

# THE ADMINISTRATOR

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## JONES GETS OVATION FROM BOARD THAT FIRED HIM

**On November 15,** 2016, Harry Jones stood in front of the Mecklenburg County commissioners – the same board that fired Jones as county managers in 2013.

This time, according to the *Charlotte Observer*, Jones was given a salute instead of a *sayonara*.

Jones, who was county manager for 13 years, was there that day to speak in support of Mecklenburg County's designation of November 17 as World Pancreatic Cancer Day.

Pancreatic cancer kills nearly all its victims within five years, a milestone of which Jones is on the cusp.

"I was afraid that this disease was going to conquer me," Jones said more than a year ago. "I have never in my life felt that way – I've been a fighter all my life."

He has also called his diagnosis "one of the best things that ever happened" to him, as it gave him a new perspective on life. He even wrote a book titled,

"How Cancer Cured My Soul."

But on November 15, according to the *Observer*, Jones put his walker aside and, in a strong voice, talked about his work mentoring fellow cancer patients and quoted from the late poet Maya Angelou's "Still I Rise."

"To a standing ovation, Jones then made his way around the dais, shaking hands with commissioners, including four who voted to fire him. He leaned across it to hug at-large commissioner Pat Cotham, who led the move to oust him," wrote the *Observer's* Bruce Henderson.

This is not the first time pancreatic cancer has touched this same board. Commissioner Neil Cooksey died after a two-year battle in 2012. Commissioner George Dunlap, who frequently talks to Jones, lost a younger sister and an aunt to the disease.

"We never really had that opportunity to say

thank you," Dunlap told the newspaper. Jones was not allowed to speak after the board voted to fire him, a move some commissioners later said they regretted.

"I want it to be said publicly that this board recognizes your valiant, significant service," board chair Trevor Fuller told Jones. "We honor you and are blessed by you."

"Pancreatic cancer is a dreaded disease and needs additional federal funding to support increased research," Jones said in an email to the *Observer*. "The statistics that were presented last night highlight the need. While an argument can be made that we are making progress relative to the five-year survival rate (currently 8 percent vs. 6 percent), much more needs to be done. It is the only cancer that owns a single-digit five-year survival rate. I did not attend to bring attention to myself. I attended to support the effort to bring attention to the disease."

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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.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

**2017 NCCCMA Winter Seminar**  
Sheraton Research Triangle Park,  
Durham  
February 1-3, 2017

**2017 NCCCMA Summer Seminar**  
Embassy Suites Concord Golf  
Resort & Spa, Concord  
June 21-24, 2017

LETTERS OF THANKS

**Two North Carolina** local government managers, Green Level Town Administrator Michael Douglas and Lowell City Manager Kevin Krouse, were recently honored as the inaugural recipients of the ICMA Annual Conference Scholarship. Both gentlemen were gracious enough to write letters of thanks to the N.C. City & County Management Association due to the experience. Here they are in their fullest.



Being a new manager from a small Town, I was very fortunate to receive a

scholarship to attend the ICMA conference in Kansas City. It was a great experience and unlike any other conference I have attended! The keynote speakers, sessions and networking opportunities were extremely beneficial to my professional development.

Not only was I able to

learn from the sessions offered but being able to hear stories from other managers and gain advice from them was very helpful. I have been able to bring this knowledge back to my community and am better prepared to be a more effective manager.

I would like to thank the North Carolina City and County Management Association Professional Development Committee for providing me the opportunity to attend the conference through the Scholarship program as well as the ICMA for providing a top notch conference in Kansas City. I will always look forward to the annual conference in the future

**Kevin Krouse**  
City Manager  
Lowell

Getting involved in local government has been one of my aspirations for many years. As I approached retirement within the military, I looked into areas of local government

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## HURRICANE MATTHEW MEETINGS PROVIDED INPUT

**The N.C. League of Municipalities** and N.C. Association of County Commissioners recently partnered to host a series of meetings across eastern North Carolina to collect information from local government leaders on how best to approach hurricane recovery in their communities.

Both NCLM and NCACC serve on the Hurricane Matthew Recovery Committee formed by Gov. Pat McCrory. The committee focused on rebuilding communities affected by the hurricane, and the meetings were intended to gather input to help guide that committee

and state policymakers with long-term recovery efforts.

Representatives from the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management and Federal Emergency Management Agency were on-site during the input sessions to answer questions and discuss next steps. NC Division of Emergency Management Director Mike Sprayberry shared at one input session, "Local emergency management at the county level were key to the success of the state's response... we couldn't have done it without them."

NCLM President Bob

Matheny, who is mayor of Zebulon, said helping residents rebuild their lives and communities requires a concerted effort.

"During this critical time of need, it is important that all cities and towns come together to help those that have suffered due to this disaster, as well as those dealing with the rash of wildfires in western North Carolina," Matheny said.

Sessions were held in Elizabeth City, Kenansville, Lumberton, New Bern, Williamston and Raleigh.

## APPLY FOR THE HERBERT STOUT AWARD

**Local governments** in North Carolina are encouraged to apply now for the G. Herbert Stout Award recognizing local government innovators and promising students in Geographic Information Services (GIS). Three awards are available based on the type of entrant and

the categories are city or town government, county government, and regional government or local/regional authority.

The awards will be delivered at the NCGIS2017 Conference in Raleigh Feb. 22-24, 2017. Click [here](#) for information on how to apply.



## LETTERS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

where my military expertise would fit best. After speaking with ICMA and NCCCMA officials, I quickly realized that I needed to attend the annual ICMA conference.

The opportunity of experiencing my first ICMA conference was amazing. As a new professional within the profession, I can say that I learned a great deal.

There are many lessons I learned outside of the lectures and workshops. I found that a lot of learning takes place by listening to other professionals address the same issues that I am facing within my own community. For instance, while discussing my I&I issues, another manager informed me about grants that his municipality had received to conduct a study on this issue. These types of discussions help novice and intermediate managers/administrators develop ways to improve their community without bearing a large cost.

The workshops I

attended at the conference also improved my awareness on how to effectively impact my community and more importantly, my council. Coming from the military, it was easy for me to give vision and guidance knowing everything would be executed. This does not work well when dealing with a council. Attending the workshop on Persuasion and Influence gave me great techniques on how to effectively engage my council to get the best results.

The City of Kansas City put forth an appreciable effort in hosting the conference. Whether it was the 5K run, Basketball Shootout or having volunteers available to assist with mundane questions, the City had someone in place to assist. I would like to personally thank Kimiko Gilmore, Jordan Brown, and Sylvya Stevenson. If the Kansas City conference is indicative of how other cities hold the ICMA conference, I will attempt to attend each year.

All in all, I must say that I enjoyed my time at this conference. I would like to thank the North Carolina City and County Management Association for the scholarship to attend. I would also like to thank ICMA for their magnanimous contributions as well. The sheer number of people with institutional knowledge that gathers and shares information is tremendous. It is this sharing of information that makes the conference necessary, but it is the camaraderie amongst fellow managers/administrators that makes the conference essential.



**Michael Douglas**  
Town Administrator  
Green Level