

‘In this together’

Our thanks to Cindy Dodge as she retires from MTA, continues to serve members in a new role

When Cindy Dodge looks back at her nearly 18 years at MTA, she marvels at just how much both townships and the Association have changed.

“What *hasn’t* changed?” Dodge reflected. “The amount of work that townships do for their communities, the level of services that townships offer, and the responsibilities and requirements of townships and their officials have all increased so much.

“What townships offer is far beyond the statutory requirements of elections, tax collection and assessing. There are societal changes, and with people looking for more of a work-life balance, they are asking, ‘What parks are available?’, ‘Is my community safe?’ ‘What local events are being held?’ Townships—and their service to their community—is constantly evolving.”

As townships have changed and grown, Dodge has been integral in helping to guide and teach thousands of township leaders, responding to member inquiries as a Member Information Services (MIS) liaison and presenting countless workshops, webinars and conference sessions. After nearly two decades, Dodge is retiring from her full-time role with the Association at the beginning of August.

The legions of officials who have turned to Dodge for guidance and advice will still be able to attend Dodge’s MTA educational sessions and reach out to her with questions. She is shifting to a contractual role with the Association, focusing on teaching at MTA workshops, *Now You Know* webinars, and Annual Conference sessions. She will also continue to work with the MIS Department, providing information and responding to member inquiries, on a more-limited basis.

“Throughout my time at MTA, my goal has been to be helpful and to explain the often-complex township topics and terminology in a way that is approachable and helps our

members,” she said. “Our MIS Department exists to ensure that township officials can get the help they need—and I am grateful to be able to continue to be a part of that.”

Dodge’s varied expertise on a wide variety of topics has made her an invaluable asset to MTA—and to our member officials. She joined MTA following a career in human resources and time serving as clerk in **Williamstown Township** (Ingham Co.). Bringing with her to MTA her experiences as a township board member and election administrator, and with her personnel management, benefits and payroll background, Dodge was aptly able to relate to our member officials and respond to their inquiries.

During her time with the Association, she has expanded her areas of expertise, becoming a Michigan certified assessing officer and teaching many assessment administration courses for MTA, as well as helping to create the curriculum and present at MTA’s annual *Board of Review Training*. In fact, when Public Act 660 of 2018 put into place required training for board of review members, Dodge was integral in working with the State Tax Commission (STC) to develop the curriculum that is still used by the STC today. She enshrined her knowledge and insights into one of MTA’s newest publications, *Assessing Your Township’s Assessing: A Guide for Township Boards*, which was released in 2023.





“We are thankful to Cindy for nearly 18 years of expertly guiding and teaching our members,” said MTA Executive Director Neil Sheridan. “Cindy will continue to be an integral part of our MIS and MTA service during this election cycle and in getting our many new officials up to speed next year. We celebrate with her, and look forward to her continued contributions to MTA and to townships and their leaders. On behalf of the MTA Board, staff and members, Cindy, we thank you—and are glad this is not ‘goodbye.’”

Throughout the years, Dodge has traveled the state, teaching on topics from cemetery management and services to tax collecting, elections prep and strategies to records retention—and others too numerous to mention. In addition to teaching for the Association, she has been a frequent speaker at other organizations, including the Michigan Association of Municipal Clerks, Michigan Municipal Cemetery Association, Michigan Assessors Association (MAA) and MParks, and has even taught several times for an international audience at the International Association of Assessing Officers annual conference. She has represented MTA on the MAA Board of Directors for numerous years.

“When I first started at MTA, I hadn’t even been to the Upper Peninsula,” Dodge said. “Now, I know every inch of this state. My travels—seeing our townships throughout Michigan and meeting and talking with our members—have helped me to even better understand our state and the people serving our communities.”

Just as townships’ responsibilities and Dodge’s experiences and expertise have grown over the years, so too has MTA and the services it provides.

“The way we communicate with our members has drastically changed,” Dodge said, noting the increasing prevalence of emails, eblasts and social media. In addition to the tried-and-true in-person workshops and conferences, the ways in which MTA provides information and education to our members has also seen an evolution. Online learning now allows members to learn at their convenience, with either live events or recorded webinars housed in MTA’s Online Learning Center. MTA’s website has also greatly expanded

over the years, now including more than 500 “Answer Center” pages—on topics from A to Z with samples, statutory citations, resources, links and more—developed, curated and maintained by the MIS Department.

“It has always amazed me how much MTA, and its staff of 18, is able to offer to our members,” Dodge said.

Being part of the integral MIS team, with daily member contact, has left a lasting impression on Dodge. “I have formed relationships with our members, and they have become friends,” she said. “I have always said that I think of our members as colleagues. We are all in this together, helping to serve Michigan’s townships.”

Got township questions? MTA has answers!

MTA’s Member Information Services (MIS) staff—which includes

an attorney and three former local government officials—are available to answer your questions on all facets of township governance and administration. Contact the MIS Department with questions Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call (517) 321-6467 (press option 1), fax to (517) 321-8908 or email:

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