

November 2020 eNews

Mester's Message



Here's another message on serving our community during these challenging times... let's continue this month's dialog with the VLMGA "M= enhance our **Management** capabilities within our Council-Manager structure" as informed by the ICMA Code of Ethics (adopted 1924, updated 2020), specifically one tenet to consider this month:

Tenet 1. We believe professional management is essential to efficient and democratic local government by elected officials.*

Tenet 5. Submit policy proposals to elected officials; provide them with facts, and technical and professional advice about policy options; and collaborate with them in setting goals for the community and organization.*

*review associated **Guidelines** at: <https://icma.org/icma-code-ethics>

Again let's also connect these tenets to the Declaration of Ideals (adopted in the early 1980s, <https://icma.org/declaration-ideals>) as they remain relevant to today's society, culture and community challenges. Of the eleven ideals two resonated with me this month as aligned with the above tenets:

Ideal 6. Advocate equitable regulation and service delivery, recognizing that needs and expectations for public services may vary throughout the community.

Ideal 11. Take actions to create diverse opportunities in housing, employment, and cultural activity in every community for all people.

Translating these tenets and ideals into the intersection of our professional and personal roles consider committing to such actions as:

- Are you continuing to provide leadership on essential services, in an efficient manner, even with having to convert to remote work and virtual meetings?;
- Are you continuing to seek diversity of staff input on policy and program development even if communication is more challenging and time consuming?;
- Are you honoring early COVID-19 commitment to reassess FY21 constrained budget, in terms of revenue projections and deferred expenditures (i.e. recruitment, salary compensation, maintenance funding), to determine if sustainable to release some "holds"?;
- As we continue to work the COVID-19 pandemic marathon response, are you still focused on other core policy development needs?; and
- Parallel to COVID-19 response continuing to address social justice, police reform and housing availability opportunities?

I am impressed to learn of the various ways VLMGA members are continuing to answer yes to the above questions as well as with intentionality achieving "A= Action" by building communities through local governments that continuously assesses equitable regulation and service delivery along with creating diverse opportunities in housing, employment, and cultural activity for all people.

There are many options available to achieve our profession's ideals and execute on the tenets. Check out additional eNews articles as well as these resources:

- Review the Community Conversations eNews article presented by Albemarle County for a meaningful engagement effort via a virtual and pandemic safe manner;
- Jointly provide local governing bodies and school boards regular revenue and expenditure updates to reassess current fiscal year along with long-view planning for FY22 and FY23;
- Dust off the pre-COVID-19 governing body work plan and start working the priorities within the "new normal environment";

- Review completed housing affordability studies and develop a well-reasoned plan to implement the recommendations;
- Continue local, regional and state efforts for strengthening police guardianship culture with stronger community trust and ensuring adequate state funding for new mandates; and
- Continue to utilize ICMA Ethics Staff to confidentially discuss any questions about our ethical obligations.

Thanks to all the VLGMA members for participation in the Regent University on an ethics research survey for how local government professionals form ethical decisions. VLGMA will receive the analytical report and have an opportunity to discuss the results at a future conference.

Welcome to our newest VLGMA members: Debra Baca, Town Clerk/Treasurer, Town of St. Paul; Daniel Hoffman, City Manager, City of Winchester; Erin McLellan, Assistant County Administrator, County of Loudoun and James Worsley, Deputy County Administrator for Human Services, County of Chesterfield.

Stay safe, healthy and remain strong, Cindy

[Contact Cindy Mester](#)

Focus on the Future – A Look at VLGMA’s Strategic Plan



Focus on the Future – A Look at VLGMA’s Strategic Plan

By Craig Meadows, VLGMA President-Elect

My articles in the September and October VLGMA newsletters focused on the first two areas of focus for the VLGMA Strategic Plan – Communications and Networking, and the Next Generation of the Profession. Before I move to the third focus area, I want to use this month’s newsletter to invite you to review the Strategic Plan document, and provide your thoughts on its content.

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Community Conversations



Community Conversations

Emily Kilroy, Albemarle County Director of Communications and Public Engagement

The Removal Will Be Televised

In July, we shared that Albemarle County began the new process codified in Virginia Code § 15.2-1812 that authorized a locality to remove, relocate, contextualize, or cover war monuments and memorials from its public property. This summer, the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors executed the new legal process to remove the At Ready Confederate War Memorial and on September 12, 2020, At Ready, the Napoleon cannons, and the stacked cannonballs that stood in front of our historic courthouse for 111 years were removed – the first locality in Virginia to do so.

To discuss this concept further or ask questions contact Emily (ekilroy@albemarle.org)

Have a topic for a future Community Conversations article to suggest?, please contact Cindy Mester (cmester@fallschurchva.gov)

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A DAO in the Life



A DAO in the Life

John Hughes, Assistant City Manager, City of Lynchburg

October 2020 has come and gone! When I drafted October’s DAO in the Life article, little did I know there would be an opportunity to communicate so soon! As many of you are aware, the City of Lynchburg hosted the first Virtual DAO meeting on October 9, 2020. From feedback, participants were engaged and appreciative of the format, facilitation, and topics presented in that abbreviated session. Dr. Ron Carlee provided excellent discussion and lecture regarding the theme of “Leading with Values, Not Bias” in which implicit bias, microaggressions, systemic discrimination and the promotion of equity were included. At one point, there were nearly 60 participants in the Zoom meeting that allowed for breakout rooms and pointed reflection. A note of gratitude to Dr. Carlee, the assigned volunteer breakout room facilitators, and to Old Dominion University for sponsoring this Fall 2020 DAO meeting.

Civic Engagement - Prince George County



Civic Engagement

By Jeff Stoke, Deputy County Administrator, Prince George County

Emotional support chickens for everyone

The fabric of society has run afowl during the pandemic. We recently had a complaint of chickens in a R-1 subdivision with small setbacks. The owner of the chickens called them “companions” during difficult times and requested that he be allowed to keep them on the property for emotional support. Unfortunately, our current laws did not allow this request. The County felt the need to review and revise our zoning code regarding poultry in the community. Rather than let the feathers fly, we decided the best course of action is a public comment period, postcards to residents, and a survey before the item goes to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors. We stressed the need to receive public input on potential ordinance changes, which would affect the keeping of poultry (including chickens) on smaller residential properties in the County.

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ICMA call for candidate nominations for the Executive Board



The following is published on behalf of VLGMA President Cindy Mester.

ICMA call for candidate nominations for the Executive Board

On October 8th, ICMA sent an email to all members for a nomination call for Regional Vice-Presidents to serve on the ICMA Executive Board. Nominations will open on November 3, 2020 for the 2021 election year. Deadline to submit your interest is January 8, 2021. This is an important leadership opportunity to serve ICMA, the Southeast Region, and the local government management profession. This opening is for the designated non-Chief Administrative Officer year in ICMA’s Southeast region. As VLGMA’s President I am honored to serve on the ICMA 2021 nominating committee.

Eligibility and the selection process for this position are governed by the ICMA Constitution and the **ICMA Southeast Regional Nominating Committee Process for Identification and Selection of Nominees for ICMA Vice-President** [<https://icma.org/articles/article/have-you-considered-serving-icma-executive-board>.]

According to the region’s geographical rotation protocol, the position for the 2021 election for an Executive Board Vice President, serving a three-year term, is open to a non-Chief Administrative Officer (non-CAO) serving in an appointed position to a local government. Because Virginia (*thank you Laura!*), Georgia, and Kentucky currently have representation on the Executive Board, candidates from those states will only be eligible if no other qualified candidates are identified. ICMA notes this does not preclude a qualified individual from these states from applying for this year’s process but could impact their ability to be selected if states without current/recent representation on the Board put forth qualified candidate(s) for consideration. I encourage you to consider submitting your candidacy for 2021 consideration.

As a heads up, the 2023 elections will be a nominations call that is open to any ICMA member (CAO and non-CAO) for which Virginia will again be eligible.

Institute of Government Update



I had the opportunity to connect with all the ICMA senior advisors at their annual meeting on October 21. We typically connect in person at the ICMA annual conference, but it was good to hear how these volunteers are helping those of us active in the profession. Senior advisors have been helping other state associations conduct ethics investigations and assisting members navigate the stresses of managing through the pandemic and social unrest we have seen in communities throughout our country.

[Contact Charles Hartgrove](#)

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Certificate News

THE Graduate Certificate in Local Government Management



"Preparing the Next Generation of
Local Government Leaders"

The Local Government Certificate Program is in full swing with a packed semester. Students participated in the ICMA UNITE Conference, finished midterms, and are gearing up for our November ICMA Student Chapter meeting. To increase enrollment for the Spring Semester, we are continuing our recruitment efforts and answering questions about the Local Government Certificate Program through 3 virtual webinars led by Dr. Stephanie Davis.

- December 15, 2020: 12pm-1pm
Access via Zoom: <https://viriniatech.zoom.us/j/93713028301>

[Contact Stephanie Davis](#)

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Tedd's Take



VLGMA Retirees' Reunion in a time of COVID

On October 27, 28, and 29, Zoom meetings were held to replace the well-attended annual VLGMA retiree reunions held the last two years in Hanover County and Charlottesville, respectively. Email invitations were sent to a rather lengthy list of VLGMA retirees with over 32 positive responses. Ultimately, each of the three sessions had about 9 participants for the hour-long exchanges.

[Contact Tedd Povar](#)

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VRSA's Insight Application



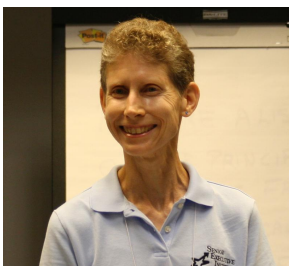
**VRSA's Insight application: Bridging the gap between
your strategic plan and everyday decisions**

Public bodies make important decisions each day as they serve their communities. Decisions may involve daily operations – utilities, public safety, refuse parks – or may be responses to new challenges and uncertainties – like COVID-19. Often these decisions not only impact the lives of citizens, but staff as well.

How do public bodies ensure they make optimal decisions that support their communities *and* strategic objectives?

[Read More](#)

Mel's Poetry Corner



Letting Go

Oh, my tree friends, how you teach me
from your lofty perspective, how to be free
of worries and fears and dis-ease and woes
that we harbor and cherish and won't let go.

Your leaves simply blow away
and with the wind, dance and play.

No strings attached
to bring them back.

You allow the new to emerge and be
your ever changing, changeless reality.

[Contact Mel Gillies](#)



Position Changes And Other Events

October 2020

- Anne Lewis has joined Baker Tilly as director of public sector executive recruitment. She most recently served as assistant administrator in Loudoun County and previously served as deputy city manager in Harrisonburg.
- Paul Oberdorfer, Charlottesville deputy city manager since 2019, has been appointed city manager of Piqua, OH. He most recently served as Charlottesville's public works director after a 19 year career with the Ohio Department of Transportation.
- Mike Watson, Bluefield town manager since 2009, has been appointed as county administrator of Carroll County effective November 9. He has served in various roles for the town of Bluefield since 2004.
- Doug Stanley has been appointed as county administrator of Prince Edward effective November 16. He previously served as the Warren County administrator for 20 years.
- Matthew Hankins has been appointed as the Wythe County assistant administrator effective October 19. He most recently served as the assistant town manager of Rocky Mount for 13 years.

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