational training's and increasing member participation. We'd love to hear from you about how we are doing and what ideas you have. This will help us make improvements, continue to provide exiting training opportunities, and build a network of motivated members. The survey only takes 5 minutes, and your responses are completely anonymous.

We will be giving away two \$15.00 gift cards to Holiday Gas Stations. Three cities with most member participation per total members for that city will be entered to win. We will do a random drawing of all the members within those cities to decide who wins.

If you have any questions about the survey, please email us:

gsmith@duluthmn.gov

We really appreciate your input!

One participant will be selected to win a \$15.00 gas card!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9BDLC5H>

*****Save the date: The 2019 American Association of Code Enforcement Annual Conference will be held in Bloomington, MN next October!**