



FCCMA 2026 Winter Institute

Finding Opportunity in Uncertain Times

February 26-27, 2026

Agenda

All sessions will be held in the Avalon Ballroom

Thursday, February 26, 2026

8:00 – 8:30 am Registration / Continental Breakfast

8:45 – 9:00 am Welcome and Introductions

Session One: Talking About Turbulent Times-Communications That Build Trust

9:00 – 9:40 am External Communication: Crisis Communication and Crisis Management
External communication is critical in turbulent times, as it often shapes how effectively a crisis appears to be managed. We'll look at how staying resident-focused, avoiding pivots driven by misinformation, and maintaining awareness of tone and optics can strengthen your response. We'll also examine how slow-moving but necessary actions can be supported—or undermined—by communication choices. Key principles include honesty, relationship-building before a crisis, relying on communications professionals, and activating the Incident Command Structure.

***Speaker:** Todd DeAngelis, Director of Communications, City of Parkland*

9:40 – 10:15 am Making Critical Decisions Under Fire: Managing Public Pressure and Limited Resources
City Managers must lead and communicate in ways that keep employees steady and morale intact, even when the message is hard and the pressure is unrelenting. This session focuses on the necessity of making critical decisions under public scrutiny, managing expectations, and communicating with clarity and credibility when resources are limited. Leaders will leave with practical strategies to maintain trust and organizational stability in high-stakes situations.

***Speaker:** Lisa Gilbert, CEO & Founder, No Nonsense Training Solutions*

10:15 – 10:30 am Refreshment Break

10:30 – 12:15 pm Making Critical Decisions Under Fire: Interactive Breakout Session
In this facilitated breakout, City Managers will work through realistic crisis scenarios in tabletop discussions that mirror the pressures they face in real time. Participants will share perspectives, receive targeted coaching, and peer feedback that can surface leadership blind spots that often emerge when stress is high and decisions must be made quickly. The focus is on strengthening judgment, communication, and leadership effectiveness under sustained pressure.

***Speaker:** Lisa Gilbert, CEO & Founder, No Nonsense Training Solutions*

12:15 – 1:00 pm Lunch

Session Two: Strength and Adaptability: Veterans of Turbulent Times – When it's Your Turn in the Breech

1:15 – 2:30 pm Lessons from the Real World: Preparing for and Facing the Unimaginable
We'll hear from three experienced managers who have faced the types of situations we all dread and survived to tell their stories, as well as share lessons learned.

***Speakers:** Chad Edwards, Borough Manager, Brackenridge, Pennsylvania, and former Village Manager of East Palestine, Ohio; Shawn Sherrouse, City Manager, City of Lakeland, Florida; and Dana Souza, City Manager, City of Sanibel, Florida*

- 2:30 – 3:00 pm **Audience Q&A with Panelist**
Audience members will have the opportunity to ask the speakers questions.
- 3:00 – 3:15 pm **Refreshment Break**
- 3:15 – 4:15 pm **Panel Discussion – Lessons Learned, Wisdom Gained, and “Do-Overs” Needed**
Our three speakers will discuss what they’ve taken away from their own remarkable life experiences, what they’re proud of, what they would have done differently, and what they will do differently next time.
- Moderator:** Mike McNees, Journeyman City Manager*
- Panelist:** Chad Edwards, Borough Manager, Brackenridge, Pennsylvania, and former Village Manager of East Palestine, Ohio; Shawn Sherrouse, City Manager, City of Lakeland, Florida; and Dana Souza, City Manager, City of Sanibel, Florida*
- 4:15 – 4:30 pm **Wrap Up of Day One/Housekeeping**
- 5:30 – 6:30 pm **Reception**
Avalon Terrace

Friday, February 27, 2026

8:00 – 9:00 am **Breakfast**

Session Three: Aligning Leadership in Turbulent Times

- 9:00 – 10:15 am **Personality, Emotional Intelligence, and Leadership – Teaching/Training**
Our default personality traits guide how we work and interact. Still, they aren’t always the most effective way to influence others, especially under stress, when strengths can become overused and counterproductive. By applying emotional intelligence, self-awareness, situational awareness, and self-management, we can adapt our temperament to fit the moment. Social-intelligence skills further strengthen communication and leadership effectiveness.
- Speaker:** Dr. Greg Stewart, PhD, MDiv, LPC, Owner and Operator of Becoming More Counseling, Coaching, & Consulting LLC*
- 10:15 – 10:30 am **Refreshment Break**
- 10:30 – 11:45 am **Application of Personality, Emotional Intelligence, and Leadership to FCCMA (Case Studies)**
With the core concepts established, attention turns to hands-on practice. Participants will delve into city-specific case studies and use the earlier framework to assess issues and identify strong leadership approaches.
- Speaker:** Dr. Greg Stewart, PhD, MDiv, LPC, Owner and Operator of Becoming More Counseling, Coaching, & Consulting LLC*
- 11:45 – 12:00 pm **Closing**