

# How does Gainesville, Florida, continue to be the Best and Whitest City in the Americas?

**One word: Leadership. The man who embodies that concept in Gainesville is Russ Blackburn.** Perhaps his greatest unsung accomplishment has been the restraint he has managed to minimize the constant in-fighting in that legendary Hanfield versus McEachoy Feud. Feud participants were everywhere at this Leadership Gainesville Alumni Forum earlier this month.

So forget the dullest most inconsequential local election which is being held in Gainesville on Tuesday, April 14, 2015—the day before most of the people will be filing their federal income taxes. Whatever happens, Russ Blackburn, the epitome of a Southern Gentleman, still will control this strong City Manager/City Attorney/ weak Mayor/Commission form of government.

But do not be surprised that Gainesville is about to go in an entire new direction. Mr. Blackburn now also is on the Board of Directors of the Gainesville Chamber of Commerce. Public and private corporations may be working so closely together that our City may become recognized as the first municipality to go private in Florida, perhaps in the United States.

Mr. Blackburn probably could have prevented the Forum from deteriorating into another ho-hum battle in the Hanfield v. McEachoy Feud. The McEachoy Clan was evident at the table of their favorite African-American District 1 candidate Charles Goston, though it is unlikely that any of them voting in that District. Also sitting discretely in the audience was another Gostonian former losing candidate Alex Patton. Patton particularly has urged support even though he knows that Goston's record is marred by dozens of arrests over a 20-year-period in Gainesville. Goston has not helped his side particularly by claiming to be a University of Florida journalism graduate with a master's degree in television.

The Hanfield candidate in District 1 is Yvonne Hinson-Rawls. She claims to be an advocate for civil rights and equality, when in fact in 1969-71, she moved away from not toward that battlefield, after her public education in all-black schools. In 1969-71, while blacks were sitting in and speaking out at the University of Florida's racist practices, she was quietly going about getting her bachelor's and master's degrees in special education. She also claims 15 years of experience as an administrator in an impoverished school district—not in Gainesville but in Miami, not in the 21st Century but in the 20th. The Hanfield crowd backed her in 2012 apparently because former City Commissioner Scherwin Henry seemed to have gotten the strange idea that he was their equal.

At that Forum, which was attended by about 40-45 people including the participants to give the media something to cover during the dullest runoff campaign in recent memory, the race for the white City Commissioner at large post seemed to be a proxy duel between former City Mayors, Mark Goldstein and Mac McEachern. Mac is backing a fellow pilot, an apparent Air Head.

Goldstein's former partner, Harvey Budd, the old Jewish savvy local television media mogul, with years of public, corporate, business, charitable experience, is pitted against the young handsome Christian Jay Curtis, who has little if any relevant experience, but he has a beautiful wife and two lovely children.. Those candidates were so out of place at the Forum that they spent most of the lunchtime talking to one another. Budd's spouse of 32 years the formidable Ilene Silverman was making certain that a black waiter was being truly appreciated.

### **But Back to the Future**

Again, the runoffs for new Council members on Tuesday will not change the operation of the City. The City still will be controlled by Russ Blackburn. The City Attorney Nicole Shalley in 2013 replaced Marion Radson, who was the only person who could challenge the City Manager about the policy and practice of Gainesville. They were generally in agreement about what it would take to make Gainesville the best voluntarily racially segregated city in Florida, if not the United States. That designation was stripped from Perry, FL after one racial incident exposed that tight-knit voluntary racial segregationist community in 2000, when a black man complained to the Florida Commission on Human Relations, about being mistreated at a bar.

As Counsel for the FCHR, former Gainesville Equal Opportunity (EO) Charter Officer Cecil Howard may have played a role in upsetting the Perry apple cart. But when he tried to take on Russ Blackburn, he soon found himself on his way to Shippenberg State University in Pennsylvania. Two of the other three Charter Officer positions also are in flux.

Carlos Holt soon will be the new City Auditor responsible to audit the EO activities and to lead in the understanding of the Navigant Consulting Report about Gainesville Regional Utilities from 2007-08. AS for a new GRU Director, the Commissioners have selected their preferences, including Charles R. Dickerson, an African-American. Anyone who believes Mr. Dickerson wants the position and will be selected, please take a refresher course in reality. If it should occur, look for him to become an immediate target in local politics just as the new Alachua County School District Superintendent Owen Roberts has faced immediate attack for almost everything he has one, including a ban on the distribution of free condoms to high school boys by school nurses.

The race issue, it seems, will not go away, even in Gainesville, where Russ Blackburn has been known as the Great White Hope, ever since he was given the position of City Manager by four of seven members of the weak Mayor/Commissioners elected body in 2005. He was an outsider who really was known locally only by Randy Reid, the County Manager at the time. They knew one another from their days together in Martin County Administration. The Hanfield crowd had favored the interim City Manager Barbara Lipscomb, apparently without noticing that the professionals hired to narrow the field had recommended only white males. However, Russ endeared himself to the community's leaders, in a City where there are few admitted followers. What does the City Manager actually do in Gainesville?

PART I - CHARTER LAWS

which I am now about to enter."

(Ord. No. 4053, § 1, 1-23-95)

**ARTICLE III. - ADMINISTRATION**

[3.01. - Charter officers.](#)

[3.02. - City manager.](#)

[3.03. - City attorney.](#)

[3.04. - Clerk of the commission.](#)

[3.05. - City internal auditor.](#)

[3.06. - General manager for utilities.](#)

[3.07. - Audits and examinations of administrative departments.](#)

[3.08. - Equal opportunity director.](#)

**3.01. - Charter officers.**

The charter officers provided for in this article are vested with authority to administer the assigned duties of their offices including the employment and removal of all subordinate employees of their offices. They must make all appointments based on merit and fitness alone and, except as otherwise provided in this act, may remove nonprobationary personnel only for cause, obsolescence of position, budgetary restriction, or for other legitimate reasons. The charter officers may purchase and contract for supplies, materials, equipment, and services required to perform their assigned duties under procedures and limitations prescribed by the commission.

**3.02. - City manager.**

(1) *Appointment; administrative head of municipal government; qualifications; terms; bond.* The commission shall appoint a city manager who shall be the administrative head of the municipal government. The city manager is responsible for the efficient administration of all the departments except for those under the control of other charter officers. The city manager shall be appointed without regard to political beliefs, hold office at the will of the commission, and receive no salary for any portion of a salary period extending beyond termination of office. The city manager shall give bond for the faithful performances of this duty in such sum as the commission requires to protect the finances of the city.

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**2.09. - Commissioner forfeiture of office and interest in contracts.**

Any commissioner including the mayor who ceases to possess any of the qualifications required by this act shall forfeit the office of commissioner. Any contract of the city in which any commissioner has or may have a conflict of interest is voidable by the commission.

(Ord. No. 4053, § 1, 1-23-95)

**2.10. - Interference with charter officers.**

Neither the commission nor any commissioner, including the mayor, may dictate the appointment of any person to office or employment by the charter officers nor in any manner interfere with the independence of charter officers in the performance of their duties. Except for the purpose of an inquiry, the commission and its members, including the mayor, must deal with employees of the city solely through their respective charter officers, and neither the commission nor any commissioner, including the mayor, may give orders to any subordinates of the charter officers either publicly or privately. Any commissioner, including the mayor, who violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in section 775.082 or section 775.083, Florida Statutes.

(Ord. No. 4053, § 1, 1-23-95)

Despite his awesome City responsibilities, Mr. Blackburn's duties with the Chamber of Commerce as a member of the Board of Directors hardly will be affected, just as they were not affected in 2013-2014, when he served as president of the Florida City and County Management Association. And now having been with Gainesville for nearly a decade, few whites have any reason to worry about some abstract conflict of interest between his public duties and his new found connection to the Gainesville Chamber of Commerce, even though the Chamber and the City Commissioners seem to differ about the best way to provide oversight for the Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU).

As indicated below, Mr. Blackburn can be a vital cog in the Chamber machinery. As a Chamber board member, Mr. Blackburn participates in many significant decisions concerning the City and its utility.

Following the work of its Energy Study Group, the Chamber...recommends that an approved utility authority replace the City Commission in governing Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU)...On a related topic the Chamber supports funding or tax incentives to support the city's renewable energy use, with the goal of decreasing costs to consumers....Other Chamber priorities include a \$20 million recurring fund to promote the state for business....State incentive programs to recruit, retain and expand companies....The Chamber's public policy agenda is approved by a majority vote of its public policy committee, executive committee and board of directors.

A. Clark, "Business—Chamber seeks changes to GRU Bill," *Gainesville Sun*, Mar. 10, 2015, p. 5B.

The screenshot shows the top portion of the Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce website. At the top left is the logo with the text "Gainesville Area CHAMBER OF COMMERCE". To the right are three buttons: "BUSINESS DIRECTORY", "JOIN THE CHAMBER", and "MEMBER LOGIN". Below this is a navigation bar with links for "MEMBER SERVICES", "ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT", "EVENTS & NEWS", "EMPLOYERS", "ABOUT US", and "CONTACT US". A search bar on the right contains the text "SEARCH THE CHAMBER" and a "GO" button. Below the navigation bar is a photograph of a conference room with a long table and chairs. Underneath the photo is a light blue bar with links: "Board Members", "Chamber By-Laws", "Board Members Only", and "Board Signup".

## 2015 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Officers



**John Carlson** Chair  
*Charles Perry Partners, Inc.*



**Todd Powell** Chair-Elect  
*Plum Creek*



**Rory Causseaux** Treasurer  
*Causseaux, Hewett & Walpole, Inc.*



**Tim Giuliani** President  
*Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce*



**Charles "Chic" Holden** Counsel  
*Holden, Carpenter, Roscow & Kurdziel, PL*

### Board Members



**Mitch Glaeser** Immediate Past Chair  
*The Emory Group*



**Jane Adams** *University of Florida*



**Nick Banks** *Front Street Real Estate Group*



**Debbie Berdy** *Contemporary Management Concepts*



**Russ Blackburn\*** *City of Gainesville*

Our Leader Russ Blackburn connected City and Chamber in his 2015 State of the City Address:

With respect to economic initiatives, I'd like to acknowledge the continuing partnership between the Gainesville Small Business Task Force, established by Mayor Ed Braddy and the Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce and city government.

The newly created position of Economic Development and Innovation director has been filled by our former Planning and Development director, Erik Bredfeldt, he is well-known by many in our development community and now serves as the city liaison for this exciting public/private partnership. Erik is now actively engaged in working to fulfill goals included in the city's Economic Development and Redevelopment Strategic Initiative. He is joined in doing so by Anthony Lyons, director of the Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency. The final member of my economic development team is Steve Dush, our recently hired Planning and Development Services director, formerly of the city of Dunwoody, Georgia and Working together with our partners from the business community, I have charged them to work together under my direct supervision and with other city agencies and community interests to stimulate opportunities for economic development and growth within the city including; development of recruitment strategies to attract new businesses and employment, increase government responsiveness to and stream planning and development processes that enable development projects to quickly move forward in the approval process.

In order to successfully appeal to today's business community, a city such as ours must not only offer a competitive business environment, but must also maintain an infrastructure that enhances a quality of life that is attractive to prospective employers as well as prospective workers. In 2013, Gainesville made considerable progress in further developing infrastructure to accommodate our efforts to become an innovation-based economy by undertaking four major infrastructure construction projects.

## City Takes Action on Chamber Small Business Recommendations

March 18th, 2014 by gainesvillechamber

*Gainesville Area Chamber and City of Gainesville continue partnership to grow local small businesses*

Gainesville Mayor Ed Braddy and Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce President & CEO Tim Giuliani co-chaired the 2<sup>nd</sup> Gainesville Small Business Growth Task Force meeting on March 12, which reviewed the City's progress in addressing the Chamber's 27 small business growth recommendations to the City ([Click here to access the Chamber small business growth report](#)).

During the Task Force meeting, City/GRU staff released a memo outlining actions taken – or planned – to address the vast majority of the Chamber's recommendations ([Click here to access March 12 City/GRU staff memo on Chamber recommendations](#) and [click here to access the matrix](#)



### March 12: Task Force Meeting Announcements

1) GRU Plan Review Process: GRU staff announced nine (9) initiatives developed jointly with the local development engineering community to ensure that the GRU Plan Review Process for projects is streamlined, efficient and cost-effective ([Click here to access the nine initiatives](#)).



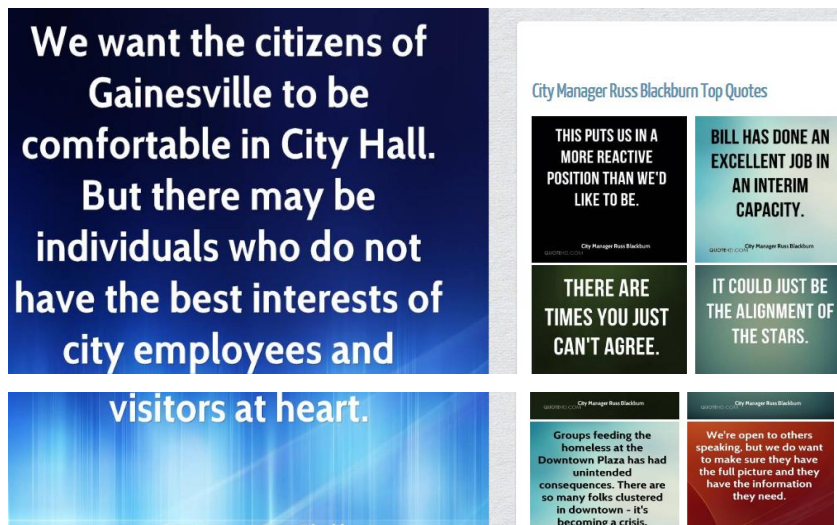
## January 9: City Manager Directive on Stakeholder Participation

10) Stakeholder Participation: The City Manager issued a new “Stakeholder Participation in Policy Development” Administrative Policy Procedure directing Departmental staff drafting policies, which may in any way impact business and neighborhoods, to engage stakeholders in policy development prior to bringing proposed policies forward for discussion by policy boards ([Click here to access](#) [Stakeholder Participation in Policy Development](#))

## GAINESVILLE’S OWN Community Redevelopment Agency Board

The CRA Board, which is comprised of the members of the City Commission, reviews recommendations of the four citizen advisory boards, adopts redevelopment plans and budgets, and provides direction to staff. The City Manager, Russ Blackburn, acts as the CRA Executive Director and Assistant City Manager Fred Murry provides day to day assistance for the CRA.

But Russ Blackburn is as much about what he says as what he does or does not do:



## Gainesville Sun Editorial: Part of the problem –

Gainesville City Commission & Mom’s Kitchen When the Gainesville City Commission bought the vacant Mom’s Kitchen restaurant in 2009, there were a number of reasons to question the purchase. The city was dealing with a \$1 million budget deficit at the time and the project wasn’t on a list of priorities for redevelopment. Yet the commission voted 4-3 to pay \$165,000 for the property, nearly double its taxable assessed value. In defending the purchase, City Manager Russ Blackburn touted city plans to revitalize the neighborhood around the restaurant’s Northwest Fifth Avenue location. He wrote in a column for The Sun that the mayor and commission had “taken a proactive stance in finding long-term solutions to a problem that has festered far too long.



*“This area has suffered from years of neglect that have led to tell-tale symptoms of a neighborhood in crisis, including major housing code violations, blight, high crime rates and illegal drug activity,” he wrote.*

Of course, little has changed since the purchase, but most McEachoys still blame the Hanfield crowd, not Blackburn. The ongoing feud has an upside. It has allowed Russ Blackburn and the City Attorney to move as quickly as any other community to become the first voluntarily racially segregated city in Florida.

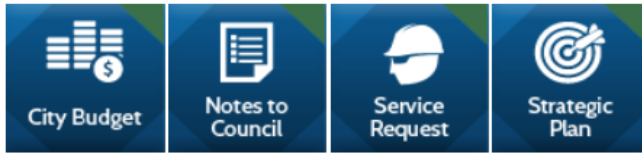
But the Manager Blackburn’s plans for what surely will be Florida’s finest voluntarily racially segregated city in the State could be derailed by African-Americans who often are not as well known in the black community as they are in the white leadership group. There are a dozen African-Americans—past, present, future--who could upset his vision of the City if their side of the story was ever told. See below. But if that happens, Blackburn still will be remembered as the epitome in Gainesville of a Southern Gentleman. See after black update.

## **Florida town has consensual segregation**



# City Manager's Office

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City Hall  
200 West Fifth Street  
Greenville, NC 27834

252.329.4432

The City Manager is the chief administrative officer for the City. The Manager is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the City and the implementation of the policies established by the elected officials. The City Manager is appointed by and reports to the City Council.

## Message from the City Manager

Welcome to the City Manager's Office web page. I am pleased that you have taken time to visit and hope the information presented will be helpful to you.



**Calendar**

[St.Peters Golf Match](#)

## Howard named social equity director at Shippensburg University

Shippensburg University recently named Cecil E. Howard, J.D., as executive director of its Office of Social Equity.

Howard, who started at SU on Feb. 2, previously served as equal opportunity director and chief diversity officer for the City of Gainesville's Office of Equal Opportunity in Gainesville, Fla. In that position, he contributed to the University of Florida's diversity action plan. Prior to that, he served as chief legal counsel for the Florida Commission on Human Relations and as a consultant on equal employment opportunity and employee relations issues.



Howard earned his law degree from Texas Southern University's Thurgood Marshall School of Law and his bachelor's degree in government from Florida State University. He also is an Equal Employment Opportunity Commission certified investigator.

"I am ecstatic to be at Shippensburg," Howard said. "I have taught as an adjunct professor in the past, and I have always been intrigued by working in higher education. You have the wonderful opportunity to shape young minds."



**Charles R. Dickerson**  
**Vice President Performance Management & Support Services**  
**Pepeco Holdings, Inc.**

Charles is responsible for customer satisfaction and revenue management processes along with transmission and distribution construction, operations and maintenance processes, and Support Services functions (Supply Chain, Materials and Logistics Management, Facilities, Fleet, Human Resource Services and Disbursement Accounting) for PHI's 1.9 million customers across its three regulated (gas and electric) utilities.

PHI is one of the largest energy delivery companies in the Mid-Atlantic region.

Prior to assuming his current role he served as Vice President Customer Care responsible for leading the creation and execution of strategies and practices that resulted in successful outcomes across multi jurisdictions for meter services, billing services, energy procurement, marketing, advertising, energy efficiency, demand response and customer relationship management functions along with credit, collections & remittance.

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Life+Style Nona's Way

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## About

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Nona C. Jones was born in East Orange, New Jersey and raised in Jacksonville, Florida. She attended the University of Florida, earning a Bachelor degree from the Weimer School of Journalism and Master of Business Administration from the Hough Graduate School of Business. She has professional experience in, both, the private sector and public sector, having served as News Director of a multi-format radio station (R&B, Country, and Gospel spanning FM and AM) and is currently a public affairs executive for a multi-service, municipal utility in Gainesville, Florida.



*Nona C. Jones*

# FRED MURRY






## Tackling Gang Violence



Whether he is working to solve homelessness in the community or helping to reduce the number of youth getting caught up in gang violence, Fred J. Murry goes above and beyond when it comes to making Gainesville a better place. Now an assistant city manager, Murry has held numerous leadership roles in the community. Every day, his 27 years of governmental management and fiscal experience are put to great use on behalf of local residents.




"I learned early in life about giving to the neighbors and people in my community. My grandmother fed everyone in the community no matter what their status, and she gave me the tools to help those in need in our community,"


[epitlocalflorida.org/video-editorial-the-things-we-do-together/](http://epitlocalflorida.org/video-editorial-the-things-we-do-together/)

nesville Marketing Delegation Led by     Mon, 13/04/2015 [Log in](#) 

### Gainesville Marketing Delegation Led by Gainesville Mayor Set to Visit Washington D.C. and Baltimore Areas (Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce)

Posted, 2014-05-03

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Chamber e-Journal 5-6-13: Gainesville Marketing Delegation Led by Gainesville Mayor Visiting Washington D.C. and Baltimore Areas this week (Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce)

All Gainesville organizations are invited to attend the University of Florida Career Resource Center's 2014 Employer Retreat 'Grow with UF -



# City of Gainesville attorney was arrested, naked, after breaking into woman's home

Story

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Posted: Monday, September 16, 2013 5:57 pm | Updated: 1:16 am, Tue Sep 17, 2013.

Kathryn Varn, Alligator Staff Writer |  0 comments

A city attorney was arrested this weekend after he broke into a woman's home while he was naked.

Gainesville Police arrested Ronald Combs, a senior assistant attorney for the City of Gainesville, early Sunday on charges of burglary, resisting officers without violence and loitering/prowling, according to a GPD arrest report.

At about 6 a.m., officers responded to a home located in the 500 block of Northeast Eighth Avenue after the caller, Marilyn Aileen Wall, told police she awoke to a noise and saw a tall, naked black man standing in her bedroom

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## COMMAND STAFF

### CHIEF TONY JONES

Chief Jones became the Interim Chief of Police for his second time on July 6, 2009. On September 14, 2009, City Manager Russ Blackburn removes the "Interim" title and appoints Chief Jones as the permanent Chief of Police for the City of Gainesville.

Retired Gainesville Police Department Captain Tony Jones is currently serving as the Chief of Police for the Gainesville Police Department. Chief Jones began his career with the agency on October 6, 1975 as a police officer. He has served in many capacities during his 33-year career with GPD. He was promoted to the rank of Corporal in August of 1986 and began working as a Crime Prevention Supervisor. In May of 1987 he was promoted to Sergeant and worked as a supervisor in the Operations Bureau. During that period, he supervised the first Community Oriented Policing Teams in Gainesville. He was promoted to Lieutenant in November of 1988 and served as the Commander of both the Crime Prevention Unit and the Community Oriented Policing Teams. In February of 1992, he was promoted to Captain of the Neighborhood Services Bureau. His responsibilities included an expanded COP Team, Crime Prevention Unit, and the School Resource Officers program.



## Legacy Building The Chestnut Family

19 May, 2014 admin Covers 1,686 views 0 0



Mr. and Mrs. Chestnut and Sons Christopher and Charles IV

## BPC Holds Press Conference in Support of Wal-Mart

Busy Kislig Shires



*Jeff McAdams of the Florida Police Union, Representative Ed Jennings, Jr., and Mortlake Nembhard, Vice President of BCN Associates, Inc. show their support for the proposed Wal-Mart distribution center in Alachua.*

Members of the Black Political Consortium and representatives from the state gave their blessing of the proposed Wal-Mart distribution center on the steps of the Alachua County Administration Building

## THE EPITOME OF A SOUTHERN GENTLEMAN

When he talks about his new job as Gainesville's city manager, Russ Blackburn doesn't sound like most people's idea of a bureaucrat. Blackburn's focus is on concepts most would associate with the corporate world: customer service, user feedback and efficiency.

"You need to remember the bottom line is you're trying to provide effective customer service that meets your citizens' needs," Blackburn said. Treating residents as customers rather than taxpayers has been something of a mantra for Blackburn....What's needed, he said, is a focus on making the attitude of Gainesville's government that of a customer-driven enterprise, with taxpayers as the consumers in need of service and support.

Blackburn has been frequently referred to as a "Southern gentleman" by his new colleagues.

**J. Adelson "Low-key city manager works to make Gainesville top tier," The Gainesville Sun, Dec, 27, 2005.**

## Government group elects Blackburn to leader post

Staff report Published: Tuesday, June 5, 2012 at 1:44 p.m.

Russ Blackburn, the city manager of Gainesville, was elected president-elect of the Florida City and County Management Association at the group's annual conference last week in Bonita Springs.

### President Russ Blackburn 2014

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### How long have you been a FCCMA member?

I initially joined FCCMA in 1987 and was a member for 2 years; I left the state of Florida to accept a position in Virginia and returned in 1997. I have been a member since that time.

**Are you an ICMA member and if so, how long?**

I have been a member of ICMA for over 37 years.

**Please describe your areas of formal/advanced education.**

I have a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from Valdosta State University; a Master's in Public Administration from Georgia Southern University. Throughout my career I have attended scores of professional development courses and sessions and I have worked very hard to stay up to date in an ever changing field.

**What got you interested in public service?**

My grandmother was a very giving and community involved person. She was a member of the American Legion, the Eastern Star and was active in her church. She volunteered as a poll worker and was always assisting as a volunteer in community causes. I observed her level of commitment to her community and was inspired by the idea of public service from her actions. As I weighed options for my own career, I kept coming back to the personal gratification that can be gained by serving your community. City and County management seemed like a natural fit enabling me to serve communities but also to engage in gratifying and interesting work for a lifetime.

**What is your current occupation?**

Since 2005 I have served as the City of Gainesville City Manager.

**What is your least favorite part of the job?**

When the manager becomes a focus of the political process rather than one element of the process the job can become more difficult and is less enjoyable.

**What is your most memorable experience on the job?**

I have been fortunate to have a career that has provided me many opportunities to learn about many different services and issues. My most memorable experiences involve facilitating teams which accomplished significant results. While serving as a Deputy County Manager in Loudoun County, Virginia, I served as a team leader to build over 300,000 square feet of new county government space. We used that new construction opportunity to reengineer the organization. Teams were assembled from throughout the organization to focus on business processes that drove the physical layout of the buildings that we were planning to occupy and were able to reengineer our processes both streamlining how we did business but also reducing the physical square footage that would be needed for county government operations.



**What are hobbies/interests?** Since I moved to Florida in the late 80s and now for the past 16 years, I have been very interested in palm trees. Even though Gainesville's winters can be a little cooler, I still observe the palm trees that can grow in our climate and have a number of trees in my own yard.

**Who were your mentors and how have you passed this information down to other young public administrators?**

I had the opportunity to work with former Lee County Manager Jim LaRue in the 80s and observed Jim's commitment to public service together with his humility and quiet tenacity. I spent several years in Charleston SC and worked with Mayor Joe Riley. Mayor Riley was elected in the early 80s and continues to serve in that role today. (NOTE: He chose not to run in 2015).

**Have you always been in the public sector or have you had experience in the private sector?** I began my career while I was in college. I started out managing a tropical fish store and at 20 years old opened my own business. I went to school full time and ran my business full time. I sold the business after I completed graduate school. Since that time I have been 100% committed to local government management.

**What career would you pick if you were to pick another?** I have often wondered what the answer to that question would be. When I think of the things that might interest me one of the professions which matches my interests and skill sets is a real-estate developer. I am also very interested in landscaping and plants and I think owning a nursery would provide gratification as you help to make the community more aesthetically pleasing and sustainable.



