

# THE ADMINISTRATOR

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

OCTOBER 2012, ISSUE 10

## 'LIFE,' WELL DONE



*The N.C. City & County Management Association recently donated \$54,000 to ICMA for the Life, Well Run campaign. From left to right: Sam Gaston, ICMA president; Brian Hiatt, NCCCMCA president; Bonnie Svrcek, ICMA president elect; and Bob O'Neill, ICMA executive director. This photo was taken at the ICMA annual conference in Phoenix in mid-October.*

## LEARN ABOUT POSITIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

**November 16, 2012**  
**School of Government,**  
**UNC-Chapel Hill**

**Facilitating positive change** is the focus of this one-day leadership development workshop for public staff and elected officials who are interested in involving others, building on current assets, and engaging in joint problem-solving.

The course provides an opportunity for significant interaction with instructors and the chance to apply the course

content to real-time work scenarios in class.

Utilizing "Appreciative Inquiry," you will learn to:

- Design ways to strengthen your organization's resilience
- Use proven principles and practices to draw valuable lessons from previous successes
- Incorporate what has worked previously into the path forward
- Discover additional resources to support your work

**Registration:** Find more information and register online at [www.sog.unc.edu/node/1803](http://www.sog.unc.edu/node/1803).

Faculty Coordinators:  
[Lydian Altman](#), Director, Strategic Public Leadership Initiative, and [Margaret Henderson](#), Director, Public Intersection Project

For more information:  
Contact Gail Wilkins, program manager, at 919.962.9754 or [wilkins@sog.unc.edu](mailto:wilkins@sog.unc.edu).

## THE ADMINISTRATOR

*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](mailto:collards12@yahoo.com).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**N.C. City & County Management Association Winter Seminar**  
Sheraton Research Triangle Park  
February 6-8, 2013

**N.C. City & County Management Association Summer Seminar**  
Craven Convention Center,  
New Bern  
June 20-22, 2013

# LOOKING AT LOCAL GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

**One trend gaining momentum** in performance management programs over the last 10 years is the idea of "open" or "transparent" government. Some local governments are going beyond posting budgets and other internal data on their websites and are now displaying performance measures and performance results in dynamic ways that are visually appealing and easy to digest. *Performance Management Programs in Local Government* is a digital document featuring this trend as well as other case studies and other examples of performance management reporting in local governments today.

*Performance Management Programs in Local Governments* contains eight case studies, eight reports and four articles highlighting some of the best current practices and ideas in this critical area. Highlights include:

- A case study on how the **City of Durham** created a new performance management dashboard that engaged its own citizens in the design. The result was a more transparent government; a more engaged and informed citizenry and news media; and a better understanding of the Strategic Plan alignment by both staff and residents.

- The City of Rock Hill's (SC) case study on their cost-effective implementation of a strategic plan and performance accountability system focusing on transparency and accountability both internally

and to the public as a whole.

- Graphically displayed real-time data in a public dashboard easily accessed through the City of Williamsburg's (VA) website.

- Community Scorecards and Performance Measures Reports from Fort Collins, CO; Toronto, Ontario; San Antonio, TX; Kirkland, WA and more.

Visit <http://ondemand.transformgov.org/store/seminar/seminar.php?seminar=15443> for more information.

## About the Alliance for Innovation

The Alliance for Innovation is an international network of progressive governments and partners committed to transforming local government by accelerating the development and dissemination of innovations. Together with our partners, [International City/County Management Association \(ICMA\)](http://www.icma.org) and [Arizona State University \(ASU\)](http://www.asu.edu), we promote excellence in local government and build a community of practice in local government innovation.

For more information, contact **Toni Shope**, east regional director, at 800.777.2509 or [tshope@transformgov.org](mailto:tshope@transformgov.org)

## ETHICS: WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

*Reprinted with permission from Public Management (PM) magazine, published by ICMA, the premier local governmental management organization, Washington, D.C. Contact the ICMA Ethics Center at 202.962.3521 or visit [ICMA.org/ethics](http://ICMA.org/ethics).*

Test your ethics knowledge as well as your knowledge of the ICMA Code of Ethics to solve these real-world issues. **See page 4 for answers.**

**QUESTION 1:** The former county manager, now in transition, was asked by a candidate for the state legislature to join the campaign team as a consultant. The election is just three months away, so it will be a short assignment. The former manager has some applications out for manager positions in other communities, even out of state. But so far, no prospects on the horizon.

About all that is certain is that the former manager will not be working in local government in this state legislative district. This consulting offer is tempting as it provides interesting work as well as additional compensation. The former manager should

A. Accept the offer to serve as a campaign consultant. Since he is not working in local government, the requirements of Tenet 7

(stay out of campaign politics) do not apply to him.

- B. Decline the offer because he received a full year's severance.
- C. Decline the offer because he is actively looking for a position in local government.

**QUESTION 2:** A councilmember from an adjacent local government has asked the town manager for her input on the annual performance review of his community's manager. The two localities launched a shared services program, and the councilmember, as chair of the oversight committee, wants feedback on his manager's efforts to support the initiative.

The councilmember seems sincere in his effort to obtain constructive feedback. The shared services effort has not been without problems. Looking back on how her colleague addressed those challenges, the manager can think of several constructive comments she might offer on his performance. The manager should

- A. Prepare a written response to the request for feedback, send it to the councilmember, and then inform her colleague. After all, the guideline under Tenet 2 only requires members to let their colleagues know when they advise and respond to inquiries from elected officials of other local governments.
- B. Provide the councilmember with some feedback verbally and without attribution,

- which the councilmember can then use to generally inform during the performance review. This manager, after all, is only one of many stakeholders who will have the chance to provide feedback.
- C. Decline the request.

**QUESTION 3:** The city has a public sculpture in the downtown square that has been on temporary loan by the artist for several years. The sculpture is a good match for the square and is well liked by the public. Unfortunately, the tough economy has forced the artist to put the piece up for sale.

The city manager is thinking seriously about buying the sculpture and donating it back to the city. She has made donations to support city and community services over the years, most of which stayed under the radar. Given the nature of this item, it will be a pretty large gift and hard to keep quiet.

While the manager is not trying to get publicity, she would like to make the point with the public that city employees care enough about the places they work to give back to the community. The city manager should

- A. A. Forget about making the donation since it would be perceived as an attempt to garner favor with her bosses, namely, the council.
- B. Make the donation through a third party so that it would be totally anonymous.
- C. Make the donation but acknowledge publicly that she did so.

## ETHICS MATTERS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

### Answers to the Ethics Quiz

#### QUESTION 1:

**Correct answer: C.** There is a level of uncertainty and ambiguity that goes along with being in a professional transition not of your choosing. While many decide to get back in the game, some former managers are open to other professional opportunities in the private or not-for-profit sector.

Since a member in transition is not working for local government, technically he or she needs to follow only Tenets 1 and 3 of the ICMA Code of Ethics. Otherwise, it would raise an ethical issue to be a city manager working on behalf of a candidate's campaign.

If a member in transition is actively looking for a position in local government and would return if given the opportunity, he or she ought to follow the entire Code of Ethics. That means not engaging in any activity while in transition that might cause a future governing body or colleague to question their commitment to the Code of Ethics. If the member was certain that his future was not in local government, then he would be free to accept this assignment.

#### QUESTION 2:

**Correct answer: C.** The guideline under Tenet 2 states

"When members advise and respond to inquiries from elected or appointed officials of other local governments, they should inform the administrators of those communities." Read literally, it seems to only require one colleague to tell the other when they have advised the other's councilmembers.

But the true intent of the guideline is to avoid the contact entirely as it can undermine a colleague and interfere with the person's ability to manage his or her organization. Providing feedback on performance in an unstructured way and without being invited to do so by their colleague violates the core principle of the guideline.

The manager should decline the councilmember's request and let the councilmember know that she has an obligation to discuss this matter with her colleague. Obtaining feedback from another local government manager can be appropriate but as part of a formal 360 performance review, where the selection of external respondents is guided by the incumbent manager.

#### QUESTION 3:

**Answer C (maybe B).** Donating a piece of sculpture to the community may be unusual, but there are countless examples where city and county managers donate time and money to great community causes. In all of these instances,

the decision on what to support and at what level is a personal choice.

But when living a public life, the motives behind such acts will certainly be scrutinized. The suggestion that the manager might be trying to garner favor with the city council is a bit of a stretch here since there is no direct link between the council and the sculpture. This is a gift to the community as a whole.

Anonymity can be difficult to preserve in public transactions. It's probably best to readily disclose the donation rather than to keep it private and cause some to wonder why you weren't willing to be public about it in the first place. In the interest of transparency, you should be willing to acknowledge that you made the donation.

*Martha Perego*  
*ICMA Ethics Director*  
*Washington, D.C.*  
[mperego@icma.org](mailto:mperego@icma.org)

**Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Life, Well Run campaign!**

See page 1 for more information.