



TML Newly Elected City Officials' Orientation

You've got questions...we've got answers.

Speaker Bios July 29-30, 2021 ~ San Antonio



Betsy Price

Former Mayor, City of Fort Worth

Now a candidate for Tarrant County Judge, Betsy Price served as Mayor of Fort Worth for 10 years. When she was first elected Mayor in 2011, she brought an ambitious vision to raise the bar for the city of Fort Worth. This started with improving the basics of any growing city – public safety, mobility, fiscal responsibility, and job growth. She also wanted to help ensure a sustainable city for future generations by promoting grassroots public engagement, supporting healthy lifestyles, and championing public education.

Prior to serving as Mayor, Betsy has been an active mother and a leader in the Fort Worth community for years, serving numerous boards, commissions, and professional associations. She'll be quick to say that, prior to her public service, one of her favorite community roles was to lead the PTA for Paschal High School, watching bright local youth grow into productive members of the community.

After running her own successful business for 17 years, Betsy turned to public service and was first elected in 2000 to serve as Tarrant County's Tax Assessor. Not afraid to ask the tough questions, Betsy quickly made her department one of the most efficient in Texas, saving taxpayers millions of dollars.

She is proud of her proven record as a strong and energetic leader who brings people together to focus on what's best for our entire community. As the next Tarrant County Judge, she plans to continue finding innovative solutions that protect taxpayers, making neighborhoods safe and growing the local economy with quality jobs.

Betsy graduated from Arlington Heights High School and earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Texas at Arlington. Together with her husband Tom, Betsy has three adult children. In her spare time, Betsy is an avid cyclist and enjoys spending quality time with her six grandchildren.



Mary J. Kayser

Former City Secretary, City of Fort Worth

Mary was city secretary of Fort Worth since January 2012 and retired on June 30, 2021. She previously served the City of Garland as city secretary from 2006-2012 and served the City of Burleson as deputy city secretary from 1992-1999, and then as city secretary from 1999-2006. She earned her TRMC Certification in 1999 (No. 325) and recertified four times, most recently in 2019. From May 2017 through May 2018 she served as president of the International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC).

She is active in TMCA and the North Texas Municipal Clerks Association (NTMCA). She has served on the Board of both TMCA and NTMCA and has served as President of both organizations. Mary was selected as the TMCA Municipal Clerk of the Year in 2010. Mary is also active in IIMC and is an IIMC Certified Municipal Clerk and Master Municipal Clerk and is an Athenian Fellow. Mary has co-authored the seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth editions of the Texas Municipal Clerks Handbook.



Martie Simpson

Consultant and GFOAT Executive Director

Martie Simpson currently serves as the Executive Director for the Government Finance Officers Association of Texas. She started her career with a large certified public accounting firm. She then went to work in the private sector for a manufacturing company and later for an insurance company. In 1997 she began her career in municipal government with the City of Killeen, finishing her career in municipal government with the City of New Braunfels.

She has served on the board of GFOAT in various capacities to include Treasurer and President and is looking forward to her new position with GFOAT. Martie currently lives in New Braunfels, Texas and is blessed with three adult sons.



Dan Johnson
City Manager, City of Richardson

Dan Johnson is the city manager of Richardson, Texas. Johnson’s 44 years as a public administrator have been served in a variety of capacities in the DFW Metroplex. Johnson was appointed to the position of city manager in 2012. Before serving as city manager, Johnson served as Richardson’s deputy city manager from 1996 until his appointment to city manager. Prior to his move to Richardson in 1996, Johnson served for 11 years at the City of Carrollton, Texas, including three years as city manager, and eight years as deputy city manager. Earlier service included responsibilities as director of regional services for three years at the North Central Texas Council of Governments (Dallas/Fort Worth metro area), and he was budget officer in Sherman, Texas, for five years.

Johnson holds a bachelor’s degree in Political Science from Austin College, and a Master of Public Administration from the University of North Texas. He is also a graduate of the Public Executive Institute of the LBJ School of Public Affairs. Johnson is the 1995 Distinguished Alumni recipient for the Department of Public Administration at the University of North Texas. He is a past president for the Urban Management Assistants of North Texas, the North Texas City Management Association, and the Texas City Management Association. Dan serves on the Methodist Richardson Medical Center Advisory Board, the University of Texas at Dallas Development Board and the Advisory Council for the UT Dallas School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences. He also serves as treasurer and Board Executive Committee Member of the North Texas Commission.



Amber McKeon-Mueller
Legal Counsel, Texas Municipal League

Amber McKeon-Mueller is Legal Counsel with TML where she provides legal information to city officials, presents on issues relevant to cities, and monitors legislation during the legislative session. She graduated from the University of Texas School of Law and received her undergraduate degree from the University of Nebraska. Prior to joining the TML Legal Department in 2018, she worked for the Texas Attorney General’s Office as a litigator. She also litigated for over 6 years in private practice in San Diego, California.



Tom Bryson
Director of Communications, City of Farmers Branch

A native of New Orleans and a proud graduate of LSU, Tom Bryson has been a local government communicator for nearly 30 years. Following an early career stint as a newspaper reporter, he came in from the dark side in 1990 to work, first, for the City of Duncanville. At Farmers Branch, where he has been since 1999, he is responsible for all city internal and external communications activities and a variety of city media, including website, social media, cable television programming, print publications, two different weekly eNewsletters, and media relations. During Tom’s tenure, the Farmers Branch communications department has been recognized more than 55 times at the local, state, and national levels for municipal government communications achievement. Tom is a past president of the TML affiliate, Texas Association of Municipal Information Officers, and is vice president of the national City-County Communications and Marketing Association where he was named national Communicator of the Year in 2016.

Additionally, he is a founding member of the Advisory Board for the Certified Public Communicator program at TCU - the first certification program of its kind in the nation for government communicators.

Tom enjoys writing, watching an unhealthy amount of television, and playing golf badly. He is married to Dr. Mechelle Bryson, the head of schools at Westlake Academy. They are proud parents of their son Taylor, an aspiring filmmaker and graduate of Centenary College of Louisiana who is currently working for Walt Disney World in Florida.



Monty Wynn
Director, Grassroots and Legislative Services

Monty Wynn is the Director of Grassroots and Legislative Services for the Texas Municipal League where he coordinates and implements the legislative policy program for the 1,167 member cities. He has been with TML for 14 years. Prior to his work at TML, Monty worked for two state comptrollers, was the Committee Director for the House Public Education Committee, and served as the Chief of Staff to two Senators.

Monty is a graduate of The University of Texas at Austin with a degree in Economics and Political Science. He and his wife, Rosemary, have two sons, Aiden, 14, and Owen, 13.



JJ Rocha

Grassroots and Legislative Services Manager, Texas Municipal League

JJ Rocha is the Grassroots and Legislative Services Manager at the Texas Municipal League where she coordinates the legislative policy program for the 1,167 member cities. Before joining TML in 2010, she interned at the Texas House of Representatives. JJ is a graduate from St. Edward's University with a degree in political science. In 2014, she received her Master's from the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas in Austin.



Tad Cleaves

Legal Counsel, Texas Municipal League

Tad joined the Texas Municipal League in 2021. During his 13+ years' experience as an attorney, he has served as an in-house City Attorney and Assistant City Attorney for multiple cities in Texas as well as outside counsel to cities across the state while employed with private law firms. He earned a history degree at The University of Texas and a mathematics degree at Texas Tech University before studying law at the Chicago-Kent College of Law. Most importantly, he has an extraordinary wife, four boys, three cats, and two dogs to keep him company in his free time.



George E. Hyde

Partner, Russell Rodriguez Hyde Bullock, L.L.P.

George Hyde is a 1998 St Mary's Law honors graduate. Shortly thereafter, George elected to live the lifestyle of a local government lawyer, became approved claims council for the TML Risk Pool defending cities, their employees, and officials in state and federal court, and was also appointed as City Attorney in numerous cities across Texas. He has held the following local government positions in his life: municipal park ranger, firefighter, deputy constable, deputy sheriff, police officer, and assistant and city attorney.

He has handled thousands of open record requests and numerous Texas Public Information Act lawsuits, including notable decisions such as Adkisson v. Paxton, El Paso, Tx. v. Paxton and in 2018, received what was characterized by the AG's office as the largest attorneys' fee award in a Public Information Act case. The City of Carrollton successfully sued the AG over the scope of public information relating to the release of certain police records. The matter went to the Texas Supreme Court, who ruled favorably for the City and the trial court then awarded the city its fees in a judgment awarding over \$100,000 (took six years).

Workshop Moderators



Steve Rockey

TAMCC President, TML Board Director for TAMCC, and Councilmember, City of Friendswood

Steve Rockey was first elected to the Friendswood city council in 2012. He grew up in the midwest and graduated from Kenston High School in Chagrin Falls, Ohio. While in high school, Steve was a wrestler and studied the Russian language. He was selected by the United States State Department to be a foreign exchange student to the Soviet Union during the cold war years.

After graduating Summa Cum Laude with a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Ohio University, he moved to Houston to work for the Shell Oil Company in their research laboratories in 1978. While working at Shell full time, he returned to school at the University of Houston to earn a second bachelor's degree in chemical engineering. He was then promoted to an engineer position and continued working at Shell at several different locations. In 2009, Steve started an engineering consulting business.



Lori Ward

TAMCC Vice President, and Deputy Mayor Pro Deputy Mayor Pro Tem, City of Addison

Lori Ward is a Texas transplant. She graduated from the University of Oklahoma, with a bachelor's degree in Spanish and taught Spanish for several semesters at the University of Oklahoma while working toward a graduate degree. For most of her 24-year career, Lori has worked in commercial business development and sales management. She is currently the director sales and marketing for a contract manufacturer that specializes in complex assembly and precision fabrication.

Lori is now serving her second term on city council as Deputy Mayor Pro Tem for the City of Addison. In October 2019, Lori was elected as the incoming Second Vice President of the Texas Association of Mayors, Councilmembers and Commissioners (TAMCC), an affiliate of the Texas Municipal League (TML).

Lori enjoys reading, movies, spending time with friends, and taking daily walks with her dog, Rally.