

Metro Mayors Celebrate 10th Anniversary

The N.C. Metropolitan Mayors Coalition marked its 10th anniversary at its fall meeting in Charlotte December 1st and 2nd. Current, former and newly-elected mayors joined together to reflect on what brought them together 10 years ago and to establish the groundwork for the next 10.

“As leaders of the state’s largest municipalities, our work to address the needs of our cities is more important than ever,” said Durham Mayor Bill Bell. “With the continuing shift of North Carolina’s population from rural to urban areas, coupled with the enduring impacts of the recession, we will remain committed to shaping ideas and policy to ensure the long-term quality of life in these metropolitan centers.”



Charlotte Mayor Anthony Foxx presents House Speaker Thom Tillis with a Legislative Award for balancing the budget without taking local revenues.

The Coalition recognized several state legislators for their work in the General Assembly. House Speaker Thom Tillis, Rep. John Faircloth and Rep. Chuck McGrady received awards for their efforts to advance the interests of North Carolina’s cities. Senate President Pro

Tempore Phil Berger was also selected for this honor, but will receive the award at a later date.

During the meeting, mayors discussed policy issues of interest, the upcoming legislative session and new laws impacting municipalities. The group heard from special guests N.C. Rep. Nelson Dollar, President of the John Locke Foundation John Hood, N.C. Senator Bob Rucho and political analyst John Davis. Participants also toured Charlotte and learned about some of the city’s newest initiatives with host Mayor Anthony Foxx.



Rep. Nelson Dollar speaks to members of the Metro Mayors Coalition.

Finally, the Coalition selected its leadership for the coming year. Durham Mayor Bill Bell was re-elected as chairman. Concord Mayor Scott Padgett was elected vice chair, and Rocky Mount Mayor David Combs will serve as treasurer. At-large executive committee members include Charlotte Mayor Anthony Foxx, High Point Mayor Becky Smothers, Wilmington Mayor Bill Saffo, Burlington Mayor Ronnie Wall and Apex Mayor Keith Weatherly.

Metro Mayors Honor Legislators

Our Coalition celebrated its 10th anniversary in December with a special meeting and dinner. It was a welcome opportunity to reflect on both our progress over the last decade and our success. We remembered those who invested time and hard work in forging this group; we celebrated the difference we have made in our cities and our state; and we honored those partners and friends who have joined with us in supporting North Carolina’s cities.

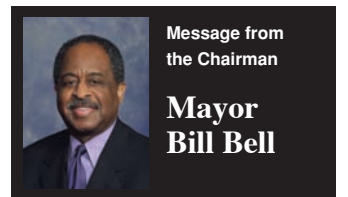
That’s why it was appropriate that we recognized this year’s recipients of the N.C. Metro Mayors Legislative Award at our 10th anniversary dinner. The relationships we have built with legislators across the state and from both sides of the aisle have been an important part of our success. Our allies in the General Assembly have listened to our concerns and needs, promoted forward-thinking policies and advocated for economic development, public safety and local rights.

House Speaker Thom Tillis and President Pro Tem Phil Berger were our first recipients this year for their efforts to balance the budget without taking local revenues. These leaders faced the tough challenge of crafting a state budget with a looming deficit of \$2.7 billion. Recognizing that cities were already hurting in the midst of the slow economy, Tillis and Berger protected cities and their revenues. They insured that local revenues were not usurped by state government and rejected

shifting additional responsibilities to local governments. Their leadership on this issue gave metropolitan mayors the opportunity to focus on building our communities and our economy, which is good for the entire state.

We also recognized the work of Rep. Chuck McGrady of Hendersonville, who was instrumental in making our voices heard on legislation to revise the rules regulating billboards. This legislation was particularly troubling because it challenged local governments’ ability to regulate the appearance of their communities. While we are not happy with the expanded cut zones and other changes in the final legislation, we appreciate the efforts of Rep. McGrady and others who advocated for our interests and improved the legislation.

Rep. John Faircloth of High Point was the final award recipient for his leadership on our gang nuisance bill, which would give law enforcement additional tools to fight illegal gang activities in our communities. Specifically, the bill would allow law enforcement to bring a civil action against gangs operating in North Carolina under the state’s public nuisance laws. A judge



Message from the Chairman

**Mayor
Bill Bell**

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Mayor John Bridgeman

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Mayor Nancy McFarlane

SALISBURY
Mayor Paul Woodson

WILSON
Mayor Bruce Rose

WINSTON-SALEM
Mayor Allen Joines

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New Mayors Take Office

This fall's elections brought five new mayors into office and into the N.C. Metropolitan Mayors Coalition. Nancy McFarlane became Raleigh's mayor, succeeding Charles Meeker, who chose not to seek re-election. John Bridgeman is the new mayor of Gastonia, taking the helm from Jennie Stultz, who also decided not to seek another term after first being elected in 1999. Greensboro's new leader is Robbie Perkins, and Allen Thomas is the new mayor of Greenville. Paul Woodson was elected mayor by the Salisbury City Council, with Susan Kluttz becoming mayor pro tem.



Nancy McFarlane – Raleigh

Occupation: Pharmacist, CEO of MedPro Rx

Age: 55

Family: Husband, Ron, three grown children

Education: Bachelor of Science in pharmacy, Medical College of Virginia

Nancy McFarlane is a small business owner, PTA mom, neighborhood advocate and environmental steward, who is focused on keeping Raleigh the best place to live and work in America.

McFarlane is also an experienced public servant. First elected to the city council in 2007, she focused on enhancing Raleigh's long-term planning goals. Improving that process continues to be among McFarlane's priorities. She hopes to complete the development of Raleigh's new Unified Development Ordinance, which will help streamline the development process for neighborhoods, developers and the city alike.

Her business background will serve her well in tackling many of the issues facing the city. In 2002, Nancy launched MedPro Rx, Inc., an accredited specialty infusion pharmacy that provides medications and services to support clients with chronic illness. MedPro Rx consistently ranks as one of the best places to work in the Triangle and recently ranked as the #1 small business in the Triangle and #2 in the South. As mayor, McFarlane hopes to streamline the steps that small business owners must take to open their doors. A Small Business Office will serve startups and a Small Business Commission will work to identify new, innovative ways to incubate and assist small businesses.

She is also focused on pursuing expanded transportation options that foster sustainable development, strengthen existing centers, and preserving Dorothea Dix as a park that can be enjoyed by generations.



John Bridgeman – Gastonia

Occupation: Real Estate Developer

Age: 67

Family: wife, Nan Falls Bridgeman. Four grown children, Amy Bridgeman Guerette, Dana Bridgeman Wilson, Robert Crawford Bridgeman and William Alexander Bridgeman and five grandchildren.

Education: Attended Gardner Webb and UNC-Charlotte

John Bridgeman is a businessman who has deep roots in Gastonia. Born and raised in the city, he attended local public schools before attending Gardner Webb and UNC-Charlotte.

In 1970, he opened Bridgeman Real Estate Company in 1970, owning and operating the largest real estate company in Gaston County for over 30 years. He is the past president of the Gaston Board of Realtors, served five years on the N.C. Real Estate Commission and was interim President/CEO of Gaston Chamber of Commerce from 2000 until 2002.

Bridgeman represented parts of Gaston and Mecklenburg Counties in the N.C. House of Representatives from 1998 to 2000. He has been active in the community in many other ways as well, including the Noon Optimist Club, the Gastonia Civitan Club, the Gastonia Jaycees and the Gastonia Rotary Club. In 1997, Bridgeman received one of the state's highest honors, the Order of the Long Leaf Pine.



Paul B. Woodson – Salisbury

Occupation: Owner and Operator of Vogue Cleaners

Age: 65

Family: Beth (wife), Kristy Harvey (daughter), Dr. Will Harvey, III (son in-law) and Will Harvey IV (grandson)

Education: Bachelor's from University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill

Paul B. Woodson won the mayor's office in Salisbury, after having served on the Salisbury City Council for the past fourteen years, including six terms as Mayor Pro Tem. Woodson was first elected to City Council in 1997 and follows in his grandfather, Walter H. Woodson's, footsteps as Mayor of Salisbury – the elder Woodson served from 1913 – 1919.

Woodson, owner and operator of Vogue Cleaners for 26 years, began his career as a chemist at the Research Triangle Park and later managed textile manufacturing plants in several North Carolina cities as both a Plant and General Manager. In addition, Woodson served as Vice-President of Sales in New York City for a North Carolina textile company and has a strong background in science and business operations.

Woodson pledges to ensure the success of Fibrant, the City's broadband utility, through more open communication with residents and and the hiring of a new director. He also vows to support government-based initiatives providing growth and development opportunities for businesses interested in making Salisbury their home. His priorities over the next two years, he says, rely heavily on input from city employees, who understand the city structure best, and he'll work with them to enhance city government efficiency.

He has served as the City Council liaison for a number of boards and commissions during his tenure, including the Fireman's Relief Fund Board, the Salisbury-Rowan Economic Development Commission, Centralina Council of Governments, the Salisbury Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and the Salisbury Tourism and Cultural Development Commission. In addition he is a member of the Rowan Cabarrus Community College Board of Directors and the Woodson Foundation.



Robbie Perkins – Greensboro

Occupation: Commercial Real Estate Broker

Age: 56

Family: Wife, Carole, and 5 children, Max, Ross, Caroline, Virginia and Emily

Education: Bachelor's degree in history and religion from Duke University and a master's degree in finance from Duke University

After 16 years serving on the Greensboro City Council, from 1993-2005 and 2007-2011, Robbie Perkins threw his hat in the ring for mayor and won on a platform of collaboration. He maintained the city could only fulfill its goals if "we" listen to each other, respect each other, and work collaboratively.

Perkins, who is president of the commercial real estate firm NAI Piedmont Triad, identified his priority as creating more and better jobs for

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would then have broad powers to work to break up the gang by prohibiting members from associating with one another and taking other actions. The bill passed the House unanimously, thanks to Rep. Faircloth's dedication, and we look forward to action in the Senate during the short session.

The Metro Mayors appreciate the leadership of these legislators and their commitment to the issues facing our cities. As we look forward to the next ten years, relationships with state, local and national leaders like these will be instrumental in our continued success.

Metro Mayors In Action



Winston-Salem Mayor Allen Joines, new Raleigh Mayor Nancy McFarlane and Boone Mayor Loretta Clawson at the December meeting.



Charlotte Mayor Anthony Foxx, Salisbury Mayor Susan Kluttz, Burlington Mayor Ronnie Wall, Durham Mayor Bill Bell and Asheville Mayor Terry Bellamy discuss metropolitan issues during the December meeting.



The Metro Mayors celebrate the group's 10th anniversary.



Asheville Mayor Terry Bellamy presents Rep. Chuck McGrady with the Coalition's Legislative Award for his work on behalf of cities on billboard legislation.



Rep. John Faircloth receives the Legislative Award for his efforts on gang prevention legislation.

Watch a special video celebrating the 10th anniversary of the N.C. Metropolitan Mayors Coalition. Featuring interviews with mayors and leaders from across the state, the video documents the coalition's founding and its path toward making a difference in North Carolina.

Scan the QR code or visit our website at www.ncmetromayors.com.



Annexation Changes in Focus

The Mayors of some of North Carolina's largest cities gathered recently in Charlotte for a panel discussion on municipal annexation. At issue was HB845, a law recently passed by the North Carolina General Assembly that enacted a number of changes to the process cities must follow to annex unincorporated areas.

John Hood, president of the John Locke Foundation, spoke in favor of the bill. He pointed out that other states have prohibitions on city-initiated annexation, oversight commissions, or that they require referenda. "North Carolina's policies were always backward and extreme and abusive," he said. He argued that the new bill will not put North Carolina's economic development efforts at a competitive disadvantage because it matches the state's processes with those of its neighbors. And he argued that evidence does not bear out the claim that the ability to annex is tied to high bond ratings. While he acknowledged the problem of free ridership, he said it could be solved by user-fees for non-city residents or a revision to the state's sale tax distribution formula.

Lastly, Hood reminded the Mayors that the bill is a compromise, saying that the anti-annexation sentiment in the General Assembly is stronger than the language of the bill implies. He speculated that if the legal challenges to the bill are successful, the General Assembly will not roll back the new requirements, but instead make them tougher.

N.C. League of Municipalities General Counsel Kimberly Hibbard detailed the changes in the bill and their implications for cities. For city-initiated annexations, the bill outlines an exemption for bona fide farms, a water-sewer opt-in procedure, and the procedure for a veto petition that could be used to override the annexation action. The farm provision prohibits farms from being annexed without the owner's consent. It also broadens the definition of what is considered a farm, a move that will

complicate municipalities' decision making. The new water-sewer opt-in procedure introduces requirements that significantly increase the cost of annexation, including a requirement that forces public funds to be spent on private property. The bill also enacted a provision requiring the annexing municipality to send affected property owners a petition allowing them to veto the annexation. If 60 percent of the property owners in the affected area sign the petition, the annexation action is denied.

Changes were also made to the voluntary annexation process. Now, voluntary annexation petitions must contain 100 percent consent from affected property owners, unless the areas are 'distressed'. If an area is distressed, a municipality must annex if 75 percent of the property owners approve the annexation. With this change, municipalities may no longer refuse to annex distressed areas because of lower property values.

The panel's final speaker was Mac McCarley, Charlotte's outgoing city attorney. McCarley expressed his opinion that "the legislators who were pushing [the bill viewed it] as an opportunity to stop or kill annexation without having to say it out loud." The new requirements, therefore, are intended to be "a barrier so high we couldn't get over it." Municipalities can meet these requirements, he argues, but they'll have to spend more money to do so. The veto petition is the most challenging; it is the change that may stop municipal annexation. Municipalities must win over residents of unincorporated areas by making municipal services appear valuable. Cities can do this by doing a better job promoting their services, but also by limiting access to them. McCarley believes that mutual aide agreements should end, or cities should charge the full cost of their services to the individuals outside their city limits who use them.

The session was educational and gave mayors and managers much to think about as they approach the new annexation laws.

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Greensboro residents. Also vital, he said, is crime and public safety, and maintaining the City's infrastructure, while retaining the quality of life Greensboro residents have long enjoyed.

He outlined the need to recruit national companies on a regional basis to locate in the Piedmont Triad by emphasizing the area's geography and transportation infrastructure. Also on his radar is the need to grow small businesses by providing talented entrepreneurs the tools they need to succeed. One way to help people start businesses, Perkins said, was to make connections for them instead of creating rules and regulations that hinder their ability to thrive.

During his tenure on City Council, Perkins has supported decisions that have resulted in new scenic corridors, reinvestment in downtown, parkland purchases, finding alternative water sources, and the promotion of regional cooperation through the Heart of the Triad initiative. These are concepts he said he would continue to pursue as mayor.

Perkins has also been active in the community, serving on a number of boards and commissions such as the Piedmont Area Regional Transportation Board of Trustees, the Greensboro Metropolitan Planning Organization for Transportation, the Greensboro Chamber of Commerce Regionalism Committee, and the Bennett College Board of Trustees.



Allen Thomas – Greenville

Occupation: Business Owner

Age: 42

Family: Wife, Janet Stubbs Thomas, and 2 daughters, Ava and Holly

Education: Bachelor's from East Carolina University; MBA from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Allen Thomas has a strong background in both business and government. Thomas co-founded IQMax Inc., a medical software

company, with a fellow East Carolina University graduate in the 1990's. Today the company has clients in 36 states, three countries and 154 medical facilities and processes 15 million medical records a day.

Thomas also has more than 20 years of experience working on private and public sector issues in government affairs at the state and federal level. He worked with the North Carolina Department of Commerce, focusing on recruiting business, industry and jobs to the state of North Carolina. In the 2004 legislative fight for funding from the North Carolina Legislature, Thomas was hired by East Carolina University Chancellor Bill Shelton and the University Board of Trustees to help spearhead ECU's efforts. He developed and launched the "Purple Alert" system, which organized thousands of East Carolina University alumni across the state to lobby their local senators and representatives to vote for funding of the East Carolina Heart Institute.

At the local level, Thomas has been active on the Board of Adjustment and the Planning and Zoning Commission. He has been a strong external advocate of Pitt Memorial Hospital and University Health Systems. As mayor, he pledges to bring energy and commitment to move Greenville forward. He is focused on creating jobs and promoting growth, implementing a comprehensive approach to reduce crime, improving the quality of life for all residents and promoting strong management in city government.

Metro Mayors Spring Meeting

March 22-23, 2012 | High Point, NC

City News

High Point Recognized for Electric Service

High Point recently received Reliable Public Power Provider (RP3) recognition from the American Public Power Association for providing consumers with the highest degree of reliable and safe electric service. The RP3 recognizes public power utilities that demonstrate proficiency in reliability, safety, workforce development and system improvement. Of the nation's more than 2,000 public power utilities, 176 have earned RP3 recognition.

Fayetteville Featured on Extreme Makeover: Home Edition

In August, TV show, "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" filmed the rebuilding of Fayetteville's Jubilee House, a 5,000-square foot, three-story facility for homeless female veterans. First Lady Michelle Obama helped with the build as part of her new Joining Forces initiative. Nearly 4,000 volunteers put in more than 33,000 man hours to make the project a success. The Fayetteville episode was selected for the two-hour season premiere in September, and a special viewing party was held at Fayetteville State University's Capel Arena.

Raleigh Celebrates Green Award

The Siemens Tree Planting Event was held October 20th in Raleigh to honor the City's 2011 U.S. Chamber of Commerce Most Sustainable Midsize City Award. The event also united business, city and nonprofit partners to help further the city's sustainability efforts by planting 100 new trees in historic Chavis Park.

Sports Facility to Bring Visitors to Concord

Carolina Courts, which specializes in basketball, volleyball and fitness activities, announced it will develop a facility in Historic Downtown Concord. The new sports facility is expected to draw thousands of visitors and generate 52 direct jobs and many other indirect jobs for the restaurants, hotels, and retailers that serve its visitors. Carolina Courts will serve the community with ongoing leagues, camps, training and open play, and will host basketball and volleyball tournaments on the weekends.

Durham Performing Arts Center Continues its Success

The City-owned Durham Performing Arts Center (DPAC) marked its third year of operation with earnings for the City of \$1.02 million, according to the preliminary, unaudited financial statement for the period ending June 30, 2011. DPAC sold over 11,000 season tickets to its flagship SunTrust Broadway Series, and the season boasted over 357,000 guests, 58 sellouts and more than 192 total events. The income will go into the City's DPAC Fund, which is used for debt service, maintenance, building improvements and other possible revenue shortfalls, including naming rights and hotel/motel occupancy tax.

Burlington Receives Recycling Grant

The Sustainability Division of Burlington's Public Works Department was awarded a \$25,984 Community Waste Reduction Grant by the N.C. Department of Natural Resources for the diversion of waste from landfills through recycling efforts.

Winston-Salem's Downtown Receives High Marks

Winston-Salem was recently ranked as the second-best downtown by Livability, a resource that covers small to mid-sized places to live. The site reviewed the entertainment, design, green spaces and unique cultural aspects of America's downtowns, and the resulting top-ten list touted Winston-Salem as an eclectic venue offering a magical piece of history.

Speaker Tillis, Wilmington Officials Discuss Economic Development

N.C. Speaker of the House Thom Tillis joined Wilmington Mayor Bill Saffo, City leaders and the area's legislative delegation for a discussion centered on economic development. Mayor Saffo highlighted examples of recent City infrastructure investments intended to support growth and private investment, including streetscape improvements to one of the City's main entryways, the Wilmington Convention Center and extension of the Riverwalk. Following the productive discussion with City representatives, Tillis toured the Screen Gem Studios before holding a town hall meeting.

Boone's Planning Praised

The Town of Boone was awarded the Outstanding Planning Award for Comprehensive Planning in a small community. The award recognized the Town's work on the Boone 2030 Land Use Plan: The Smart Growth Plan for the Heart of the High Country.

Salisbury Mayor Leading on Rail

Mayor Susan Kluttz has been appointed vice chairwoman of the Amtrak Mayors' Advisory Council. Kluttz has served since 1999 on the 15-member council, which raises awareness of intercity passenger-rail services and lobbies Congress to fund rail projects in Amtrak cities. Kluttz is the only North Carolina mayor on the council.

Chapel Hill Recognized for Innovative Communications

The Town of Chapel Hill was recognized with a Silver Circle Award in the "Most Innovative Communications" category during the 2011 SAVVY Awards. Sponsored by the City-County Communications & Marketing Association (3CMA), the competition recognizes outstanding local government achievements in communications, public-sector marketing and citizen-government relationships. Chapel Hill was recognized for its innovative council orientation program that included a mock Council meeting, a lunch date with the senior management team that was modeled after a speed-dating experience and focused information sessions that included a mock development application process designed as a game.

Greensboro Focuses on Inner-City Neighborhoods

Greensboro has made it a priority to revitalize its inner-city neighborhoods through a new project called Rebuild Greensboro. The initiative was developed to spur economic development, provide more options for low-income housing and put money back into the community. The core of this initiative is its Property Management Entrepreneur Program that provides structured, hands-on training to develop and guide young entrepreneurs with an interest in real estate toward becoming effective, self-sufficient property managers. Partners for this initiative include the Nussbaum Center for Entrepreneurship, Guilford Technical Community College (GTCC), the GTCC Small Business Center, the Small Business and Technology Development Center, the East Market Street Development and the Workforce Development Board.

Greenville Wins Planning Award

The City of Greenville received the North Carolina Marvin Collins Planning Award in the 2011 Special Theme-Community Development Category. The award is presented by the North Carolina Chapter of the American Planning Association and recognizes agencies and individuals that have completed outstanding plans, programs and projects, have excelled as planning students or have made notable contributions to the planning profession.

Accolades

- *Expansion Solutions Magazine* named High Point a winner of its 2011 Awards of Excellence in the distribution/warehousing category.
- The Fayetteville-Cumberland Senior Center Silver Links program was selected as the North Carolina Recreation and Parks Association's Arts and Humanities Award winner. Silver Links is an umbrella for programs geared toward connecting older adults with community resources.
- *Newsweek* recently ranked Raleigh fifth on its list of "Can-Do American Cities." The listing ranks cities on sustainability, transportation and infrastructure, livability and business development.
- Brookings Institute named the Triangle the nation's #2 fastest growing region for green jobs. The report, "Sizing the Clean Economy," is the first attempt at a comprehensive assessment of the nation's green jobs sector.
- *Forbes* magazine ranked Raleigh #1 on its "Best Place to Do Business" List, while Forbes.com ranked the City #2 on its lists of "America's Best Cities for Young Professionals" and "The Next Big Boom Towns in the U.S."
- Fifteen members of the Concord Electric Systems department provided restoration assistance in Farmville, Kinston, Rocky Mount, and Tarboro after those communities experienced heavy damage from Hurricane Irene.
- The Greensboro Fire Department was presented with the 2011 "Jerry Craft Award" by *Industrial Fire World* for the excellent work performed at the massive Colonial Pipeline tank farm fire that occurred in June 2010.
- Durham Parks and Recreation has been selected as a recipient of the prestigious 2011 Dorothy Mullen Arts and Humanities Award (Class II) for the success of the Bimbé Cultural Arts Festival, a community-wide celebration of African and African American culture, history and traditions.
- Burlington Mayor Ronnie K. Wall was appointed Honorary Chairman of the "Walk to End Alzheimer's" in Downtown Historic Burlington.
- Boone Mayor Loretta Clawson was recently appointed to the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging.
- Urban Libraries Council recognized the Greensboro Public Library's Kathleen Clay Edwards Branch as one of its 2011 Top Innovators. A panel of judges selected 11 outstanding programs based on their innovation, results achieved and potential to be replicated in other libraries. Kathleen Clay Edwards received "Top Innovator" in the Sustainability category.

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