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Maurice's Musings



Maurice Jones

Maurice's Musings

A lot can change in one year. At this time in 2017, I was preparing to transition from VLGMA's President-Elect to President with the simple hope of representing this wonderful organization with the dignity and respect that all of our members deserve. I could never have imagined how tumultuous the next 12 months would be for me, my family, my community and a number of my esteemed colleagues in VLGMA, who like me, are transitioning to new journeys in life.

I'm writing this article just two weeks after learning that my time as the City Manager in Charlottesville will be winding down soon. Although I was not surprised by this development and fully understand that any one election can bring about a change in leadership, I was surprised by the "suddenness" of it all. Although I have several months to decide what my future will hold and I am fully engaged in the issues and decisions that need to be made every day within the Charlottesville City Government, there have also been many moments when I realize I won't be here to see these efforts through to completion. Unexpectedly, it dawns on me that the implementation of our strategic plan and the construction of those important CIP projects, etc. will take place without me.

It is a strange feeling, a mix of sadness and, oddly enough, some pride. Sad, because we are in this profession to implement policies that will help people, and yet in the near future I will not be part of "gettin' it done" in Charlottesville. Proud, because I know our staff will complete those initiatives and projects with precision and professionalism, and I will be applauding their every success.

Last summer in the aftermath of the Unite the Right rally my inbox was flooded with emails of support from my peers around the state and around the country. Once again, as word of my departure from Charlottesville made the rounds, many of you rose to the occasion and provided me comfort and support. I cannot thank you enough for your encouragement during this difficult time.

I promised myself that the last couple of paragraphs in my final article as VLGMA President would not be full of doom and gloom. There is a season for everything and my season as the manager in Charlottesville is simply coming to an end. However I am exceptionally excited about the future. I'm looking forward to what lies ahead for me and my family ... and for one of the best local government associations in the country!

Thanks to the hard work of our executive board and members we have accomplished a great deal this year - development of the next iteration of our strategic plan, growth in our membership, a well attended and informative winter conference (with another fantastic summer conference around the corner) and the nomination of one of our own, Laura Fitzpatrick, to the ICMA Board. All in all, a pretty cool year for VLGMA.

I know this organization will continue to be a beacon of light for the Council-Manager form of government - a management structure that has served our state and our country so well for over 100 years. Thank you for allowing me to serve as your President for the last year. It has been the honor of my professional career. [Contact Maurice Jones](#)

Position Changes and Other Events

May 2018

- Robert (Bob) Sisson, Fairfax city manager since 1991, announced his retirement effective July 1.
- Charles Hartgrove, former Lynchburg deputy city manager, has been appointed by Gov. Northam as chief deputy commissioner of the Virginia taxation department.
- Marvin Collins, Williamsburg city manager since 2015, resigned. Assistant city manager Andrew Trivette has been appointed interim manager.
- Carl Boggess, Bedford County administrator since 2016, announced his intent to retire at the end of the year.
- Reid Wodicka, assistant county administrator for Bedford County since August, 2016, has been appointed Lynchburg deputy city manager, effective June 13.
- Shannon Flanagan-Watson, assistant manager for Arlington County, has been appointed deputy manager there effective May 21.
- Jason Tyree, property maintenance supervisor for the city of Lynchburg's community development department, has been appointed town manager for



Buchanan effective June 18.

- Maurice Jones, city manager for Charlottesville for the past 8 years, did not have his contract renewed by city council, effective December 7.

Tedd's Take



Tedd Povar

A Public Service Requirement

Ever since the creation of an all-volunteer military, there have been calls for some type of public service obligation for all young Americans. While military service may not be an attractive option for many, there are other ways for young people to gain both experience and an understanding of the broad context of public service. It is vital to learn that the country and world are more important than oneself, and that there are ways to make a meaningful, positive impact on those less fortunate.

Currently, organizations like AmeriCorps (which now includes VISTA) and the Peace Corps depend on federal funding and other support to meet their missions. I'd like to suggest that these and similar programs be expanded to provide mandatory one- or two-year placements for young Americans, either immediately after high school or during their college years. In exchange for that service, the participant would receive a basic stipend or credit for college expenses, equivalent to that which an enlisted soldier is paid during that same period.

As I see it, the benefits are many: Program participants would learn what is truly meant by poverty, hunger, sickness, and unsanitary conditions, and what can be done to mitigate those challenges. They would also have opportunities to experience community and team building and develop leadership skills. The program would provide the chance to broaden perspectives on what seemed previously only a theoretical issue in the news affecting unfamiliar people in unfamiliar places.

As commemorating Memorial Day reminds us, freedom is not free and public service needs to become a fundamental part of everyone's life. We have become a "me-centered" country, forgetting the famous words of John F. Kennedy, who originated the idea for VISTA: "Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country." That spirit of contributing to the public good must be rekindled, or we will continue to drift apart rather than find principles that bind us together.

[Contact Tedd Povar](#)

William G. O'Brien Memorial Highway

The William G. O'Brien Memorial Highway was dedicated in Rockingham County on June 6th.

(provided by Stephen King, Rockingham County Administrator)



A DAO in the Life - Laura Fitzpatrick



Laura Fitzpatrick

A DAO in the Life

By Laura A. Fitzpatrick, Deputy City Manager, City of Chesapeake

Later this month the most pivotal mentor in my life is retiring after a long career in city management. This mentor is my father, Daniel Fitzpatrick, City Manager of Rochester, New Hampshire. As I prepare the comments that I will make at his retirement reception, I reflect on all that he has taught me. 99% of the framework I apply to my work is from my dad. A good mentor can be hard to find. I am fortunate to have one that is genetically obligated to impart his wisdom on me! I intend to organize my speech in a "Top Ten List of City Management and Leadership Tips from Dan Fitz." Please indulge the grateful and proud daughter as I share three items from the list here.

Like many of us, I struggle with a tendency towards perfectionism. I contend with this often in the world of work. These three tips pertain to perfectionism.

PERFECTIONISM AND RESULTS

Do not let perfect be the enemy of good.

I first reflected on perfectionism circa 2005 when I was in my first deputy city manager job in a small community. I was tasked with revising the personnel manual. I was paralyzed by the enormity of the task amidst the many hats you wear in a small city. In a conversation about the project, my dad casually commented, "It sounds like you are letting perfect be the enemy of good." He suggested I just get started on the increments of the project and not get hung up on making it perfect along the way. This was a light bulb moment!

YOU DO NOT NEED TO BE PERFECT.

A few years ago my dad and I were talking about effective leadership. He is aware that, like many of us, I have struggled with impostor syndrome. In one conversation, he said to me, "You know, Laura, you do not need to be perfect to be a good leader. Look at me!" (Self-awareness is an admirable quality of my father.) In another conversation, we were talking about interviewing. "You do not need to be perfect to get the job," he said. "You also do not need to have a perfect interview to get the job!" What a valuable reminder in times of stress!

YOUR TEAM WILL NOT BE PERFECT.

In my reflections about perfectionism, my dad and I have discussed its relevance towards leading a team. I find myself cringing when a team member makes a mistake or approaches an issue in a way different from what I envisioned. Just as we must be understanding of our own imperfections, we must also be understanding of others. This also pertains to the notion that there are several right ways to get the result we desire. Approaches that deviate from the "perfect approach" in our head can be effective and are often better for results and the team. (Of course, this is an essential part of delegation!)

A dose of perfectionism can certainly be productive as we pursue excellence in all areas of our lives; however, it can also be a very heavy burden to carry and impose on others. My awareness for the negative impact perfectionism can have on my leadership and results is acute. I carry this awareness with me as I navigate the world. Thanks, Dad for all the insights and discussions. I look forward to many more!

[Contact Laura Fitzpatrick](#)

Fall DAO Meeting - Save the Date

Date: Friday, September 21, 2018

Host: Orange County, VA

Url: <http://orangecountyva.gov/index.aspx>

Location: Lewis Hall Classroom at James Madison's Montpelier

Url: <https://www.montpelier.org/>



For our DAO fall meeting, we are planning an informative day with a focus on a few of Orange County's current projects. These include a long-term growth management plan, our broadband initiative (leveraging e-rate funding and our procurement of a public safety radio system with the provision of broadband to the unserved and underserved residents of the County), and some recent tourism initiatives. Our day will also include a complimentary tour of James Madison's home, Montpelier. We look forward to hosting you in Orange County! Stay tuned for more information!

[Contact Glenda Bradley](#)

Certificate News

While summer offers a break for many school programs, the Certificate program staff are extremely busy this summer. The program is offering a full course load, giving our students the opportunity to double up or catch up on their studies. Moreover, we are planning for the fall semester as we anticipate more students joining us. If you are interested in the program, the deadline to apply for the fall semester is August 1st.

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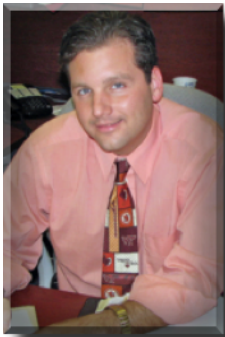
*"Preparing the Next Generation of
Local Government Leaders"*

The summer is also a time of new beginnings. One of the key goals of the Certificate program is to raise up the next generation of local government managers. We celebrate when one of our students has achieved that

goal, and this month, Jason Tyree has done that. Jason will begin his appointment as the new Town Manager for Buchanan in June. After three years with Lynchburg and finishing the Certificate this past semester, Jason is moving on to fill the 'big chair'. The hiring panel recognized Jason's enthusiasm for local government and willingness to think creatively about the problems facing the small town. Jason's love of lifelong learning also shone through. So, when you get the opportunity, congratulate Jason on achieving this professional goal. The next generation's leaders need as much support as they can get.

If you know of someone in your organization who may be ready for the next steps of leadership, please encourage them to look into the Certificate program. Program Director Stephanie Davis will be attending a number of conferences and programs this summer to help with recruitment. As always, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact her at sddavis@vt.edu or 804-980-5549.

Civic Engagement - Community Engagement Fridays



Brian Thrower

Community Engagement Fridays

By Brian Thrower, Emporia City Manager

In researching civic engagement topics this time around for my article, I began thinking of the various strategies we often use to reach our citizens at the local level. After doing some research on the matter, I came across an article from the March 2018 Edition of Public Management magazine titled "Community Engagement Friday." The article discusses the City of Salisbury, North Carolina's civic engagement initiative aimed at reaching residents directly in their neighborhoods.

This initiative first started with City staff visiting residents at their homes to update citizens on City programs and events. Staff also thought this "door knocking" could help address communication and relationship-building issues that had been identified at previous meetings. This "door knocking" eventually turned into "Community Engagement Fridays" whereby staff meets with residents in different neighborhoods of the City on Fridays. The large group of employees actually walk the Salisbury streets to meet with residents in their respective neighborhood. The City notes there is no expense associated with implementing this program other than printing flyers.

My reason for sharing this article is to highlight the fact that civic engagement does not have to involve complex processes or require extensive financial resources. Civic engagement can be as easy as walking down the street and talking with residents. I encourage you to develop your own low cost and simple civic engagement strategies.

The referenced article can be found at <https://icma.org/articles/pm-magazine/community-engagement-friday>.
[Contact Brian Thrower](#)

At the TLG Conference in Tacoma, the City of Virginia Beach was one of five award winners for Outstanding Achievement in Innovation. The City is proactively engaged in applying data science and artificial intelligence to: 1) create historic, current, and future data analysis platforms, 2) address flood-related issues caused by hurricanes and nor'easters, and 3) empower citizens to better manage their flood risk in enterprising new ways. 8 Cities in the Hampton Roads region formed an action cluster to participate in NIST's Global City Teams Challenge to densify a presently-sparse network of water level sensors to enhance real-time predictions made by the VA Institute of Marine Science (VIMS). Click [here](#) to read more and see the video. Congratulations, Virginia Beach!!



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 with the help of our partners International City/County Management Association and Arizona State University. 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.

Mel's Poetry Corner



Mel Gillies

Oasis of Now

Feeling anxious, depleted, unbent?
You are not in the present moment.
Fear comes when we imagine a future or replay the past
or contemplate an unpleasant circumstance.

Slow your breathing down and receive
this moment as it is, instead of mind's imagining.
Don't ask it to change but savor
its sustenance, companionship, and distinctive flavor.

You have finally found it.
Your spiritual oasis.
Relax, for now all is clear.
Love is here.

[Contact Mel Gillies](#)

Calendar

Upcoming Events

Summer Conference - June 20-22, 2018 at the Virginia Beach Oceanfront Sheraton Hotel. More info [here](#).
[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

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