

THE ADMINISTRATOR

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THE MANY PATHS TO BECOMING A CITY MANAGER

By Gini Hamilton

There are likely as many paths to city and county management as there are city and county managers in the state. "You have to find your own path," said Clinton City Manager Shawn Purvis.

In 2013, Purvis was appointed manager of the City of Clinton after John Connet transitioned to Hendersonville. Purvis had served as the city's assistant manager and finance director for five years. Prior to that time, he had been a research assistant at the North Carolina League of Municipalities and a management intern for the Town of Hillsborough.

Purvis earned a BA in history and a Master of Public Administration (MPA) from UNC-Chapel Hill. He is an ICMA Credentialed Manager. And in addition to other School of Government courses, he has participated in the Local Government

Federal Credit Union (LGFCU) Fellows program, designed as leadership training for emerging leaders in the state, and the Public Executive Leadership Academy, which focuses on community leadership.

This was Shawn Purvis' path to becoming a city manager. Purvis conducted informational interviews with managers when he was an MPA student to get an understanding of their career paths. "Every one was different," he said.

Of course, not every public servant aspires to be a city or county manager. "As you move through a public service career, you don't just build on what you learn at each step and what you bring to the next, but also you see your future differently as you move along," Purvis added. Individuals who originally wanted to be city managers find along the way that they are effective assistant managers with



responsibilities that perfectly fit their particular interests and skills.

Purvis enjoyed being an assistant manager and finance director in Clinton. Under his leadership the city received six consecutive awards from the Government Finance Officers Association. He led five successful Community Development Block Grant projects totaling more than \$3 million. He introduced new incentive programs for downtown development

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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

2016 NCCCMA Summer Seminar

Renaissance Hotel, Asheville
June 23-25, 2016

2017 NCCCMA Summer Seminar

Embassy Suites Concord Golf Resort & Spa, Concord
June 21-24, 2017

2016 NCCCMA SUMMER SEMINAR COMING UP NEXT MONTH

The 2016 N.C. City & County Management Association (NCCCMA) Summer Seminar will take place June 22-25 at the Asheville Renaissance Hotel in Asheville/ Buncombe County.



As usual, this seminar is chock-full of educational and networking opportunities designed around maximizing attendees' ability to go back to their communities and be better city or county managers, assistants or administrators.

The seminar will start off on Wednesday with the "It's All About You – 360 Feedback for Managers," an ICMA credentialing session. This session will continue through Thursday.

Also on Thursday, the annual golf tournament will allow for fantastic networking in a wonderful setting – the High Vista Golf Club in Mills River.

Friday morning will kick off with a general session, "Building Trust Through Citizen Engagement." Hickory Assistant City Manager Andrea Surratt will explain how her city is going to great lengths to engage its citizens on how and where to invest \$40 million in new public facilities.

As always, the seminar will include various concurrent sessions and will end on Saturday remarks from the N.C. Association of County Commissioners and the N.C. League of Municipalities.

For more information, please go to <http://www.ncacc.org/440/5444/NCCCMA-Summer-Seminar>

MANY PATHS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and fostered a partnership with the local arts council to commission the city's first public art piece while helping to procure \$150,000 in grants and donations.

Purvis said it was his experience as an LGFCU Fellow that encouraged him to seize the advancement opportunity presented when then-City Manager Connet left Clinton.

"Having a better understanding of my own leadership personality and tendencies prepared me for this new position," Purvis said. "I am better able to help develop our management team and nurture a culture of communication and understanding within the organization. Being an LGFCU Fellow has helped me put what I've learned—through education and professional experience—and take all of that to a different level."

Purvis is guiding multiple infrastructure projects in Clinton, community and economic development projects, and the city's strategic planning efforts. He said, "As manager, I no longer get into the technical details of things. But I am able to stay focused on the big picture, which is great."

The need for managers is growing. Today, 10,000 baby boomers will turn 65 and 10,000 more will do so every day for the next 12 years, according to the Pew Research Center. While those numbers reflect national estimates, the impact is being felt in North Carolina communities, especially in our local governments, since the average age of public sector workers is higher than that of the general work population. It is anticipated that 50 percent of senior managers are poised to retire in the coming years.

The School of Government offers courses that help public officials throughout an organization do their jobs more effectively and help those who are interested be more prepared to advance their careers. One of these is the LGFCU Fellows program.

Program director and faculty member Willow Jacobson said, "The Fellows program helps to ensure that local government public officials have the skills and knowledge to respond to the increased complexity of their work and the need to sustain high levels of service and performance during times of transition."

Since 2011 nearly 200 public officials have participated as LGFCU Fellows. Surveys show that alumni are being promoted into positions of greater responsibility and are leading with greater authority in their existing positions.

How to apply to become an LGFCU Fellow

Applications are encouraged from local government professionals who lead or seek to lead in their organizations, including managers and assistant managers, department heads and supervisors, assistants and directors, executives, and administrators.

A group of 25 individuals will be selected as LGFCU Fellows for each of two cohorts in 2016, one in September-October and a second in November-December. Applications, including a testimony of support from the applicant's manager or supervisor, are due by June 28, 2016. For more information, visit sog.unc.edu/resources/microsites/leading-results-igfcu-fellows.

ICMA TO OFFER BUDGETING WEBINAR

Get a better handle on the budgeting process by learning the principles and concepts that everyone should understand. With ICMA's *Budgeting Guide* Webinar Series, you will get a forward-looking, strategic examination of local government budgeting and how to improve the process.

Led by the Center for Priority Based Budgeting's Jon Johnson and Chris Fabian, this three-part webinar series covers the fundamentals needed to create a budget that will promote economic vitality in the community. It is a must-see for local government managers, assistant managers, department heads, elected officials, and anyone who needs to understand the local government budgeting process.

You and your staff will discuss:

- Lessons for budgeting and the budgeting cycle
- Managing conflict through a budget policy
- Accounting and auditing
- Capital budgeting
- Performance measurement
- And more

A Budgeting Guide for Local Government, 3rd Edition is required reading for this series. You may purchase the book by calling 770.280.4171

Session One: June 29, 2016: Getting Started: Budgeting Principles and Preparation

Session Two: July 13, 2016: Budget

Implementation, Accounting, and Auditing

Session Three: July 27, 2016: Budgeting for Capital Improvements and Performance Improvements

Pricing for the webinar series starts at \$395 (member)/ \$695 (nonmember)

This purchase is for a single log-in. There is no limit to the number of staff from your office participating in this webinar from an auditorium or conference room. In the room where staff will participate, you'll need a speakerphone and a computer to view the Web component.

WEBINAR: NEW (AND LAST) FLSA OVERTIME REGULATIONS

The US Department of Labor has just released the final rule setting the salary level below which all employees must be paid overtime. As a result, employers will have to pay time-and-one-half overtime premium pay to many, many employees who now earn a straight salary. How will your

organization deal with the major change? How will you minimize the strain it will place on your budget?

This one-and-one-half hour webinar on June 6 at 10 a.m. will examine the new rules and how government employers can implement the change while inflicting the least amount of

harm to their budgets. The leaders will be Diane Juffras of the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Government and Drake Maynard, former managing partner North Carolina Office of State Personnel and independent human resources consultant.

Click [here](#) for more information.