



Maine Municipal Association

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Cathy Conlow New Executive Director at Maine Municipal Association

AUGUSTA – The nationwide search for a new executive director at the Maine Municipal Association ended with the appointment of a well-known, high-profile municipal leader from one of Maine’s largest cities.

Catherine “Cathy” Conlow, who has served as city manager in Bangor since 2011, and as Orono town manager prior to that, was the unanimous choice to head the organization starting in August 2021, according to James Gardner, Jr., the president of MMA’s 12-member Executive Committee and manager in the Town of Easton.

Conlow will replace Stephen Gove, a long-time MMA executive who will retire at the end of this month after a 41-year career during which he led several MMA departments. Gove has served as MMA’s Executive Director since 2015.

Conlow said her deep experience in municipal government, especially in Maine, should prove to be valuable in her new role.

“MMA is a recognized leader in supporting and promoting municipal governance and I am honored to have been selected to lead the organization,” she said. “I have spent the last 33 years working in local government and this position is the perfect opportunity to use my knowledge of local government to support the good works of the 486 municipalities across the state. I feel so fortunate to be given the opportunity to lead an organization that is so highly thought of throughout the state, as it supports the unique mission of our municipalities.”

Gardner said that during the search for a new MMA leader, the Executive Committee consistently heard two themes about Conlow: That she has a direct, engaging management style. And, that she embraces innovation.

“Cathy always strives to move her organizations forward,” Gardner said. “That is exactly the kind of leader our Executive Committee sought going forward.”

Conlow takes over a non-partisan, voluntary membership organization that is well-respected among Maine towns and cities and among state municipal leagues nationwide. There are 486 municipalities in Maine; every town and city in the state belongs to MMA. The organization, founded in 1936, has 110 employees and offers a wide array of services to municipalities.

In addition to her municipal management roles in Maine, Conlow served as president of the Maine Town, City & County Management Association. She won that organization’s most prestigious award, the Linc Stackpole Manager of the Year Award, in 2019. She has served on the Bangor Region YMCA board and on the board of the Municipal Review Committee, which oversees a solid-waste facility in Hampden.

Prior to moving to Orono in 2004, Conlow held various municipal positions in Minnesota and Oregon. She is a graduate of Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania and holds a Master of Public Administration degree from George Washington University.

Gove said Conlow will take over an organization with excellent member relations, a cooperative working partnership with state government, dedicated employees and a solid financial balance sheet.

About the Maine Municipal Association: MMA, founded in 1936, is a voluntary, non-partisan member-service organization. It has a core belief that local government is a fundamental component of our democratic system of government. MMA’s services include advocacy, education and training, professional legal and personnel advisory services and self-funded group insurance programs.