

The Administrator

A PUBLICATION OF THE NORTH CAROLINA CITY AND COUNTY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

DECEMBER 2011, ISSUE 12

Putting the 'support' back in Membership Support

To Bald Head Island Manager Calvin Peck and others on the N.C. City & County Management Association (NCCCMA)'s Membership Support Committee, it has become increasingly clear in recent years that members of the local government management profession -- perhaps more than ever -- are in need for support and compassion from their mentors and peers. But something else has become clear.

"We should do more than just be there to support the membership in their time of need," said Peck.

The Membership Support Committee met in Forsyth County this summer to discuss that very topic. Too often, said Peck, members of the committee come to the aid of a city or county manager after the fact -- either after said manager was dismissed or pressured to leave.

"We shouldn't wait for something bad to happen," said Peck.

It doesn't have to be that way, nor should it solely be up to the committee or the Range Riders program. What Peck and the Membership Support Committee are hoping to instill into the rest of the NCCCMA membership is an obligation to be proactive, to forge relationships with managers and administrators in geographic regions.

Peck would like to see regional leaders take the reins. Some parts of the state have ready-made regional groups constituted that could lead the way. In some parts of the state, it may be the head of a council of government that takes charge. In another section, it may be a seasoned county or city manager that has strong roots in the community.

The key is forging relationships.

"We should be there; we shouldn't wait for something bad to happen," said Peck. "The hope is that before the inevitable happens, they

know who to turn to.

"It can't just be the 20 of us (on the committee). We need to have our relationships with our neighbors so that we can help them before they get fired. If you're frustrated, you know who to turn to."

Peck stresses that this idea of regional relationships should not be reserved just for managers in trouble, but for new managers or new managers to North Carolina. As more Baby Boomers retire, more newly appointed or just new managers are likely to fill those slots. Many will come from outside of North Carolina; others may transition from the private sector or the military. Almost all will need to forge relationships with other managers.

Peck stated that the NCCCMA Executive Committee was intrigued by the Membership Support Committee's ideas.

Said Peck: "We have an obligation."

Hewett: 21 days that changed my life

By Doug Hewett
Assistant City Manager, Fayetteville

If someone told you they could change your life in 21 days, making you a better person and a better manager, would you believe them? As managers, we are often skeptical of such claims. Our skepticism, created by years of experience, is habitual. And like those of us who have tried to start an exercise routine, lose weight or quit smoking know, habits are oftentimes hard to create and break. Anecdotal and some empirical data suggest that it takes 21 days to form or break habits in our lives. This is a story of how 21 days at Harvard's Kennedy

School (HKS), as part of the Senior Executives in State and Local Government Program,



changed both my personal and professional life. I'd been intrigued about the program, arguably the most prestigious in the country, but wondered if I could devote the time away from work and family to participate. Three weeks is a big time commitment, but the residential program is designed to give you time

away from your daily life to learn new skills and recharge your passion for public service.

The program concentrated on four basic themes: The central theme reviewed basic foundations of American government dating back to Jefferson, Madison, and Hamilton. Using the Constitution and Federalist Papers showed why it is often so difficult to get things done in government -- a difficulty the founding fathers felt was needed. The underlying tension between demands to "get it done efficiently" and cries to "listen to our voices, let us partici-

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Rewind: Taking steps to undo the unintentional ethical misstep

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In the movie *Resurrecting the Champ*, a sportswriter stumbles across a story that has the potential to elevate his career: it's about an aging, homeless former champion boxer with vivid memories of his glory days. The writer gets close to the champ to learn the rich and painful details of his life.

Research uncovers rare footage of a fight. Watching the fight in the newsroom, the champ identifies the other fighter and recounts the blow that knocked his opponent out.

The story is published to rave reviews. As the writer is enjoying his success and fielding an offer to cover televised boxing, he learns from an old boxing promoter that his champ is a fraud. The real champ died years ago.

But wasn't the film proof of his identity? The champ was in the film. It's just that he was the one who got knocked out. He was masquerading as the true champ.

The writer didn't intentionally do something unethical. He didn't fabricate a story. But now he had an ethical dilemma because he knew

that what he wrote was a lie—and that he had been careless to believe the champ without doing more digging. He struggled with the ethical problem—tell the truth, be embarrassed, and probably get fired. Or conceal the truth and advance his career.

Only after he appeared on television in a debut for a new position did he realize that he had no choice but to tell his publisher the truth. He entered the publisher's office only to be introduced to others who had broken the news first. His delay in telling the truth added to the suspicion that he had known all along that the story was a lie. His one window of opportunity to salvage his credibility had passed. No chance to rewind his actions.

Anyone can be in the center of this kind of an ethical hot spot.

One situation

A city manager accompanied his elected officials to a meeting with the county commissioners to talk about consolidation. At the outset, one county commissioner bluntly stated that the consolidation of one department could occur if the city agreed to take the current department director "off the county's hands." The director, while competent, had never been a favorite of this commissioner.



The city's elected officials jumped at the opportunity to hire this individual to run the consolidated department for the city. Before the city manager could absorb what was happening, the city and county elected officials hatched a plan. The county would terminate this department director with severance to sweeten the deal. Once released from the county, the city would offer to hire the individual. To make this happen, the individual would have to be left in the dark.

The manager didn't speak up in deference to the elected officials who were leading the discussion. He was also reluctant to disagree with them in front of other officials. It didn't help that the county attorney who was present supported the plan.

With a bit of time to consider what had transpired, the manager realized that there was simply no way that he could be a party to this deal—and that he had an obligation to help the city council understand why they should not be as well.

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Calendar of Events

NCCCMA Winter Seminar
February 1-3, 2012
Sheraton RTP

2012 NCCCMA Summer Seminar
June 28-30, 2012
Asheville Renaissance

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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pate” was the basis for our real-world case studies and group projects.

The most dominant theme was individual leadership and introspection, answering questions like, “What is it that really matters to me,” and, “What am I willing to risk/do in order to accomplish my objectives?” We also explored the role of the manager as both an active participant in governance, as well as the need for us to be aware of the larger picture by sometimes using Marty Linsky’s “balcony analogy.”

Another theme was enhancement and overview of direct skills. These included negotiations, statistical analysis, policy implementation, media relations, finance, and performance measurement. None of these went into great depth, but all provided exposure to different thought processes.

The final theme was discussion of some current topics, such as education policy; collaborative merger of services; transparency; advocacy; differences between elected and appointed officials; and use of analogies when forming

policy. There were robust discussions about the future of labor unions and the financial conditions of state and local governments.

The program was led by an outstanding faculty and staff. They pushed, challenged, questioned, and provoked the class to look at ourselves and our behavior differently. The challenges went beyond intellectual when we visited Thompson Island’s Outward Bound facility. There we explored teamwork, trust, and perseverance. The program is experiential in nature, using a process of making meaning from experience, and is built around several leadership and group dynamics exercises. The focus was not on answers, but on how to formulate questions, how to exercise leadership, and how to grapple with our own tendencies, such as my tendency to impose limits on myself.

An odd highlight of the Outward Bound program was the self-addressed letter each participant wrote that was mailed to us six months later. My letter arrived a few days ago and reading it brought back the feeling of that day. “I

did it! I actually climbed the Giants’ Ladder! It is important to try and fail versus not trying and failing. I tried and I made it! My take away is to not limit myself. Working with other people, people I trust and who depend on me – I can do anything. God, thanks for this day and this opportunity for growth!”

As a mid-career professional, the program ultimately reaffirmed the value of public service and equipped me with tools to use in the second half of my career. Along the way, I made what I know will be lifelong friends and changed my perspective on the impact I can have on an organization and community – not too bad for 21 days.

I need to thank my manager Dale Iman (HKS 2006) and ICMA for selecting me as the 2011 recipient of The Ferguson Group scholarship. Their confidence in my ability and allowing me to represent my fellow ICMA members will not be disabused throughout my career.

Applications for The Ferguson Group scholarship to attend the 2012 HKS program are being accepted through January 6, 2012.

Originally published at icma.org

Ethics, continued from page 2

Although intervening could halt a potentially effective strategy for both parties, continuing with a “deal” that lacked transparency, respect for the individual involved, and the integrity of the hiring process was not possible. The manager addressed the issue with the council, explaining that the decision to consolidate needed to be unwound from the fate of the director.

A second example

A city and county were locked in a dispute after the county approved the construction of a large manufacturing plant. New jobs were important but city officials were concerned that the environmental impact of the new facility, located near city resources, outweighed the gain. Council designated the city manager to be the point person on the issue.

A county commissioner, the lone vote against the proposal, stopped by city hall to see the mayor. Hearing that the mayor was unavailable, the county commissioner asked to meet with the city manager. Out of courtesy, the manager obliged.

The county commissioner expressed a desire to work with the city to stop what he regarded as a disaster for the region. The manager informed the mayor, and the mayor met with the commissioner and directed the city attorney and city manager to sit in. At the conclusion, the attorney advised all parties not to disclose the meeting to any other county officials as the information presented by the commission might help the city prevail.

The manager soon recognized that he had an ethical issue to resolve. Unintentionally, he met twice with a colleague’s elected official

without informing his colleague. He had a professional obligation to inform the county manager although doing so could have harmed the city’s interests.

When yet another county commissioner called him, the manager seized the opportunity. He informed the commissioner that contact should be elected official to elected official. He told the county manager of the contacts and enlisted his help to put an end to it.

Find yourself inadvertently in an ethical hot spot? Best to do the right thing, and quickly. f

—Martha Perego
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51st Annual NCCMA Winter Seminar

The Changing Face of Local Management: New Challenges – New Tools

Sheraton Imperial Hotel, Research Triangle Park, City and County of Durham February 1-3, 2012 Draft Agenda

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2012

9:00-12:30 PRECONFERENCE SESSIONS

Workshop I (Imperial 6 & 7)

Making Imagination Happen!

Do you have the most imaginative team needed to accomplish your community's aspirations? Join Karen Thoreson, President, Alliance for Innovation to look back and then forward to see what surprises a changed world has brought to local government organizations. What has happened that you never would have expected? And what are your team's aspirations for the future? BE BOLD! This session will look at: Drivers of Change Innovative Organizational Cultures Obstacles to Innovation Steps to help you Encourage Innovation in Your Organization Conversations Starters! Those who participate will be given a follow up guide to start the conversation in their organizations along with an assessment to test readiness for change. **Moderator:** Toni Shope, East Regional Director, Alliance for Innovation, Cornelius. **Speaker:** Karen Thoreson, President, Alliance for Innovation, Phoenix, AZ

Workshop II (Auditorium)

Attracting Private Investment for Economic Development and Community Revitalization

A manufacturing facility sits vacant near Main Street and local leaders want to know their options for rehabilitating the property and putting it back to use. A chamber of commerce urges county commissioners to offer incentives to small business owners who agree to make additional investments in their businesses. A downtown development director seeks city and county assistance in revitalizing a downtown that has been struggling in this economy. Local leaders seek to attract new private investment for a hotel and movie theater into a sagging commercial area.

What finance tools can a local government use in these scenarios? In this workshop, participants will: Learn the basics about local government authority to enter into public-private partnerships for economic development and revitalization. Examine revitalization projects in communities around the state and hear about the finance tools that have been used. Learn the essential questions to ask private developers in order to avoid over-committing public resources. Hear how the School of Government's new Development Finance Initiative assists communities with development finance efforts. **Moderator:** Bill Coleman, Retired Town Manager, Town of Cary, Industry Strategist, SAS Institute. **Speakers:** Will Lambe, Director, Community and Economic Development Program, UNC-CH School of Government; Michael Lemanski, Director, Development Finance Initiative, UNC-CH School of Government; Jonathan Q. Morgan, Associate Professor, UNC-CH School of Government;

C. Tyler Mulligan, Assistant Professor, UNC-CH School of Government

12:00 Registration

12:00-1:15 Executive Committee Meeting (Royal)

1:30-2:15 Welcome and Introductions (Imperial 4 & 5)

Harry L. Jones, Sr., President CCMA, County Manager, Mecklenburg County; Ken Larking, Program Chair CCMA, Assistant County Manager, Moore County; W. Lane Bailey, Immediate Past President CCMA, City Manager, City of Lenoir; Mike Smith, Dean, School of Government, UNC-CH

2:15-3:00 KEYNOTE ADDRESS (Imperial 4 & 5)

Speaker: Clark Sutton Gillespy, Vice President, Economic Development/Business Development/Territorial Strategies, Duke Energy Carolinas

3:00-3:30 Break

3:30-5:00 Plenary Session (Imperial 4 & 5)

Elements of a Successful Local Economic Development Program

NC Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco leads a session on economic development success stories in our state. The session will focus on large and small successes, cross boundary partnerships and growing your own businesses. A reactor panel will include perspectives from the NC Community College System, the NC Rural Economic Development Center, and a local economic development corporation. **Moderator:** Ken Larking, Assistant County Manager, Moore County **Speakers:** J. Keith Crisco, Secretary of Commerce Department of Commerce. Panelists: Billy Ray Hall, President Rural Economic Development Center, Inc.; Scott Millar, President, Catawba County Economic Development Corporation; Scott Ralls, President Community College System

5:00 Reception (Imperial Pre-Function Area)

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2012

7:30 Late Registration

7:30-8:30 Alumni Breakfasts

Appalachian State University (Empire AB)

East Carolina University (Piedmont)
 North Carolina State University (Empire C)
 University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (Empire DE)
 University of North Carolina at Charlotte (Bull Durham A)
 University of North Carolina at Greensboro (Room 101)
 University of North Carolina at Wilmington (Bull Durham B)
 Western Carolina University (Sandhills)

7:30 Continental Breakfast (Imperial Pre-Function Area)

8:30-10:00 CONCURRENT SESSIONS

1. Speed Coaching for MPA Students (Imperial 6 & 7)

Have career questions about the local government profession? Want advice about options you're considering? Want help with connections to advance your career interests? MPA students will have the opportunity to network one-on-one with up to six city/county managers and assistants in a fun, yet time-sensitive, way! **Moderators:** Emily Leik, 2nd-Year MPA Student, UNC-CH MPA Program; Tom Lundy, County Manager, Catawba County

2. Session I (Imperial 4)

Are You Ready for Your Next Job?

Securing a job depends on how you present your accomplishments in the recruiting and screening process. This session will give students, managers in transition, and others who are exploring career options pointers on how to present themselves in a compelling way. It will cover the "do's and don'ts" of resumes and cover letters, and provide useful information on surviving the recruitment process. Please bring copies of your resumes, cover letters, and laptops (optional). **Moderator:** Rodney Dickerson, Assistant Town Manager, Town of Garner. **Speaker:** Heather Lee, Ph.D, SPHR, Senior Partner, Developmental Associates, LLC, Durham

3. Session II (Imperial 5) Courage & Conflict: A New Mind-set for Resolution

Sadly, most people feel inept and uncomfortable addressing conflict. And we tend to avoid dealing with things that make us feel that way. Yet, we all have conflict on a regular basis. This presentation introduces the importance of mind-set as a key to successfully addressing conflict. Among other things, participants will learn about: 3 key mind-set philosophies, 4 different ways we communicate (2 of which are common and ineffective), 1 common mistake that starts or exacerbates conflict, and universal hot buttons we need to know in dealing with conflict. Imagine the freedom and power you would have if you were one of the relatively few people who willingly and effectively address conflict. This short program can help you do that. **Moderator:** Lee Galloway, Town Manager, Town of Waynesville. **Speaker:** Gregg Piburn, Owner, Leader's Edge Consulting, Loveland, CO

8:30-12:00 CONFERENCE WORKSHOP (Auditorium) Lean Thinking for Government Challenges

This workshop will be a presentation of Lean Thinking and how it provides

governments at all levels with new approaches to deal with today's challenges. The workshop will also show project results from local government agencies that have implemented lean approaches within their organizations and how they have benefited from such process change. **Moderator:** Craig Honeycutt, County Manager, Alamance County. **Speakers:** Ken Hoover, Regional Manager, North Carolina State University – IES, Greensboro ; Annah Poteat-Godwin, Improvement Specialist, North Carolina State University – IES, Kannapolis ; David Yates, Coordinator of Process Optimization, North Carolina State University – IES, Rocky Mount

9:00-10:30 MPA Program Director's Meeting (Crown)

9:30-3:30 A photographer will be available today to take, or update, your photograph for the NCCCMA Directory. (Beside registration table)

10:00-10:30 Break

10:30-12:00 CONCURRENT SESSIONS

1. Session I (Imperial 4)

The Future of Local Government

The Alliance for Innovation's 2011 Big Ideas meeting focused on the Future of Local Government. Scholars and practitioners developed three contrasting and distinctly different views of what the future may bring and how local government should prepare. Karen Thoreson, President of the Alliance for Innovation will lead a discussion on these three Big Ideas and allow participants to discuss and evaluate their own reality. **Moderator:** Toni Shope, East Regional Director, Alliance for Innovation, Cornelius. **Speaker:** Karen Thoreson, President, Alliance for Innovation, Phoenix, AZ

2. Session II (Imperial 5)

Managing in a Small Municipality: Challenges, Opportunities and Rewards

Whether one is seeking their first position in local government, seeking/entering their first management position, or just looking to learn from others who have managed small units of government, this session will provide insight into the challenges and rewards of being a manager in a small unit of local government. Participants will hear from and interact with experienced managers working in this type of setting and they will be invited to share their experiences in this interactive learning workshop. There will also be discussion of the resources available to assist managers working in this setting, such as the NCLM, the UNC SOG, and other state resources. **Moderator:** Dewey Harris, Assistant County Manager, Catawba County. **Panelists:** Joseph M. Moore, II, City Manager, City of Brevard; Carl W. Stenberg, Professor, School of Government; atthew Zapp, Town Manager, Town of Benson

12:00-1:30 PRESIDENT'S LUNCHEON (Empire)

Includes introduction of NCCCMA MPA scholarship recipients, recognition of Life Members, recognition of sponsors and: Memorable Moments in Local Management

1:45-5:00 CONFERENCE WORKSHOP (Auditorium)

Fly by the seat of your pants: The best trait for tough times

Author and psychologist Brad Blanton writes, "The only security we have is in our ability to fly by the seat of our pants." Attendees will learn how to become more resilient, benefiting their professional and personal lives. They will also get a chance to determine how resilient they are, what are their potential opportunities for improvement in that area, and how to become more adaptable. Among other things, participants will: Assess their levels of resiliency, Learn to recognize and respond to the normal cycle of addressing change, Tap into the power of Blank Blank Enterprises and its CEO, Discover how to "fail better," Be introduced to tools that force group and personal action, Borrow the wisdom of that great philosopher (and Denver Bronco quarterback) Tim Tebow, and Create customized and realistic personal action plans based on the workshop. Participants will be able to assess during the workshop how their personal traits help or hinder them in dealing with change themselves. **Moderator:** John Connet, City Manager, City of Clinton. **Speaker:** Gregg Piburn, Owner, Leader's Edge Consulting, Loveland, CO

1:45-3:15 CONCURRENT SESSIONS

1. Session I (Imperial 4)

Communicating the Importance of Local Government

Too many people today see government as an enemy rather than the legitimate institution for addressing public challenges. This session will present ways to reframe the discussion and help clarify and strengthen the role of cities and counties as instruments of the people, by the people, and for the people. **Moderators:** Donna Warner, Director, Local Elected Leader Academy, UNC-CH School of Government; Gordon Whitaker, Professor, UNC-CH School of Government. **Speaker:** Elaine Mejia, Senior Program Associate, Public Works

2. Session II (Imperial 5)

Big Ideas Right At Home – Innovation in Local Government

Hear from your North Carolina colleagues about forward thinking projects and creative efforts that have won national awards from ICMA and NACO. Local counties and municipalities will share presentations on their innovative ideas and solutions to issues and problems within their communities. Learn how to save money, build teams and promote collaborative approaches to issues in your community. **Moderators:** Martha Wheelock, Assistant City Manager, City of Winston-Salem; Tony Wilder, Deputy County Manager, Harnett County

3:15-3:30 Break

3:30-5:00 CONCURRENT SESSIONS

1. Session I (Imperial 4)

Choosing Civility

This session will explore how Alamance County Public Libraries initiated a Civility project with its staff, based on P.M. Forni's book Choosing Civility. This project will be carried out into County Government and the community via a Community Read program. We will also discuss how other communities

throughout the country are starting to take part in a variety of programs designed to Choose Civility. **Moderator:** Craig Honeycutt, County Manager, Alamance County. **Speaker:** M. J. Wilkerson, Director, Alamance County Public Libraries

2. Session II (Imperial 5)

The Changing Face of Grantsmanship

Strategies for winning grants in an austere budget environment. Applying for, implementing, and working with firms that provide grant writing and management services. What do you do when the grants are gone? What happens if you have to send grant dollars back because your municipality can no longer afford the matching funds? **Moderator:** Todd Clark, City Manager, City of Newton. **Speakers:** H. Dewitt Blackwell, Jr. AICP, Executive Director, Western Piedmont COG, Hickory ; Dan Gerlach, President, Golden LEAF Foundation, Rocky Mount ; Bill McNeil, AICP, President, McNeil Planning Solutions, Greensboro

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2012

7:30 Late Registration

7:30 Continental Breakfast (Imperial Pre-Function Area)

8:00-9:00 Public Executive Leadership Academy Graduates & 2011 Prospective Applicants Meeting (Crown)

8:00-9:00 Orientation for New Managers and Association Members, Senior Partner Training (Imperial 6 & 7). Speakers: Harry L. Jones, Sr., President CCMA, County Manager, Mecklenburg County; Gordon Whitaker, Professor of Public Administration and Government, UNC-CH School of Government

9:00-10:15 Business Meeting (Imperial 4 & 5)

NCCCMA President Harry Jones will preside over the semi-annual business meeting of the association. Election of officers and directors for FY 12-13 will be considered by the membership.

10:15-10:30 Break

10:30-12:00 NCACC & NCLM Legislative Updates (Imperial 6 & 7)

Potential issues that could impact local governments in the 2012-13 biennial sessions of the General Assembly will be discussed. **Speakers:** Ellis Hankins, Executive Director, North Carolina League of Municipalities (Imperial 6); David Thompson, Executive Director, North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (Imperial 7)

12:00-1:30 Civic Education Committee Meeting (Sandhills)

12:00-1:30 Program Conference Committee Meeting (Empire E)