

TML Newly Elected  City Officials' Orientation
You've got questions...we've got answers.

Speaker Bios
July 21-22, 2022 – Allen



Betsy Price
Former Mayor, City of Fort Worth

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.

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. Since her retirement in 2021 she has contracted with City Hall Essentials and served as Interim City Secretary in the Towns of Northlake and Westlake as they searched for a permanent Town Secretary. She earned her TRMC Certification in 1999 (No. 325) and recertified four times, most recently in 2019. Mary is an IIMC Certified Municipal Clerk and Master Municipal Clerk and is an Athenian Fellow. She has served as President of NTMCA, TMCA and IIMC.

She continues to be active in TMCA and the North Texas Municipal Clerks Association (NTMCA) as well as IIMC.



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.

Martie currently lives in New Braunfels, Texas and is blessed with three adult sons.



Dan Johnson

Former City Manager, City of Richardson

Dan Johnson is the recently retired City Manager of Richardson, Texas. Johnson's 45 years as a public administrator have been served in a variety of capacities in the DFW Metroplex. Dan's most recent 25 years with the City of Richardson included his 2012 appointment as City Manager, and his prior service as Deputy City Manager for Richardson from 1996.

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 (D-FW metro area), and he was Budget Officer in Sherman, Texas, for five years.

Dan holds a Bachelors Degree in Political Science from Austin College, and a Masters in 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 (UMANT), the North Texas City Management Association (NTCMA), and the Texas City Management Association (TCMA).

In 2022, Dan was named a "Distinguished Member" of the Texas City Management Association - one of only six in the 100-year history of TCMA. He also received the TCMA Lifetime Achievement Award and is the inaugural recipient of TCMA's Excellence in Ethics and Integrity Award. Dan has received "Life Member" status in both ICMA and TCMA. Dan is the 2021 "Citizen of the Year" award recipient from the Richardson Chamber of Commerce. The North Central Texas Council of Governments presented Dan with the 2022 Bill Pitstick Commitment to Regionalism Award for demonstrated service over his 45-year public administration career.

Dan serves on the Methodist Richardson Medical Center Advisory Board, the University of Texas at Dallas Development Board and the Advisory Council for the UTDallas School of Economic, Political & Policy Sciences. He is also a Board Member of the University of North Texas Public Administration Advisory Board. He was the Past-Treasurer & Board Executive Committee Member of the North Texas Commission.

Dan, and his wife Tina, live in Richardson. Dan continues as an active public administration advisor and trainer on topics of municipal service, including Ethics & Governance, Economic Development, Public Finance & Budgets, Transit-Oriented Planning and Development, and Public Management & Leadership, among other topics.

Dan and Tina homeschool their miniature schnauzer, Luna!



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

Vice President & Public Sector Practice Leader | Cooksey Communications

A native of New Orleans and a proud graduate of LSU, Tom Bryson was a local government communications professional for more than three decades in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. 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, then for the City of Farmers Branch where he retired in January of 2021. At Farmers Branch, he was 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 team was recognized more than 55 times at the local, state, and national levels for municipal government communications achievement. Tom is a past president of both the TML affiliate, Texas Association of Municipal Information Officers, and 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, a retired charter school administrator. They are proud parents of one son, Taylor, who makes magic every day as a front line cast member at 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 1,172 member cities. He has been with TML for 16 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, 16, and Owen, 15.



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 1,172 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.



Sarah Tompkins

Legal Counsel, Texas Municipal League

Sarah Tompkins is an attorney in the legal department at Texas Municipal League. Sarah received her undergraduate degree in English Literature from Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and her law degree from the University of Texas. Prior to joining TML, Sarah served as a legislative attorney at the Texas Legislative Council and a briefing attorney for Judge Elsa Alcala at the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals.



Evelyn Njuguna

Director of Legal Services, Texas Municipal League

Evelyn Njuguna is the Director of Legal Services at 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 Tennessee where she received both her undergraduate and law degrees. Evelyn previously worked at TML in 2006-2008, and recently returned to TML after serving as an Assistant City Attorney at the City of Houston and First Assistant City Attorney at the City of Missouri City.

Workshop Moderators



David Rutledge, CMO

TML President-Elect, and Mayor, City of Bridge City

Rutledge has served as the mayor of Bridge City since 2016 and previously served as a councilmember for six years. He has earned his annual certified municipal official designation with TML since 2015. Before being elected TML president-elect in June 2021, he served as the TML Region 16 president, represented TML Region 16 and TAMCC on the TML Board, and participated in numerous TML committees. Rutledge will take office as TML president in October 2022.



Lori Ward

TAMCC President, TML Board Director for TAMCC, and 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.



Steve Rockey

TAMCC Immediate Past President, 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.