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Cup of Joe to Go



Joe Casey

Cup of Joe to Go

Starting this year and hopefully each year thereafter, I will send a message to all senior leaders to share with their employees, as applicable. The message is simple - protocols in dealing with board members and citizens, including those who are candidates for office or supporting such candidates. Our VLGMA profession follows the ICMA Code of Ethics and they serve as a great reminder of how we should act and treat others. I encourage all of you to read them and share them with your employees as many of the ethical statements apply to your workforce. I also encourage you to read your own HR policies that address ethics.

One issue addressed in my message are the efforts to be responsive to existing Board Member information requests. Board members have every right to get information in helping them respond to constituents, develop initiatives or make decisions. Staff should be responsive for any district or citizen-related information. However, when such information is based upon countywide-data, or has county-wide implications; is public information that might be of interest to or benefit other Board members; or when the information might have the potential to impact a future Board agenda, staff shall provide all Board members with such information with concurrence from their deputy county administrator.

Next month, I will share the second part of my message that addresses handling requests from citizens, including those who are candidates for office or supporting such candidates. The theme is quite simple - if you treat all citizens well and the same, then by default you will be treat the candidates as citizens and serve them just as well.

[Contact Joe Casey](#)

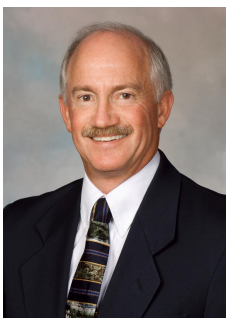
Position Changes and Other Events

January 2019

- Tyrone Franklin, former Surry County administrator, has been appointed executive director of the Williamsburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority.
- Mark Taylor, Spotsylvania County administrator since 2015, has been appointed Greene County administrator effective in April.
- Tedd Povar, associate director of the Virginia Institute of Government, announced his retirement effective April 1, 2019.
- William "Bill" Rolfe, former Bedford County and Orange County administrator, passed away.
- Michael Lombardo, town manager for Hamilton, Massachusetts since 2010, has been appointed administrator for Essex County.
- Kevin Boggess, city manager for Salem since 2008, was asked to resign on a 3-2 vote of city council, effective mid-February.
- Robert Hiss, assistant manager for the Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County, Georgia, has been appointed Bedford County administrator effective February 25th.
- Joseph "Joe" Paxton, former Rockingham County administrator (retired), has been appointed interim town superintendent for Dayton.
- Will Moore, planning and zoning administrator for the town of Middleburg, has been appointed deputy town administrator while retaining his other responsibilities.



Tedd's Take



Tedd Povar

Beware of Dark Clouds on the Horizon

These are heady days for most localities going into the FY20 budget cycle - sales taxes are solid and growing, property values have seen a nice little spike, and, in general, things are pretty good. Many believe this is a great time to make up for the years of penny-pinching by being a bit more generous to the many worthy departments and agencies that always have more needs than resources.

Every city, county, and town elected official wants to be magnanimous, within reason. How better to ingratiate oneself to their internal and external audiences than to say "yes" to the many demands, be they pay raises, new equipment, expanded programs, or donations to worthy nonprofits.

The budget process can easily be seen as an annual event, isolated from the past and from the future. "Let's just get this one done, and we'll worry about next year, next year." It is the responsibility of the administrator to be continuously mindful of the long term, and remember that the good times never last. Economists are predicting, almost unanimously, that a recession looms, starting late this year or during 2020. It is time to be cautious and pull back the reigns on the unbridled economic optimism that may pervade many governing bodies.

While local governments tend to slide into a recession more slowly than the general economy because of their reliance on property assessments and taxes, they also recover more slowly for the same reason. By being fiscally conservative now and banking much of the 'extra' income generated during this time of expansion, localities can flatten out these economic gyrations, creating more stability and dependability in their operations.

Recommending an answer of 'no' when it is easier to say 'yes' takes fortitude and resolve. While it is one of the tougher parts of an administrator's job, your electeds and staff will appreciate your guidance, wisdom, and foresight for years to come.

[Contact Tedd Povar](#)

Member Tribute - Bill Rolfe

Member Tribute Bill Rolfe

By Hunter Rolfe Moore



On Wednesday night January 9th, 2019 we lost my Daddy, Bill Rolfe. After six months of relentless testing and hoops to get him on the liver transplant list his body just couldn't take anymore. He fought so hard for us, and himself, and we will always be so proud of that. My Mom kept his meds going, brought him to so many appointments, and cared for him so selflessly on good days and tough ones. My sister was his required additional support person and asked countless questions to ensure he was getting exceptional care every step of the way. And I was in contact with UVA, lining up to hopefully be a living donor option. We really thought we were going to be able to save him.

He was an incredible man, a hilarious father, and a supportive husband to my Mama. He was my first love, and I was his baby girl. We shared a special bond, and he would listen to me when he wouldn't listen to anyone else. He was the person I was most excited to call whenever I had accomplished something big because I knew he'd be more proud than anyone. He was a big guy with a bright smile who could command the room, he was so full of life. People gravitated to him wherever we went. He was the life of the party and I know I get that from him. I'd like to think that he stuck around for one more birthday party with me, and I'm so glad we spent it together. He was an incredible story teller as he loved to embellish things the more time had passed and we loved him for it. He was someone that was highly respected in his career, known for demanding perfection, and I know that I get my unfaltering work ethic from him too. He loved the water and the sun and the sand, and there wasn't anywhere he was happier than taking us on vacations and hanging on a beach with a beer and a cigar. He was the most

incredible Pop to his 3 grandbabies and I know in recent years these kids brought him so much joy. He often asked me when we might have another and was willing to forfeit me as a liver donor option just to have another grandchild. He could be really demanding but at the end of the day he was kind, and sentimental, and so generous. He was my Dad and no one will ever be able to replace him and no one will ever love me the way he did. I will share funny stories about him with joy to whoever will listen, and I will cry on the days where I miss him unbearably, but no matter what I will carry him with me always.

Steve Carter, Nelson County Administrator shares:

When I first met Bill many, many years ago at a summer VLGMA conference, he shared his experience in having interviewed for a position with the locality I was then employed by. It was such a treat to hear Bill relate his story on one of the elected officials who interviewed him, who was still in office when I was employed by the locality. Bill's account was right on target! From that point in time I was very fortunate to get to know Bill and have him as a friend as well as a colleague. He was truly the best in all respects.

A DAO in the Life - Jennifer Whetzel



Jennifer
Whetzel

A DAO in the Life

Jennifer Whetzel, Deputy County Administrator,
County of Augusta

In December, I was fortunate to take a long vacation to visit the Land Down Under. The weather was hot, the animals were very different, the scenery, spectacular. All the usual things you would gleam from a bucket list vacation. Then there are things you pick up on from a local government perspective.....they use roundabouts extensively, trash is called "rubbish" and the trash trucks specifically say that the contents are going to the landfill (so recycle people!), one council specifically did not want a bridge over a river in order to keep their area from developing. There were a few big construction projects that were proactively marketed to the citizens, something that could be beneficial to us in the States as well.

Also when traveling, you pick up on how citizens of other countries feel about the United States. Our politics are very important to them. In Australia, they were watching the United States and cautiously offered their opinion on what is happening in our politics. Then I realized (thanks to my astute husband) that what we do in the States affects them in multiple ways such as economy, trade, and security. The United States is a world power. Australia is not. Countries such as Australia need our protection, need Americans to spend on their successful tourism programs, send them goods they don't have, and so on.

I have progressed through the ranks of local government. I started as an Assistant Finance Director, moved to a Finance Director and now Deputy County Administrator. As an Assistant, there were times when fiscally responsible decisions had to be made, sometimes at the grumbling of departments and employees. I had no trouble making these decisions, they were right in the eyes of

internal controls. Life was black and white. I was Australia. My bosses took the brunt of the complaints and held their (my) ground. They were the United States.

One of the biggest changes in moving from a Department Head to a Deputy is that you aren't really a Department Head anymore. You lose your past circle of contacts. You feel the pinch of "the pleasure of the Board", a boss that works for "the pleasure of the Board", and the need to satisfy all the Department Heads and employees. You end up being one that takes the brunt of the complaints and you do the best you can to hold your ground. You have moved from being Australia to being the United States.

This role is very tough. You rely on your moral compass to guide you, hopefully leading to the greater good of all citizens. Sometimes you realize battles are not worth fighting so maybe you can win the war. You arrange resources to ensure that goals are met and services are provided. Most importantly, you invest in your staff, allow them to be in the black and white all the while introducing them to the gray. For they are the next generation of leaders. They are the next United States.

[Contact Jennifer Whetzel](#)

Civic Engagement - County of Cumberland

Civic Engagement - Practicing What I Preach

So, if ever you want to test the waters of engaging with your community, try undertaking a controversial project like a landfill. During the last eight to ten months, we in Cumberland County have gone through just that process, and I have been reminded at many points along the way of certain foundational principles that are so very important. Incidentally, they are some of the very same principles I have shared with (they would say preached to) my children through the years, and so I have found myself in the position of necessarily practicing what I have so frequently preached.



Vivian Giles

1. Keep it positive. I have adopted the view that all civic engagement is positive. Even when you, your staff, or your elected officials - or all of you - are being yelled at or vilified (though I am sure I am assuming far too much as that never happens to you), remember that civic engagement is a good thing. After all, if citizens are looking over your shoulder, they are interested in what you are doing, and criticism can only make you better. Embrace it, because even when your civic engagement is relating to a positive topic - something the whole community supports - inevitably there will be disagreements about how to accomplish the agreed-upon goal. In my observation, just about everyone with whom I have engaged truly had the best interest of the community at heart and they were sharing ideas that they truly thought would help and work best. Let them have that, let them have their moment, and thank them for the feedback.
2. Stick to the issues.
This is something that you quickly learn as a lawyer: there is no room for digression to irrelevant matter. The court simply will not tolerate it. But it is not uncommon that discussions quickly get off track, and I have found when

that happens, the conversation tends to become more emotional than fact-driven. Stick to the issues and the narrow set of decision points necessary to complete the task at hand. This will require a strong meeting leader, and in that capacity, do not hesitate to take control of the room.

3. Do not take anything personally.

This is another lesson learned from practicing law, and a skill keenly honed as a county administrator. This also is something more easily accomplished by following suggestion number two above: stick to the issues. Rarely when an upset citizen is unhappy is their ire truly about me or another county official. And even if it is, I have always told my children to allow classmates some latitude because we do not know what struggles they may have in other parts of their lives. We need to let a great deal of what people may say to or about us go unacknowledged other than to correct misinformation when doing so is helpful to the collective or productive to the conversation. Once again, I must practice what I have preached to my children.

4. Be grateful.

Be grateful that we live in a society where public engagement is possible. Be grateful that citizens in our communities have really good ideas, constructive feedback, and care enough about what we do to engage. Be grateful that we have jobs that afford us the opportunity to engage with our citizens and help our communities. And on any given day, be grateful that you were given the opportunity to just be there.

5. Smile.

I really do believe that smiling is contagious. And I believe that in addition to lightening the mood and setting a positive tone for any conversation, you will feel better too. But remember, your smile must be genuine, it must come from within, and it is shared through your eyes. After all, do we not have so very much to smile about!

Thank you for your public service. Keep engaging; enjoy it, learn from it, and grow from it; and smile!

[Contact Vivian Giles](#)

Innovation Edge

ALLIANCE FOR INNOVATION



Innovation Edge

Let Plain Language Work for You is a recent article submitted by Matthew Vanderhorst, Community and Information Services Director with the city of Montgomery, Ohio. He looks at how local governments can communicate more clearly internally and externally. This is very helpful information for all of us and gives us perspective on having the intention to share ideas and concerns succinctly, appropriately, and to the point. It even helps improve our voice-search feature on phones and laptops. Please read more [here](#).

Be sure to register for TLG 2019, which takes place April 9-12 in Reno, Nevada. Early-bird cut-off is February 15. Get more info [here](#).

About the Alliance for Innovation: The Alliance for Innovation is inspiring innovation to advance communities. As the premier resource for emerging practices in local government, we are building cultures of innovation and

connecting thought leaders in the profession. We are accessible and valuable to all levels of an organization. You can learn more about the Alliance at www.transformgov.org or contact me at saburnett@transformgov.org.

Certificate News

Certificate News

With the new year begun, new and returning students are getting ready for classes and the next steps toward better professional development. To help get our students even more motivated, we like to recognize our recent Certificate graduates from this past semester. We had 11 students join the ranks of our alumni. Please join us in congratulating them.



Daysha Holmes	Virginia Tech - Procurement Department
Bladen Finch	Senate of Virginia
Sarah Larson	Blacksburg, VA
Thanh Dang	City of Harrisonburg
Scarlet Stiteler	City of Newport News
Jessica Webb	County of Roanoke
Jacqueline Lynch	County of Roanoke
Donna Krauss	Stafford County
Thomas Gilligan	Loudoun County
Jefferson Miller	Loudoun County
Katelin Hays	Fauquier County

If you or someone you know is interested in the Certificate program, Director Stephanie Davis will be planning recruiting sessions this spring. Feel free to contact her at sddavis@vt.edu or 804-980-5549.

VLGMA Membership Renewal and List



Membership renewals for FY19 need to be finalized and your prompt attention to this matter is appreciated. If you are not interested in renewing and/or would like for us to remove you from the email list related to VLGMA, please also let Sandy Harrington at sharrington@vml.org know.

To renew your membership, please use the following link <https://www.vml.org/vlgma-dues-payment/>

Please share VLGMA membership information with your colleagues who have not yet joined. You may find membership information at <https://icma.org/vlgma/membership>

We wanted to share a few FAQ's:

New Member?

The online renewal system defaults to Yes for this question (which is the first question), if you are not a new member, please change it to NO)

I am a life member- do I still need to participate in the renewal process and use the online link?

We would like everyone to use the online link because we want to ensure we have current contact information for the members. Please select check as the payment option, this will indicate no payment due.

I am unsure of my membership category

Please contact Sandy Harrington at sharrington@vml.org if you are unsure of your membership category

I entered my information and I was unable to print the admin notice and/or did not receive an email with the form

If this happened to you, we can easily regenerate the form and send it to you. For those paying by check, please print the completed form, and send the form along with your check payment.

NACA dues option

I did not select the NACA dues-but want to now. The form is set up so that an individual can do the NACA dues as a separate transaction, just select the NACA dues only option in the drop-down options.

I do not trust using online links

If this is an issue for you, please contact Sandy Harrington at sharrington@vml.org and we can assist with getting the membership renewal processed

If you have any questions related to the online membership renewal process, please contact Sandy Harrington at sharrington@vml.org or 804-523-8524

VLGMA Website Membership List

The VLGMA website now has an updated membership list. Go to: <https://members.icma.org/eweb/DynamicPage.aspx?WebCode=vlgma> to review your information. Email Molly Harlow at mjh3a@virginia.edu with updates.

ICMA Update



ICMA Gettysburg Leadership Institute

ICMA Gettysburg Leadership Institute
May 15 - 17, 2019

<https://icma.org/gettysburg-leadership-institute>

Join ICMA on the battlefield of Pennsylvania just as the Confederate army invades the crossroads town of Gettysburg and this unintended encounter turns into a desperate, ferocious battle.

Who are the major players? What leadership styles are in play? How did the leadership styles and decisions play out?

The Battle of Gettysburg's historical lessons are used as an exploration of personal leadership, organizational effectiveness, and disaster management as participants take an inventory of their leadership styles and decide what needs to change, improve, and/or be added to their personal toolkit to assure the triumphant advance of their organizations.

In 2019, communities around the world will be challenged to keep up with -- and more importantly, keep ahead of -- the dramatic changes technology presents. At this year's 2019 ICMA Southeast Regional Conference, held February 27-March 1 in Greenville, South Carolina, through interactive breakout sessions and workshops, local government leaders will devise ways to evaluate the positives and negatives of these fast-changing technologies to ensure public safety, access and improved quality of life for their residents. Join us in Greenville to build the local government leader's playbook on innovation. [Register today.](#)

Mel's Poetry Corner

Heart Power

It is a blessing for the intellect to serve and fulfill
the heart's intuition and passion and so build
a life of humility and gratitude and light
guided with the wisdom of spiritual insight.

In the hands of a builder, a chainsaw can provide
order, beauty, and a place to live and thrive.
The heart can build a stairway to heaven with
the engineering skill that the mind can give.

Your greatest accomplishment can be
learning how to use and share all your faculties.
With the collaborative synergy of heart and mind,
infinite power and goodness and love preside.

Life graciously awaits
the loving, vibrant architecture, your presence makes.

[Contact Mel Gillies](#)



Mel Gillies

Calendar

Upcoming Events

2019 VLGMA Winter Conference - Feb. 20-22 in Staunton at the Stonewall Jackson Hotel - [Registration](#) closes Feb. 8th!

[More Dates](#)

Update Email Address



Making a change? To continue to receive the monthly eNews and other VLGMA notices, please email [Molly Harlow](mailto:Molly_Harlow) to update your contact information.

Future Newsletter Articles



A goal of this e-newsletter is to keep you informed on activities relative to our profession. As with any membership-based organization, contributions by members are welcome and encouraged. Topics can range from a recent achievement in your locality to an upcoming event with networking potential to human interest stories about current or retired members. To contribute simply send your brief e-newsletter content (~5 sentences or less) via email to [Molly Harlow](mailto:Molly_Harlow).

Future Newsletter Articles

[VLGMA Website](#)

[ICMA Website](#)

[Alliance for Innovation](#)

[Virginia Municipal League](#)

[VA Association of Counties](#)

[Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service](#)

[ELGL](#)

[Website Contact](#)



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Constant Contact 

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