



# THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, OHIO

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

( 937 ) 324-7300

FAX: ( 937 ) 328-3497

VOICE/TTY: ( 937 ) 324-7343

A career in local government administration can be fun and rewarding, but it can also be stressful and disappointing. Not the most encouraging statement for students and young adults considering a career in local government administration. However, city management is full of paradoxes. For example; Lead—but also be led. Be politic—but not a politician. Promote diversity—but ensure equity. These are just a few of the paradoxes I had the benefit of experiencing, first hand, as a twenty year old Wittenberg Political Science Student in 1997.

My participation in the local government internship program in the City of Fernandina Beach, Florida taught me priceless lessons that have stayed with me through the first years of my career as a local government administrator. In Fernandina Beach, I witnessed first hand, the paradoxes that shape local government and the communities in which we live. It is not often that young adults get the opportunities to experience the goods and bads of a career with the guidance of a professor and other classmates nearby.

In a day when city managers are retiring faster than public administration students are graduating, the Fernandina Beach experience was critical for me. I once thought it would be interesting to be a city manager. With the thought in mind, I visited Dr. Baker in the Political Science department at Wittenberg. He told me about an internship experience he was putting together. I thought, how much better could this be? A summer on the beach and an internship to boot.

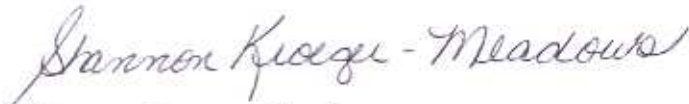
Little did I know that the experience that summer would shape my outlook on city management. After working in the Community Development Department of this small, upper middle class, beach community I questioned whether city management was right for me. I watched the City Manager be fired. That night, I wondered if I could do it—could I be strong enough to stand up for the community, do what I thought was right, and still be fired for it? Many students have these same questions during summer internships. Few can walk down the hall and discuss the questions with a professor. The day after the city manager was released from his duties, I visited with Dr. Baker and asked him these questions. Over the years, I've lost the exact words he said to me; however, I remember what I walked away with. If you have passion and commitment, you can stand up for the community, do what is right, and know that the consequences will be the best in that situation.

76 E. HIGH STREET, SPRINGFIELD, OHIO 45502

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

With that in mind, I continued my political studies courses, and focused on urban studies and geography. Following Wittenberg's graduation ceremonies in 1999, I set off for the University of Kansas Edwin O. Stene Master of Public Administration Program. I returned to Springfield in 2000, after completing my courses of study in Kansas and joined the Springfield City Manager's team. Today, I continue to add to my list of local government administration paradoxes, but continue to know, that if I have passion and commitment, I can do what is right for this community. So far, the consequences have been magnificent. There hasn't been a day that I've regretted my decision to enter this field. Not all of my experiences have been wonderful. Many have affected me deeper than watching the city manager be fired; however, I have confidence, passion, and commitment to my duties and know that each day, I can make a difference. I am so thankful that I had the opportunity to learn all of this at such an early age—one summer just sitting on a beach.

Most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shannon Kroeger-Meadows". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Shannon Kroeger-Meadows  
Executive Assistant to the City Manager  
Wittenberg University class of 1999  
University of Kansas class of 2001