

LEVY COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
 APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT
 P.O. BOX 310
 BRONSON, FL 32621
 TELEPHONE: (352) 486-5218, EXT. 3
 FAX: (352) 486-5167
 EMAIL: HUMANRESOURCES@LEVYCOUNTY.ORG



Instructions: Complete all items. If a question is not applicable, type "N/A". Do not leave any sections blank. Failure to do so may result in a loss of employment opportunities. Resumes may be attached to supplement the information on the application, but are not accepted in lieu of completion of this application. This application will only be used to consider you for the one position for which you are applying. If you wish to be considered for future openings, you will need to submit a new application. *Asterisk items must be completed.

*Position Applying For: County Manager *Department: Board of County Commissioners

PERSONAL INFORMATION

*Last Name <u>Harper</u>	*First Name: <u>Mary-Ellen</u>	*Middle Name: <u>Lescoe</u>		
*Street Address: <u>70 NW 130th Street</u>	*Home Phone: <u>NA</u>	*Cell Phone: <u>860.729.8247</u>		
*City: <u>Trenton</u>	*State: <u>FL</u>	*Zip Code: <u>32693</u>	*County: <u>Levy</u>	*Email: <u>MaryEllenLHarper@Gmail.com</u>

*Are you at least 18 years of age? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		*Do you have a valid Florida driver's license? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Class: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E – Regular License <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C CDL Endorsements: _____	
*Have you ever worked under a different name? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If "Yes" Name: <u>Mary-Ellen Lescoe</u>			
*Are you able to perform the essential functions of the position as listed and described on the job description for this position with or without a reasonable accommodation? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
*Relatives Employed by Levy County: Do you have relatives by blood or marriage including elected officials, working for the Board of County Commissioners or other elected officials in Levy County Government? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (If Yes, please complete below) <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Full Name of Relative: <u>Thomas J. Harper, Sr.</u>	Dept. or Office Location: <u>Planning Commission</u>	Relationship: <u>Father-In-Law</u>	
*Have you ever been employed by Levy County Commissioners? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (If Yes, please complete below) <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Dates Employed: <u>February 2, 2024 - Present</u>	Department: <u>Public Information Office</u>	Supervisor Name: <u>Wilbur Dean</u>	Reason for Leaving: <u>Presently Employed</u>
*Law Violation Record: Have you ever been convicted, pled nolo contendere, or had the adjudication of guilt withheld in connection with any criminal offense in any civilian or military court? Note: A "Yes" answer to this question will not automatically bar you from employment. The nature, job-relatedness, severity, and date of the offense in relation to the position for which you are applying will be considered. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (If Yes, please complete below) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			
Offense:	Date:	Place:	Disposition:
*Are you on the exclusion list for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			

EDUCATION – TRAINING – SKILLS

***Highest Education Level Attained?**

- Less than High School
 High School Graduate
 Tech School
 2 Year College
 Some College
 Some Grad School
 Doctorate
 Bachelors
 Master's
 MD, DDS, JD
 Post
 GED

School Level	Name and Location of School	Course of Study	Did you Graduate?	Degree or Diploma
High School	Bloomfield High School, CT	College Prep	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Diploma with Honors
College/University	University of New Haven, CT	Fire Tech/English	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	BS Magna Cum Laude
Post Graduate	University of New Haven, CT	Public Admin/Labo	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Masters Public Admin
Business/Trade	National Fire Academy, MD	Exec. Fire Officer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Executive Fire Officer

***List any past accomplishments, honors, or assignments which may be relevant for the job for which you are applying:**

30 years of experience in Federal, State, and Local Government including 20 years managing a 175-member fire department

***Special training, knowledge, skills, or abilities related to the position in which you are applying:**

Proven track record as a strong leader and communicator in local government; written books and developed and instructed college courses on subjects including communication, management, professional writing, and speaking

LICENSES-CERTIFICATIONS-REGISTRATIONS

Please Indicate any Professional/Occupational Licenses or Registrations/Certifications you currently hold below.

Name of License/Certification/Registration: Fire Instructor IV		Issued By: State of Florida	
Number:	Issue Date: 2017	Expiration Date: 2025	State: FL
Name of License/Certification/Registration: Fire Instructor I, II and III		Issued By: State of Connecticut	
Number:	Issue Date: 1998, 2001 and 2010	Expiration Date: NA	State: CT
Name of License/Certification/Registration: Fire Officer I, II, III, and IV		Issued By: State of Connecticut	
Number:	Issue Date: 1997, 1998, 1999, 2001	Expiration Date: NA	State: CT
Name of License/Certification/Registration: Firefighter I and II		Issued By: State of Connecticut	
Number:	Issue Date: 1994 and 1995	Expiration Date: NA	State: FL
Name of License/Certification/Registration: Hazardous Materials Technician		Issued By: State of Connecticut	
Number:	Issue Date: 1997	Expiration Date: NA	State: CT

Employment History

Experience: Beginning with your most recent job, describe your employment history, including related volunteer or other non-paid experience. This information will be used to evaluate your qualifications for this job opening and will determine your eligibility to go on to the next step of the evaluation process. Describe additional related experience on a "Separate sheet and attach to Application."

Company Name: Levy County BoCC		Phone: 352.486.5218		From Mo./Yr. 02/2024	To Mo./Yr. Present
Street Address: 310 School Street	City: Bronson	State: FL	Zip: 32621	Starting Pay: \$74,000	Ending Pay: \$74,000
Job Title: Public Information Officer		Number of Employees Supervised: 0		May we Contact this Employer? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Supervisor Name: Wilbur Dean		Supervisor's Phone Number: 352.486.5218		Reason for Leaving: Presently Employed	
Duties and Responsibilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Public Information Officer is responsible for initiating communication from the Levy County Board of County Commission to the Levy County community, the media, and other audiences. ▪ Responsibilities of the Public Information Officer include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Relations: Generating and disseminating information and news regarding Levy County's governance. This includes effectively responding to media inquiries, assisting with community outreach activities, and maintaining the County's webpage and social media accounts. • Emergency Communications: In an emergency, the Public Information Officer is integral to the Emergency Operations Center staff. The Public Information mission during an emergency is to promptly share accurate information with the public to encourage people to take action to save lives and minimize property damage. 					

Employment History

Experience: Beginning with your most recent job, describe your employment history, including related volunteer or other non-paid experience. This information will be used to evaluate your qualifications for this job opening and will determine your eligibility to go on to the next step of the evaluation process. Describe additional related experience on a "Separate sheet and attach to Application."

Company Name: Dynamix Consulting Group		Phone: 860.729.8247		From Mo./Yr. 04/2021	To Mo./Yr. 10/2023
Street Address: PO Box 68		City: Lake Alfred	State: FL	Zip: 33850	Starting Pay: \$150,000
Job Title: Owner / Principal		Number of Employees Supervised: 12		May we Contact this Employer? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Supervisor Name: Mary-Ellen Harper		Supervisor's Phone Number: 860.729.8247		Reason for Leaving: Parter bought out Consulting Firm	
Duties and Responsibilities: Public Safety Consulting including data analytics, interviews, report writing, management of contractors					
Company Name: Emergency Services Consulting International		Phone: 971.300.9012		From Mo./Yr. 06/2018	To Mo./Yr. 04/2021
Street Address: 4795 Meadow Wood Lane		City: Chantilly	State: VA	Zip: 20151	Starting Pay: \$50,000
Job Title: Director of Operations		Number of Employees Supervised: 30			
Supervisor Name: Andrea Hobi		Supervisor's Phone Number: 971.300.9012		Reason for Leaving: Started Own Company	
Duties and Responsibilities: Public Safety Consulting and management of employees and contractors					
Company Name: Florida State Fire College		Phone: 352.369.2800		From Mo./Yr. 8/2017	To Mo./Yr. 6/2021
Street Address: 11655 NW Gainesville Road		City: Ocala	State: FL	Zip: 34482	Starting Pay: \$35,000
Job Title: Executive Development Programs Manager		Number of Employees Supervised: 12			
Supervisor Name: Michael Tucker		Supervisor's Phone Number: 352.516.7319		Reason for Leaving: Offered position with National Consulting Firm	
Duties and Responsibilities: Develop, Schedule, and Instruct Chief Officer Certification Courses; Manage 12 contract instructors					
Company Name: Town of Farmington Fire Department		Phone: 860.675.2300		From Mo./Yr. 12/1997	To Mo./Yr. 6/2018
Street Address: 1 Monteith Drive		City: Farmington	State: CT	Zip: 06032	Starting Pay: \$15/Hour
Job Title: Director of Fire and Rescue Services		Number of Employees Supervised: 175			
Supervisor Name: Kathleen Eagen		Supervisor's Phone Number: 860.675.2320		Reason for Leaving: Moved to Florida	
Duties and Responsibilities: Responsible for the management of a 175-person fire department (volunteer, part-time, and career)					

VETERANS' PREFERENCE

Do you wish to claim Veterans' Preference? Yes No

If Yes: Branch: _____ Entry Date: _____ Discharge Date: _____

Applicants seeking Veteran's Preference should attach the Veteran's Preference Request Form and a Copy of their DD 214 to this application.

REFERENCES

List 3 References who are NOT Relatives.

*Name:	*Complete Address:	*Phone:	*Occupation:	*Years Known:
Rissa Johns	519 NE 2nd St Chiefland, FL 32626	352.535.5301	Chiefland Commissioner	3
John Oates	70 Bushy Hill Road Granby, CT 06035	860.559.5455	Retired Fire Chief CEO, International Public Safety Data Institute	31
Kevin Sehlmeier	Ottawa Building, 611 W. Ottawa Lansing, MI 48909	616.433.5216	Michigan State Fire Marshal	6

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Please read carefully, initial each paragraph, and sign below.

*Initial MLH	*I authorize any person, school, current employer (except as expressly noted), past employer(s), and organizations named in this application form (and accompanying resume or other documentation, if any) to provide Levy County with relevant information and opinion, personal or otherwise, that may be useful in making a hiring decision. I release all parties from all liability for any damage that may result from furnishing information and opinion to you. Additionally, I understand that Levy County may conduct a background check as well as check a check of any social media pages I may have.
*Initial MLH	*Levy County is a Drug-Free Workplace. I understand that as a condition of employment I may be required to take a post-offer/pre-employment alcohol/drug test. I further understand that, if management suspects that I am unable to perform my job without endangering other or myself at any time during my employment, I may be required to take an alcohol/drug test.
*Initial MLH	*I hereby acknowledge that I have read the above statements and understand them. I certify that I the undersigned applicant, have personally completed this application. I declare that the facts contained in the application (or any resume or other documents submitted) are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that any misrepresentations or omissions may disqualify me from further consideration for employment, and will result in my dismissal from employment, if discovered at a later date.

Applicant Signature:  Date: July 24, 2024

All applications are subject to Florida Public Records Law.

LEVY COUNTY IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Levy County Government Center
310 School Street, Room 112
Bronson, FL 32621

Mary-Ellen L. Harper

70 NW 130th Street, Trenton, FL 32693

Phone: 860.729.8247

Email: MaryEllenLHarper@Gmail.com

Cover Letter

Levy County Board of County Commissioners

P.O. Box 310, Bronson, Florida 32621

July 24, 2024

Dear Commissioners,

Please accept this resume and application for the position of Levy County Manager.

August 2, 2024, marks my six-month anniversary as Levy County's first-ever Public Information Officer. I have spent the last six months showing you exactly who I am—an energetic team builder who believes wholeheartedly in communication, planning, and implementation.

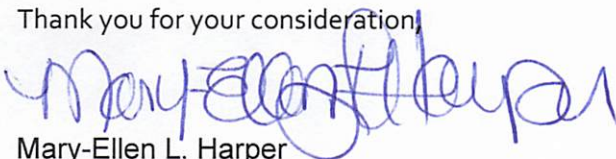
Prior to working as your Public Information Officer, I spent more than 30 years working in state and local government in both the northern and southern United States. Most recently, I have been working as a public safety consultant since 2018. Working as a Public Safety Consultant has allowed me to assist municipal governments across the country in engaging their stakeholders to review their data and to develop short-term Strategic Plans, long-term Master Plans, Staffing Studies, and a variety of other custom projects. I was often called upon to work with government agencies facing difficult – and usually very politically sensitive – situations that needed assistance in developing a plan to move forward. These projects consistently resulted in repeat work, recommendations to other agencies for work, and long-term friendships with people that I stay in touch with to this day.

In all of my previous positions, I was charged with understanding my stakeholders' needs and then motivating my team members to meet or exceed the expectations of those stakeholders. I met with success in the public and private sectors by building strong working relationships based on honest, open communication and trust and then establishing a clear work plan so that all team members understood the expectations and deadlines and what they must do to succeed.

If I were selected as Levy County's first County Manager, my immediate priorities would be to meet with all department heads to identify what is and is not working well within their departments, to create a short list of issues that need immediate attention, and then to commence work on a county-wide master plan to assure that Levy County has a long-term plan to align its resources with the anticipated increased demands for service that will come with the future growth of our county.

People will always rise to the occasion when they feel appreciated and secure and are challenged to think outside the box. As your first-ever County Manager, I would inject new life into the Levy County Government System by implementing written policies to provide a formal structure and consistent processes, thereby managing and exceeding the expectations of both our internal and external stakeholders.

Thank you for your consideration.



Mary-Ellen L. Harper

Mary-Ellen L. Harper

70 NW 130th Street, Trenton, FL 32693

Phone: 860.729.8247

Email: MaryEllenLHarper@Gmail.com

Resume

Experience

2024 – Present Board of County Commission Levy County, FL

Public Information Officer

- The Public Information Officer is responsible for initiating communication from the Levy County Board of County Commission to the Levy County community, the media, and other audiences.
- Responsibilities of the Public Information Officer include:
 - **Community Relations:** Generating and disseminating information and news regarding Levy County's governance. This includes effectively responding to media inquiries, assisting with community outreach activities, and maintaining the County's webpage and social media accounts.
 - **Emergency Communications:** In an emergency, the Public Information Officer is integral to the Emergency Operations Center staff. The Public Information mission during an emergency is to promptly share accurate information with the public to encourage people to take action to save lives and minimize property damage.

2020 – 2023 Dynamix Consulting Group Lake Alfred, FL

Owner / Principal

- National Public Safety Consulting Company founded on a vision of helping fire, EMS, and police departments use their data to deliver the best possible service to their communities; reports are specifically designed to use data to explain fire and emergency services concepts to the general public.

2018 – 2021 Emergency Services Consulting, International Chantilly, VA

Director of Operations

- ESCI is the Consulting Firm of the International Association of Fire Chiefs
- Responsibilities included managing more than two dozen consultants and working with clients across the country on Long-Range Master Planning, Strategic Planning, Cooperative Efforts / Shared Services Feasibility, Standards of Cover, and other projects as requested.

2017 – 2021 Florida Division of State Fire Marshal Ocala, FL

Executive Development Programs Manager

- Developed and taught all courses leading to Fire Officer III and IV Certification in the State of Florida
- Recruitment, scheduling, evaluation, and overall management of the adjunct faculty instructional staff at the Florida State Fire College who teach in the Executive Development Programs.
- Marketing of all Executive Development Programs at the Florida State Fire College.

Mary-Ellen L. Harper

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Phone: 860.729.8247

Email: MaryEllenLHarper@Gmail.com

1997 – 2017 Town of Farmington Farmington, CT

Director of Fire & Rescue Services and Deputy Fire Marshal / Assistant Emergency Management Director

- Charged with managing the operations of a 175-member combination fire department, including five stations and 17 apparatus; annual call volume was approximately 3,800.
- Managed 140 volunteer firefighters, 30 part-time firefighters, and eight full-time union firefighters.
- Responsible for a \$1.5 million Operating Budget and 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan
- Successfully merged three independent volunteer fire departments and unionized full-time firefighters into a consolidated fire department by way of a Town Ordinance.
- Negotiated / Managed 5 Contracts between the IAFF 3103 and the Town of Farmington
- Negotiated / Managed 3 Joint Contracts between the Town's three independently incorporated volunteer fire companies and the Town of Farmington.
- Developed the Town's first FLSA-Compliant Program to staff fire stations with part-time firefighters.
- Facilitated Department-Wide SWOT Analysis and authored the department's first-ever Strategic Plan
- Grant Awards: 5 FIRE Grants and numerous grant awards from local sources
Projects: \$6.5 million Fire station renovations, Emergency Medical Dispatching, Fire Safety Trailer, Light Preemption, 2 Generations of Thermal Imaging Cameras, Ipad Integration, 2 ISO Rating Improvements, HeartSafe Community Designation, Personal Protective Equipment and Radio Improvements; specified and purchased 13 new apparatus
- Fund Raised and Managed the Construction of a \$1.5 Million Regional Live Fire Training Facility
- Co-Chair of the 2013 Connecticut General Assembly Emergency Medical Services Primary Service Area Task Force that changed Connecticut Law related to Primary Service Response Areas.

2016 – 2019 University of New Haven West Haven, CT

Adjunct Lecturer of Fire Science

- Taught undergraduate classes in the Henry C. Lee College of Criminal Justice and Forensic Sciences

2001 – 2017 Connecticut Fire Academy Windsor Locks, CT

Adjunct Instructor

- Developed and Instructed Fire Officer, Instructor, and EMS Programs focusing on leadership, management, budgeting, writing, and public speaking.

1997 – 2002 Blue Hills Fire District Bloomfield, CT

Deputy Fire Marshal

- Conducted Fire Safety Inspections, Plan Reviews, Public Education, and Fire Investigations

1996 – 1997 V.A. Connecticut Healthcare System West Haven, CT

Fire & Life Safety Technician: Department of Facilities Management

- Conducted fire safety inspections and managed JCAHO Accreditation programs

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1994 – 1998 *The Hartford Courant* Hartford, CT
Correspondent
▪ Wrote newspaper articles on local news and special features in Connecticut

Education

2005 – 2009 National Fire Academy Emmitsburg, MD
Graduate of the Executive Fire Officer Program

1999 – 2004 University of New Haven West Haven, CT
Master's Degree in Public Administration, Concentration: Personnel & Labor Relations
▪ Graduate Fellowship; Sigma Beta Delta Honor Society; Pi Alpha Alpha Honor Society

1994 – 1998 University of New Haven West Haven, CT
Bachelor's Degree Cum Laude, Fire Technology, Minor English / Writing
▪ 1997 Outstanding Fire Technology Student; Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society

Certifications

Fire: Fire Fighter I & II; Fire Service Instructor I and II; Fire & Life Safety Educator;
Fire Department Safety Officer; Fire Officer I, II, III, and IV.
Medical: Emergency Medical Technician; Emergency Medical Service - Instructor; CPR Instructor-Trainer
Hazardous Materials: NFPA 472 Hazardous Materials Technician
Fire Marshal: Fire Investigator; Hazardous Materials Inspector; Life Safety Code Inspector

Professional Affiliations

2021-2023 Validation Committee Member of the International Fire Service Training Association (IFSTA) 10th Edition of *Emergency Services Instructor*

2021-2023 Validation Committee Member of the IFSTA 2nd Edition of *Live Fire Instructor*

2020 Co-Author of the Fire Protection Publications of Oklahoma State University 2nd Edition of *Public Information Officer*

2018-Present National Fallen Firefighters Foundation Everyone Goes Home Program, Lead Advocate for the State of Florida

2017 Validation Committee Member of the IFSTA 4th Edition of *Chief Officer*

2004-2018 International Association of Fire Chiefs

2004-2017 Connecticut Fire Chiefs' Association; Legislative Committee Chair
▪ Appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives to Co-Chair the State EMS Primary Service Area Task Force in 2013
▪ Changed the law to empower local municipalities in Connecticut as it relates to Emergency Medical Service Primary Service Area Designations

2000-2017 Connecticut Fire Department Instructors' Association

1998-2017 Capitol Region Fire Chiefs' Association; Secretary and Vice President

1997-2017 Connecticut Fire Marshals' Association; Conference Committee

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Community Service

2019-Present Audio Visual Assistant, First Baptist Church, Chiefland, FL
2018-2019 Choir Member, First Baptist Church, Chiefland, FL
2016-2017 Sunday School Teacher, St. Andrew Church, Colchester, CT
2016-2017 Assistant Youth Lacrosse Coach, Colchester, CT
2012-2017 Youth Soccer Coach, Assistant Coach, & Manager: Colchester, CT
2012-2013 Chair, F.D. Recruitment and Retention Task Force, Colchester, CT
2001-2005 Volunteer Fire Fighter / EMT: Colchester, CT
1992-2002 Volunteer Fire Fighter: Blue Hills Fire District, Bloomfield, CT
1995-1997 Volunteer Fire Fighter / EMT: Allingtown Fire District, West Haven, CT
1994-1997 Volunteer EMT: Bloomfield Volunteer Ambulance, Bloomfield, CT

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Testimonials

The following testimonials are provided as evidence of Mary-Ellen's ability to begin a project with complete strangers and to build positive relationships that result in improved service delivery to the community.

"The report provided offers significant value to CARS and gives us an abundance of tasks to work on to facilitate the organization's growth in a positive direction to meet the demand of the community we serve in the coming years. Thank you and your team for all of your time and efforts. I cannot stress enough how insightful the value of an outside educated review is to an organization that is willing to grow and learn."

— **Bethany Gingerella, President, Charlestown Ambulance Rescue Service, RI**

"The Nashua Fire Rescue Strategic Plan process was very well done, and the outputs were exceptional! The process was smooth and well-monitored by the Dynamix Consulting Group team and seemed to go flawlessly! I have been part of many Strategic Planning teams, and this was by far the most efficient and effective! Thanks for all your guidance in this process."

— **Alderman Rick Dowd, Ward 2 Nashua, New Hampshire**

"Dynamix Consulting Group worked diligently to earn the trust and respect of all parties involved and empowered us to turn walls into phone calls. Their data-driven approach is moving us toward making sound, informed decisions about what our community needs from its emergency services. Most importantly, Dynamix Consulting Group is helping us put the institutions in place to keep the work of our volunteers manageable while preparing for future demands."

— **Assistant Township Manager Nick Valla, Middletown Township, PA**

"I cannot say enough, both personally and professionally, how much their expertise and determination are appreciated by the Spartanburg County Fire Service as well as myself. I highly recommend their services to anyone looking for a dedicated, determined team of experts."

— **Ginny Dupont, County Attorney of Spartanburg County, SC**

"Delivering emergency services on Vashon Island poses many challenges which had not been evaluated in over 20 years. We needed to find consultants to partner with the Vashon community to help us understand and address these challenges. We found the exact fit with Dynamix. Mary-Ellen and Stuart were personable, strategic, they listened and guided us to develop a modern, comprehensive, community-based strategic plan to protect our island."

— **Matthew Vinci, Fire Chief, Vashon Fire & Rescue District, Washington**

Mary-Ellen L. Harper

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Government Project Experience

The following list of projects is provided to illustrate the scope and diversity of the types of government consulting projects on which Mary-Ellen has worked.

Agency Evaluations

East Granby, Connecticut
Wethersfield, Connecticut
Douglasville, Georgia
Sterling Heights, Michigan
Cherokee Nation EMS, Oklahoma
Middletown Township, Pennsylvania
Warminster Township, Pennsylvania
Charlestown Ambulance-Rescue Service,
Rhode Island
Bellaire Police Department, Texas
Vashon Island, Washington

Community Risk Assessment: Standards of Cover

Houston, Texas
Central Pierce, Washington
Gig Harbor, Washington

Cooperative Services/Consolidations

West Haven, Connecticut

Master Plans

Southington, Connecticut
Sarasota County, Florida
Worcester, Massachusetts
Nashua, New Hampshire
Spartanburg County, South Carolina
Winchester, Virginia

ISO Evaluations

East Granby, Connecticut
Nashua, New Hampshire
Goochland County, Virginia

Miscellaneous Studies

Owensboro, Kentucky
Alexandria, Virginia
Manassas, Virginia

Staffing Studies

Alsip, Illinois
Orleans, Massachusetts
Warminster Township, Pennsylvania

Station Location Studies

Concord, New Hampshire
Barrow County, Georgia

Strategic Plans

East Granby, Connecticut
Worcester, Massachusetts
Sterling Heights, Michigan
Nashua, New Hampshire
Trotwood, Ohio
Middletown, Pennsylvania
Spartanburg County, South Carolina
Vashon Island, Washington

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Legislative Experience

The following is provided as one example of Mary-Ellen's Legislative Experience. Mary-Ellen was instrumental in having this bill introduced in 2012. It did not move forward, so she led the effort to have it re-introduced in 2013, got herself appointed by the Speaker of the House to the Statewide Task Force, led the legislative efforts of Connecticut Municipalities and the Fire Service against one of the largest commercial ambulance companies in North America (and their lobbyists!). This law was successfully changed in 2015. This is one example of several legislative initiatives that Mary-Ellen was involved in while working in Connecticut.

Mary-Ellen was also involved in reviewing and drafting proposed changes to the Florida Administrative Code and Florida State Statutes while working for the State of Florida Department of Financial Services, Division of State Fire Marshal.

Harper Named Co-Chair of Connecticut Emergency Services Task Force

Mary-Ellen Harper is Farmington's Fire and Emergency Services director.

[Jessie Sawyer](#), Patch Staff

Posted Thu, Oct 10, 2013 at 2:09 pm ET | Updated Thu, Oct 10, 2013 at 2:22 pm ET



By Jessie Sawyer and Kaitlin McCallum

When a House bill raised by Farmington Rep. Mike Demicco attempted to overturn the longtime status quo of emergency services and give towns the ability to choose their own provider, the answer was a silent no.

The public health committee stripped the bill of all mention of its original intent and replaced it with language on disciplining technicians and instructors.

However, the bill, which passed last year, did allow for the creation of a task force – the Connecticut Emergency Medical Services Primary Service Area Task Force – to study the issue of how public service areas are assigned to providers and how towns should be able to change them.

Connecticut Speaker of the House J. Brendan Sharkey appointed Farmington Fire and Emergency Services Director Mary-Ellen Harper to the task force in July.

In September, the task force elected her as co-chair with Raphael Barishansky, Director of EMS for the Connecticut Department of Public Health.

"I am very excited about the opportunities associated with co-chairing the State EMS PSA Task Force," she said. "My work so far has given me an opportunity to work with a group of fire chiefs, police chiefs, town managers, mayors and state elected officials who genuinely want to ensure that they are delivering the best possible patient care for their residents."

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Harper said that the opportunity is also teaching her about how the state government operates and the democratic process.

"I do understand that there is a need for regulatory oversight by the State, but when State Regulation hinders the ability of a local municipality to ensure that it is providing the best possible service to its residents, it is time to fix the system," she said. "And my goal is to accomplish just that!"

Months before her appointment to the task force, back in January, Harper asked Demicco "to sponsor legislation that would allow municipalities to make improvements to the way emergency medical services are provided within their communities," she wrote in an email to Patch. That led to his introduction of the emergency services bill to the House.

"One of the State of Connecticut's lesser understood elements is the Primary Service Area Designation System, which falls under the auspices of the Department of Public Health," she said. "In the 1970s, when this system was established, specific agencies or companies were designated as Emergency Medical Services providers for specific geographic areas. These designations were essentially granted for life, not unlike the term of a Supreme Court Justice."

Currently, state regulations prevent municipalities from choosing their own emergency services provider unless town officials can prove that "an emergency exists and that the safety, health, and welfare of the citizens of the affected area are jeopardized by the performance of the assigned primary service area responder," Harper said.

"I will venture a guess that many of the towns in Connecticut who do not hold their PSA do not even realize that the State of Connecticut has essentially forced them into an arranged marriage with their EMS providers," she added.

Harper seeks to improve what she calls an "antiquated system that inhibits good government, the need for transparency, and essentially creates a state-mandated monopoly within each individual PSA."

Beyond not being able to explore alternative emergency service provider options, Harper said that current state regulations also prevent municipalities from opting to "share resources."

"Municipalities successfully manage the delivery of fire, police, public works, and virtually every other service they provide to their residents. Emergency Medical Services should be no exception," she said.

The task force has 15 members of the group, including representatives from non-profit and for-profit ambulance companies, representative of a municipal emergency medical services provider, and town, hospital, and fire service representatives.

The task force has met a few times and is just beginning to get organized.

It is charged with presenting a report including recommended action by Feb. 15, 2014.

Mary-Ellen L. Harper

70 NW 130th Street, Trenton, FL 32693

Phone: 860.729.8247

Email: MaryEllenLHarper@Gmail.com

References

The following personal references are offered; each of the individuals chosen can speak to Mary-Ellen's sense of energy and ability to build motivated teams that exceed expectations on or ahead of schedule.

1. Rissa Johns, Chiefland City Commissioner, Seat 2

Friend and Morning Gym Partner

519 NE 2nd Street, Chiefland, FL 32626

352.535.5301

Ljohns@chieflandfla.com

2. Chief Michael Tucker, Flagler County Fire and Rescue Department

Former Bureau Chief Florida Division of State Fire Marshal

Hired Mary-Ellen to work for the Florida State Fire College

38 Renshaw Drive, Palm Coast, FL, 32164

352.369.2833

VillagesChief@gmail.com

3. Kathleen Blonski, Town Manager

Hired Mary-Ellen as the Fire Administrator, then promoted her to Director of Fire & Rescue Services. Mary-Ellen's supervisor for 20 years

1 Monteith Drive, Farmington, CT 06032

860.675.2320

BlonskiK@Farmington-CT.org

4. Russell Nelson, Fire Chief

Worked with Mary-Ellen for 20 years when she was the Director of Fire & Rescue Services in Farmington, CT.

37 Garden Gate, Farmington, CT 06032

860.573.5086

NelsonR@FIPConstruction.com