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EDITORIAL

# Good management works in government too

By *Maria Walls*

CONTRIBUTOR

There are many contentious issues in our nation today related to government and how it is run.

One of the underlying problems is that government has become a bureaucracy.

The definition of “bureaucracy,” according to Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary, is “a system of government or business that has many complicated rules.”

For the simple reason that government earns none of the dollars it collects, it should be an entity that serves the people it represents.

Applying business-like principles through a spirit of service can result in reduced budgets, lower taxes, efficient processes, convenient services, and a positive experience for the taxpayer.

Although it is often an unpopular concept, going against the usual stereotypes and grain of government culture, when a government operates in such a manner, common sense and business-



Maria Walls

like principles are not difficult to implement.

I know this firsthand.

Over the past four and a half years, the Treasurer’s Office transitioned from a bureaucracy to a government department serving our community with innovation and enthusiasm using business-like practices to improve our efficiency and services.

Of course, as leaders in government, we have a responsibility to understand the parameters in which we can operate. When that is understood, private sector practices can yield great results in the public sector.

Employee evaluations create opportunities for positive development and better performance, outside-the-box thinking eliminates antiquated practices and increases accuracy and response times.

Customer-service driven operations earn the trust of our taxpayers.

Our staff is well trained, the atmosphere is pleasant and, through the use of technology, we are not only more transparent than any other Treasurer’s Office in the state, we were also able to reduce staffing and budgeted expenses by over \$580,000 from a \$2.5 million budget.

Many of these practices are just good management; they are not copyrighted principles for the sole use of the private sector.

What is unfortunate is that government being “run like a business” is labeled as such because so few government entities implement common-sense management practices.

When good management is the norm in government rather than the exception, public trust and accountability will increase and the cost of government will decrease.

In the end, whether a bureaucracy or an effective, representative government, the consequences of government conduct is borne by the people we serve.

Taxpayers should expect to walk into a clean, organized office, and be greeted by pleasant and knowledgeable staff who can guide them through a process with minimal inconvenience.

The question really is, are your government leaders, elected or appointed, serving you or perpetuating a bureaucracy?

*Maria Walls, CPA is the Treasurer of Beaufort County. [www.BeaufortCountyTreasurer.com](http://www.BeaufortCountyTreasurer.com)*

## Letters to the Editor

**To the Editor:**

A letter from Walter F Heydt in the Nov. 4 Hilton Head Sun called attention to recent shootings in Savannah.

However, in his attempt to make his point, he referenced his experience in Queens and summed it up with “a situation like Chicago” without explaining why either is salient to the subject of his letter.

The problem with his letter and many others like it is statements are made without any factual information.

I am going to hazard a guess that he never lived in Chicago, but why should

that keep him from commenting on the “situation in Chicago.”

*Jeff Covinsky  
Hilton Head Island*

**To the Editor:**

As much as the Beaufort County Board of Education might want it to do so, the issue with Superintendent Jeffrey Moss is not going to go away. I believe that the board needs to recognize and accept this reality.

Many people are going to continue to use the public comment portion of the board meetings to discuss their frustra-

tions with the fact that basically nothing has been done to correct or remedy the behavior of the superintendent. And many, like me, will also continue to use letters to the editor in the local papers to vent our frustrations.

The board’s apparent “blind eye” to this fact means, to me, that board members, especially the chairperson and those who haven’t spoken-out on the issues, fully accept or condone the superintendent’s actions.

This is of major concern, considering his direct role in the nepotism aspects

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