



# from your Executive Director

By Bryan E. Smith

TOI Executive Director

**T**HIS YEAR has been like no other. We have had to change the way we work, live, and spend our free time. We have all had to “change” the way we live our daily lives. We all know that everything as changed, some things permanently, some not. But we all know that there are so many “unknowns” out there too.

Because of all the unknowns, and for the safety of our members, the TOI Board of Directors made the determination in late July to cancel the 2020 in-person Annual Educational Conference. It most certainly was not an easy decision, but again, one made with the safety of everyone involved in mind. It was also unprecedented as the association has never cancelled the annual conference, even in wartime during the 1940’s. So, we definitely are making history.

There is an old saying that “when life hands you lemons, you make lemonade”. That is exactly what we are doing. We are going to have a “Virtual Conference”. We have taken the in-person cancellation “lemon” and made “lemonade” with a Virtual Conference. It is a major step, but a very important one. Myself, along with the TOI Board of Directors and staff feel very strongly that it is so important that we continue to show our

support and continue to provide educational opportunities to help educate our members in their roles as township officials, even during this unprecedented time. The “Virtual Conference” will be the same week we would have had the in-person Conference. So, for those of you who had already marked your calendars, do not change it!

Doing things “virtual” will have its challenges. I for one am not the most “tech savvy” person but it is a major step, one that I’m sure will involve a lot of learning, not only on my part and TOI’s staff, but our members as well. It might be challenging for those who have never participated in a virtual event before but there will be help from TOI as you will read about elsewhere in this magazine. It will definitely be a new way of doing business!

I hope each of you are up to the challenge and will participate in our first ever “Virtual Annual Conference”. Make your plans now and I hope to see all of you “virtually” in November!!

**Township Government:  
Lighting the Way in Local Government**

**113TH ANNUAL EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE  
OF THE TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS OF ILLINOIS  
GOES VIRTUAL!  
NOVEMBER 16-20 & 23, 2020**