



2027 SCHEDULE

**SUNDAY
APRIL 18, 2027**

**ST. JOSEPH, MICHIGAN,
IS IN THE
EASTERN TIME ZONE!**



**THE INN AT HARBOR
SHORES**

800 Whitwam Dr
St Joseph, MI 49085
(269) 983-1111

www.harborshoresresort.com/the-inn

**EASTERN TIME
4:00 PM
HOTEL CHECK-IN**

**5:00 PM
REGISTRATION
(CASH BAR OPEN)**

**5:30 PM
ORIENTATION**

**6:30 PM
DINNER**

**7:30 PM
OPENING SESSION**

**STRATEGIC STYLE
INVENTORY**

A quick assessment-based session that helps participants identify their strategic thinking style and learn how it shapes communication, decision making, and collaboration.

Lewis G. Bender, PH.D.
Bender & Associates
www.lewbender.com

**MONDAY
APRIL 19, 2027**

**8:00 AM – Noon
MANAGING
GENERATIONAL
DIFFERENCES
TWO DIFFERENT
PERSPECTIVES**

This interactive session helps public works leaders bridge generational differences. Two instructors share different perspectives on what drives each generation, how it impacts communication and conflict, and practical ways to adjust leadership and coaching to strengthen teamwork and retention.

Facilitators:
Lewis G. Bender, PH.D.
Bender & Associates
www.lewbender.com

Steve Ludwig
Ludwig Speaks
www.ludwigspeaks.com

**NOON – 1:00 PM
LUNCH PROVIDED**

**1:00 – 4:30 PM
FINDING YOUR WHY
AND THE WHY OF
YOUR ORGANIZATION**

Clarify your personal “why” and connect it to your public works organization’s mission. Learn simple ways to use purpose to guide decisions, communicate priorities, and align your team.

Steve Ludwig
Ludwig Speaks
www.ludwigspeaks.com

**TUESDAY
APRIL 20, 2027**

**8:00 AM – Noon
GAIN INFLUENCE
BY HONING YOUR
PRESENTATION SKILLS**

Earn trust, win buy in, and move people to action with presentations that are clear, confident, and compelling. You’ll learn how to strengthen your message with purposeful nonverbal communication, apply proven presentation techniques, and use practical audience engagement strategies—so you can speak with authority in any setting and champion public works with impact.

Instructor:
Doug Cartland

**NOON – 1:00 PM
LUNCH PROVIDED**

**1:00 – 4:30 PM
DE-ESCALATION
TRAINING**

This course uses Law Enforcement Active Diffusion Strategies (L.E.A.D.S.), focusing on practical communication tools, understanding stress responses, body language, and intentional interaction techniques to promote safety, professionalism, and reduce the need for force during tense encounters.

Instructor:
Chief Brent Pirochta
City of Brighton
Police Department

**WEDNESDAY
APRIL 21, 2027**

**8:00 AM – Noon
WHY HAVE
GOVERNMENT?**

Frequently, we get caught up in important discussions related to the roles and powers of our governments. Questions such as capitalism versus socialism, and which services government should provide, consume our national and local dialogues. This workshop re-examines the historical and philosophical roots of the question that has challenged humankind through the ages: “Why have government?”

Lewis G. Bender, PH.D.
Bender & Associates

**11:30 AM
LUNCH PROVIDED**



**CERTIFICATES
will be awarded
to those that have
successfully completed
all the sessions.**