

# Local Government Communications Workshop

*Practical Tools for Conflict Management and Community Engagement*

**10:30 a.m. Welcome and introductions**

**10:35 a.m. Session I: Listening and conflict management in local government**  
*Interactive skills-building with practical tools to apply while serving constituents*

Miscommunication is the most frequent cause of conflict in any organization - and local government is no exception. Lack of effective listening can lead to stereotyping between competing interest groups, negative assumptions of local government staff and leaders, and costly missed opportunities for collaboration. Conflict can reduce participation, spread misinformation, and more.

Led by **Melissa Maybury Lubin**, this interactive session will focus on practical concepts and methods to overcome these costly barriers to effective listening and communication.

**Noon Lunch**

**1 p.m. Session II: Host a REAL Town Hall**  
*Engage your community in large-scale interactive dialogue to solve issue collaboratively*

## AGENDA

In an ever-more complex world, solutions to health issues, sustainability efforts, and human service challenges rely on effective collaboration between different organizations, professional disciplines, socioeconomic statuses, cultural communities, political predispositions, age groups, and educational levels. Limited resources and

other challenges can be overcome through public-private partnerships, business relationships, and appropriate support by government.

However, due to what is commonly referred to as “stove piping”, the level of any interaction across these differences is limited, and the results are missed opportunities, costly redundancy of services, and unmet needs.

Led by **Kai Degner** of the Fairfield Center, this session will focus on a practical model for an interactive, large-group community dialogue series that fosters much-needed collaboration and integration. Learn how the Fairfield Summit model is applied in Harrisonburg to maximize the potential of many community members discussing and addressing vital community issues.

**2:30 p.m. Wrap-up / adjourn**



**Melissa Maybury Lubin**  
*Director of the Virginia Tech Richmond Center*

Melissa Maybury Lubin is director of the Virginia Tech Richmond Center, where she is responsible for the university's graduate and lifelong learning programs that are tailored to serve the Richmond metro area. In addition to managing a portfolio of continuing education programming,

Melissa creates, customizes and facilitates a series of human development coursework for organizations in the private and public sector. Her expertise is in coaching, sales, management development and personal strengths assessment and development. Before joining Virginia Tech, Melissa held leadership positions at the Institute of Professional Development, This End Up Furniture Co., Circuit City Stores Inc. and Radford University. Lubin is a Ph.D. candidate in Adult Learning and Human Resource Development at Virginia Tech.



**Kai Degner**  
*Mayor of Harrisonburg  
Director of Civic Engagement  
at the Fairfield Center*

Kai Degner wears two hats for this workshop: mayor of Harrisonburg and director of business services and civic engagement at the Fairfield Center. He has been on the steering committee for the National Conference on Dialogue and Deliberation and has coordinated more than 300 community dialogues and forums. He is skilled in applying a combination of innovative meeting and conference techniques designed to allow for rich participation, creative exploration and effective decision-making. In 2009, he created the Harrisonburg Summit series, designed to be large-community dialogue events. He is the creator and lead instructor in Listening 101, a four-week experiential listening course. He holds a master's degree from James Madison University.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Locality: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

All meetings will begin at 10:30 a.m. I will attend the following Communications Workshop:

**Tuesday, March 30**      **Abingdon**      **FREE**  
Virginia Highlands Small Business Incubator  
851 French Moore Jr. Blvd.  
Abingdon, VA 24210  
*Please respond by March 24*

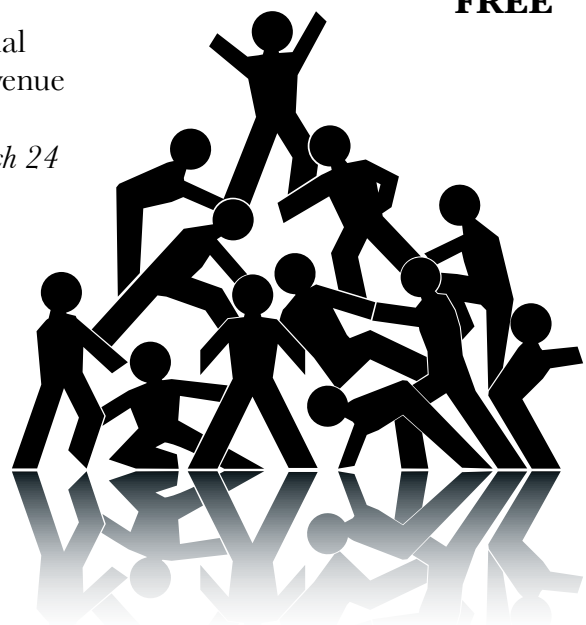
**Wednesday, March 31**      **Vinton**      **FREE**  
Vinton War Memorial  
814 Washington Avenue  
Vinton, VA 24179  
*Please respond by March 24*

**Send your registration form to:**

VML Insurance Programs  
P.O. Box 3239  
Glen Allen, VA 23058  
Attn: Karen Wall

**By FAX:** (804) 273-0560  
Attn: Karen Wall

**By e-mail:** [communications@vmlins.org](mailto:communications@vmlins.org)



*We look forward to communicating with you there!*