

VDOT hires Collins

Annual salary will be \$94,000

Dan Collins

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Martinsville City Manager Dan Collins is leaving to work for the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT).

Collins, who submitted his resignation to the Martinsville City Council last week, will become VDOT's resident administrator for Roanoke, Craig and Botetourt counties, the transportation agency announced Tuesday.

In his new job, he will oversee VDOT's road maintenance, land development programs, budgets and business operations for those three counties. He will manage a staff of about 130 employees, according to a release.

The job is basically the same as the one held by Lisa Price Hughes, resident administrator at the Bassett Forks VDOT office that oversees transportation matters in Henry and Patrick counties and Martinsville.

Collins said that his new job will be a little different from Hughes', though, because Interstate 81 runs through Roanoke and Botetourt counties and he will oversee a rest stop and truck weigh station along the highway.

The Henry County-Martinsville area has no interstate. But the proposed Interstate 73 now being considered for approval by the Federal Highway Administration would run through the county.

Collins has managed cities and counties throughout Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee and Missouri. He became Martinsville's city manager in July 2004 and has almost 30 years of experience in managing local governments.

"His experience in government management definitely will be a welcomed asset" to VDOT, Salem District Administrator Richard Caywood said in the release.

Collins will report to Caywood, said VDOT spokesman Jason Bond.

As city manager, Collins has an annual salary of \$113,300. His new job will pay \$94,000 annually, Bond said.

Collins chose not to publicly announce his new job and instead waited for VDOT to announce his hiring.

In his letter of resignation, he did not elaborate on why he was resigning. He said that “a chance to work outside of municipal government is available and I feel that I should pursue this new opportunity.”

Collins has said he will not comment on reasons for his resignation.

He said Tuesday, however, that transportation issues have interested him for many years. Cities must maintain their streets so he, as a city manager, has had to stay abreast of related matters, he pointed out.

He is no stranger to VDOT operations — his father spent 34 years with the agency.

“I’ve been around it my whole life, and I’m familiar with the issues,” Collins said. Still, “there are some nuances (between local government and state government procedures) that I’ll have to pick up on really quickly.”

“One of the major issues facing the commonwealth and the country” is transportation needs, he said, adding that he looks forward to helping Southwestern Virginia improve its network of highways.

A member of the International City Manager’s Association, Collins received the Public Administrator of the Year Award from the American Society for Public Administration in 1993. He serves on the executive board of the Virginia Local Government Management Association.

A list of Collins’ accomplishments as Martinsville’s city manager, released by the city following his resignation, includes overseeing improvements made to the Liberty Street/Clearview Drive/Stultz Road intersection, helping to start planning improvements to Wilson Park, overseeing the revitalization of West Church Street and increasing the city’s reserve funds over three years.

Collins said that he and his wife, Robin, will sell their home in Martinsville and move to Salem. His last day with the city will be April 22.