

IN 'LOVE' WITH STORM WATER SERVICES



VIVIAN LOVE
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT COORDINATOR

Photo By Nancy Pierce

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Storm Water Services has seen a lot of changes over 25 years and Vivian Love has had a front row seat to almost all of them. The Administrative Support Coordinator has been a part of the department for 20 years.

“I’m the oldest of 9 children and I have been supporting people of different ages my entire life. It was just an extension of what I already knew and what I’ve already been doing,” said Love.

For the last 20 years, she’s also been a tremendous support for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Storm Water Advisory Committee (SWAC). In fact, she’s only the third person to ever fulfill the duties of Clerk for the board.

“Working with the SWAC these many years has provided me with the opportunity to sharpen my knowledge, skills and abilities to work even better with such a variety of awesome personalities—professionals, elected/appointed officials, community leaders, city & county management and staff, and the citizens of Charlotte-Mecklenburg,” said Love. She calls her work on the board “a privilege, an honor and even an occasional test.”

While she enjoys the work and the challenges it presents, the people are the real reason she’s stayed for so long. “I enjoy the communications, the respect, the variety of duties and the earnest caring shared among the SWAC members, staff and citizens for the protection of the environment surrounding our communities,” said Love.

A fondness that goes even further among her co-workers. She calls Mecklenburg County Storm Water Services staff “my family and home away from home.”

For Love the relationships go beyond the 9-5 work day. “I’ve seen them get married, start families. I see them grow up....” She credits department Director, Dave Canaan with creating an encouraging environment. “He treats staff with courtesy, professionalism, and is totally encouraging. His lead is how we follow,” she said.

While the atmosphere around the office is light, Love realizes the work being done by both the department and the board is serious. She recalls one of the most difficult times involved working in the disaster centers.

“People come in with children and it absolutely breaks your heart,” said Love. “You get to see the heartbreak and hurt and the loss face to face. It’s no longer just a name and a number. You see the people who’s home the address belonged to is now gone.”

Since the department began, Love has watched programs expand and grow around the city that she loves.

“Mecklenburg County is a great place to live and work and since I’ve been with the county 30 years I saved the best for last with Storm Water Services.”

The 65-year-old is going to retire at the end of December. “I’m going to go home and sleep at least for the first 30 days,” she laughs. If you know Vivian, you know she won’t sit still for long.

She’s often referred to as the glue that holds the staff together. So what is her advice to her replacement? “Make yourself available, be flexible, keep a positive attitude and just keep moving forward.”

There’s no doubt Vivian will continue to do just that!