

## **First African-American city manager is 'a person of faith'**

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Ask Garland Keith Chadwell about his passion for music and he may tell you a story about his parents.

The two musicians who became his mom and dad met in their college choir. Today, the future Pompano Beach city manager lends his voice to his Atlanta church, where he sings in two Methodist choirs.

"I'm very much a person of faith. Trust me, I do this work by faith," Chadwell said recently of his 20 years in local government.

Chadwell is getting ready to leave his post as Fulton County's deputy manager of community services to become Pompano Beach's first African-American city manager. He starts July 23 and will earn \$185,000 a year. Chadwell replaces former city manager Bill Hargett, who retired last month.

Chadwell, 53, who goes by Keith, is divorced and has an adult daughter who lives in Atlanta. He likes golf and the performing arts. The last play he saw was *A Raisin in the Sun*.

His new role won't be the first job to prompt a move across state lines. He worked for the government of the District of Columbia in 2000. And in the 1980s, he helped Lucas County, Ohio, begin its first 911 computer-aided dispatch center.

But his move to Pompano Beach marks the first time he'll lead a city. It is "a culminating point in my career," he said.

As a high school student, Chadwell said, he worked as an intern at a television station and wanted to be the next Walter Cronkite. He majored in mass communication and political science at Morehouse College in Atlanta. He became interested in public safety and human services and earned a master's degree in public administration.

"Local government is an absolute service-driven industry," he said.

Chadwell said he faced one of his toughest moments a few years ago in his current position. He managed the library system during a time when staff was experiencing low morale as a result of changes on the board of trustees. Around that time, a staff member shot and killed a branch manager and then committed suicide, he said.

"With a signature event like that, suddenly we had everybody's attention," he said.

Chadwell said he helped to obtain legislative support to change the library's structure and hired a new library director.

Those who work with Chadwell say he's prepared for his new position.

His current supervisor, Fulton County Manager Tom Andrews, said he has kept Chadwell busy, putting him in charge of budget issues and several city departments.

"He's going to be a big loss to me, although I'm delighted he's moving up in the career ladder," Andrews said.

Co-worker and neighbor Ruth Jones said Chadwell impressed her recently with the way he handled a public debate over the housing authority.

"I lost twice," she said. "Glad for him but not for us."

Pompano Beach city officials say they will look to Chadwell for guidance during budget workshops and meetings about the city's two community redevelopment areas.

"He comes at a critical time, with budget issues in the state," Mayor Lamar Fisher said.

Commissioner Kay McGinn said she hopes Chadwell can bridge the differences she believes exist on the commission.

"I hope that he is able to unify the city and commission and lead the city into projects that we all are in favor of," she said.