

THE ADMINISTRATOR

A PUBLICATION OF THE N.C. CITY & COUNTY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

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11 AWARDED PELA SCHOLARSHIPS, 2 GET SEI AID

The North Carolina City & County Management Association (NCCCMA) is committed to helping its members in the pursuit of education and professional improvement.

A major way this is supported is through the NCCCMA Professional Development Committee. A major responsibility of this committee is to solicit scholarship applications from among the membership. These scholarships are typically for the Public Executive Leadership

Academy (PELA), through the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Government, or the Senior Executive Institute, through the University of Virginia. The committee shall also receive applications and requests from association members for other professional development opportunities that the committee deems appropriate.

Recently, the Professional Development Committee awarded scholarships totally more than \$15,000 to 11

NCCCMA members to be used toward PELA. Those scholarship winners were: **Elton Daniels**, town manager, Sharpsburg (\$1,500); **Seth Eckard**, town administrator, Sawmills (\$1,500); **Mary Furtado**, assistant county manager, Catawba County (\$1,500); **Bryan Gruesbeck**, town manager, Pittsboro (\$1,500); **Kevin Howard**, county manager, Caswell County (\$1,500); **Braston Newton**, assistant town manager, Benson

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DONATE TO THE JAMIE DEAN COLLEGE FUND

When Holly Springs Town Manager Carl Dean, first vice president of the N.C. City & County Management Association, passed away in early May after collapsing during a town golf tournament, he left behind a daughter, Jamie Rose Dean.

Carl Dean, who was just 56 when he died, was preceded in death by his wife, Bess Baptist

Dean. Obviously, Jamie Dean has a long road ahead; however, you can help by contributing to the Jamie Dean College Fund.

The fund is set up through the Holly Springs branch of the State Employees Credit Union (SECU). Donations may be made at any SECU branch, or mailed to: SECU, P.O. Box 728, Holly Springs, NC 27540. Checks should be payable to the "Jamie

Dean College Fund."

Donations can also be made c/o NCCCMA, 308 W. Jones St., Raleigh, NC 27603 with Jamie Dean College Fund in the memo. Donations made through NCCCMA are tax deductible.

The NCCCMA membership had already collected \$2180 through the summer seminar.

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The Administrator is a monthly newsletter of the North Carolina City and County Management Association, a professional association for city and county managers and assistant managers from counties and municipalities throughout the state of North Carolina.

For comments or suggestions, please contact Matt Lail, editor, at 919-819-3979, or email at collards12@yahoo.com.

UPCOMING EVENTS

99th ICMA Annual Conference

Boston

September 22-25, 2013

2014 N.C. City & County Management Association Winter Seminar

Sheraton Research Triangle Park

February 5-7, 2014

2014 N.C. City & County Management Association Summer Seminar

Charlotte

June 19-21, 2014

REGISTRATION FOR 99TH ICMA ANNUAL CONFERENCE OPEN

Conference and housing registration for the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) 99th Annual Conference is now open.

This year's conference will be held September 22-25 in Boston at the John B. Hynes Veterans Memorial Convention Center. In addition, the NCCMA Hospitality Suite will be held at the Marriott Copley Place Hotel.

The 2014 ICMA conference – the association's centennial celebration – will be held in Charlotte.

Take advantage of the discounted registration rates for ICMA members and register online by **July 11** to save the most on the 2013 conference. Registering online also improves your chances of securing a ticket for events that have attendance limits. Online registrations must be paid by Visa, MasterCard, or American Express and may be divided between two credit cards to enable you to separate personal expenses from business expenses.

Visit ICMA.org to register online.

You must register by mail or fax if you are a nonmember who wants to join ICMA in order to receive the member discount.

If you prefer to register by mail or fax, click to open the printable [registration form](#), which is available in Adobe Acrobat format. (If you do not have Acrobat Reader, download it from [Adobe](#) for free.) You can also contact ICMA's Member and Customer Support Team (800-

745-8780, 202-289-4262, customerservices@icma.org) to request a copy of the form. Please note that registrations by mail and fax will only be accepted through September 5.

Members: To register as a member, you must be a current member of ICMA. If you would like to verify your membership status, call the ICMA Member & Customer Support Center toll free at 800-745-8780 or 202-289-ICMA (4262) or e-mail customerservices@icma.org.

Nonmembers: Take this opportunity to join ICMA and receive a discount on conference registration, as well as many other membership benefits. To join online or download a membership application, go to icma.org/apply. All membership applications and conference registrations must be received by ICMA by July 11 to qualify for the lowest member registration fee.

Members in transition. If you have been fired or forced to resign your position in local government and are now "in transition," ICMA will provide complimentary registrations for you and your partner. ICMA will also provide you and your partner with complimentary tickets to the Sunday Welcoming Reception. If you are eligible, this discount will appear at checkout.

Visit ICMA.org for more options for attendees.

To inquire about payment plan options, contact ICMA Member & Customer Support Center toll free at 800-745-8780 or 202-289-ICMA (4262); or e-mail

ETHICS: DEFINING THIS ERA'S POLITICAL NEUTRALITY

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This spring, ICMA launched a discussion with members to get their perspectives on what political neutrality means for professionals working in local government in this era. As the defining bedrock principle for the profession, it's a worthy place to start what is designed to be a structured dialogue of the entire ICMA Code of Ethics.

It's certainly an intellectually challenging place to start! But why not start here? As ICMA's Executive Director Bob O'Neill has noted, "Political neutrality is a principle that goes to the heart of the profession. It's a distinctive characteristic that defines both how we are viewed and how we see ourselves."

A Look Back

The original drafters of the ICMA Code of Ethics in 1924 defined the profession's commitment to political neutrality straightforwardly: "No city manager should take an active part in politics." By 1938 when the code underwent its first change, that statement disappeared entirely.

The only reference to politics at all was added to the statement defining the role of the manager in the policy process: "The city manager is in no sense a political leader. In order that policy may be intelligent and effective, he provides the council with information and advice, but he encourages positive decisions on policy by the council instead of passive acceptance of his recommendations."

Every era views principles through the lens of their experience. Looking back, it may be odd to see a core value placed aside. On the other hand, perhaps the members drafting this revision wanted to emphasize another key characteristic of a professional manager: a source of unbiased information and advice on policy matters.

A statement about the profession's commitment to stay out of politics doesn't resurface in the code until 1972, in what became the first edition of Tenet 7: "Refrain from participation in the election of the members of his employing legislative body, and from all partisan political activities which would impair his performance as a professional administrator."

In 1998, the members voted to change Tenet 7 to the version in place today: "Refrain from all political activities which undermine public confidence in professional administrators. Refrain from participation in the election of the members of the employing legislative body."

The New Era

In the recent dialogue, more than one member challenged the assumption that a new era is sufficient reason to reexamine the meaning of political neutrality for the profession. After all, politics is still politics.

But while the principle remains solid from the perspective of some members, the terrain has shifted. Campaign disclosure requirements, accessibility to data on the web, social media, and the number of polarizing issues up for consideration are just some of the factors affecting today's political arena. For the profession, it may be a classic example of what author Jim Collins noted in his conversation with the profession: a situation where the principles endure but the practices may need to change.

Input from the Frontlines

Four consistent themes emerged in the dialogue: local politics, national politics, family engagement in political activity, and issue advocacy.

There was widespread consensus that engaging in campaign politics where you work is a violation of the principle of political neutrality. And, from a career perspective, not smart strategy. The standards outlined in the code help members frame those difficult conversations with elected officials, avoid hot spots,

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and even fend off unwanted requests for campaign donations.

On the national front, members expressed opinions across the spectrum about whether it was okay to support candidates for office. Some see a clear line between local and national elections. To those members, the ban on presidential candidate donations seems too restrictive.

Others, noting the widespread access to campaign donor rolls and polarized politics, supported the across-the-board ban on campaigning for candidates.

Dealing with family members who want to engage in politics, especially at the local level, is a grey area.

The ICMA code doesn't govern the conduct of family members. But there are implications for members serving as the manager or

assistant when their family decides to support a local candidate, run for office, or get involved in issues.

And how do you address the use of social media by your children? Or your spouse as it relates to engaging in politics? The general advice was to have the conversation upfront to talk about the implications, potential tradeoffs, and practical approaches.

On the subject of issue advocacy, there was widespread agreement that more dialogue and guidance are needed.

Here are some notable comments:

- Issues have become very partisan and divisive.
- It's hard to do anything even on the perimeter of the political arena without being perceived as political.
- Public issues intersect our personal and

professional lives. Even the organizations we belong to and support have the potential to be problematic. Whoever imagined that being a Boy Scout would be a source of controversy?

- Local government professionals have both a right and a responsibility to voice positions on human and civil rights issues.
- We cannot be silent on issues because it's the very reason we entered public service in the first place: to make a difference.

Let the dialogue continue!

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

(\$1,500); **Bruce Oakley**, town manager, Oak Ridge (\$1,500); **Shawn Purvis**, assistant city manager/finance director, Clinton (\$1,500); **David Saleeby**, fire and emergency services coordinator, Iredell County (\$1,500); **Stephen Steese**, city manager, Roxboro (\$500 – received other assistance); and **William Summers**, town manager,

Lillington (\$1,500).

There were two scholarship applications this year for SEI: **Kerry McDuffie**, town administrator, Fremont; and **Mike McLaurin**, town manager, Waxhaw. Both McDuffie and McLaurin received \$2,500 scholarships to go toward the program in Charlottesville. The SEI program costs \$6,500.

In total, the scholarships allocated by the NCCCMA totaled \$20,500, which is flat to the amount allocated toward scholarships in 2012. That year, 13 went to PELA, 1 to SEI (short session), 5 to the School of Government and 1 to Harvard.