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ACA Newsletter

Council Committees Take Shape Under New Structure

Austin—The newly-elected Austin City Council representing 10 districts has successfully restructured the city's council committees to allow more in-depth discussions and civic participation.

Among several initiatives by the new Council was to send important and controversial agenda items to council committees hoping to reach consensus through stakeholders' input and avoid long and late night hours on the dais.

Subsequently, the Council has increased the number of committees from seven to 10, which are: 1) Audit and Finance, 2) Austin Energy Utility Oversight, 3) Economic Opportunity, 4) Health and Human Services, 5) Housing and Community Development, 6) Mobility, 7) Open Space, Environment, and Sustainability, 8) Planning and Neighborhoods, 9) Public Safety, and 10) Public Utilities.

The change that most affected the MBE/WBE community is the substitution of the Economic Opportunity Committee for the previous Small, Minority-owned, and Women-owned Business Committee. Staff from the Small and Minority Business Resources Department will no longer be the public liaison replaced by staff from the Economic Development Department.

Council Member Troxclair, who chairs the Economic Opportunity Committee, said in a meeting with the Asian Contractor Association, the Black Contractors Association, and the Hispanic Contractors Association, that MBE/WBE issues will definitely be included in the discussions as she and the other members are still trying to work out how to prioritize the many issues to be discussed in these monthly meetings.

Below is a list of the 10 Council Committees and Members.

Economic Opportunity Committee (2nd Monday at 2:00pm)



Chair: Troxclair



CM Houston



CM Pool



CM Casar

Austin Energy Utility Oversight Committee (4th Thursday at 9:00am)



Mayor Adler

(Mayor and All Council Members)

Audit and Finance Committee (4th Wednesday at 9:00am)



Chair: Tovo



CM Troxclair



CM Renteria



CM Pool

Health and Human Services Committee (1st Monday at 4:00pm)



Chair: Houston



CM Tovo



CM Garza



CM Troxclair

Housing and Community Development Committee (4th Wednesday at 4:00pm)



Chair: Renteria



CM Kitchen



CM Casar



CM Gallo

Mobility Committee (1st Wednesday at 3:00pm)



Chair: Kitchen



CM Gallo



CM Garza



CM Zimmerman

Open Space, Environment, and Sustainability Committee (4th Wednesday at 2:00pm)



Chair: Pool



CM Garza



CM Tovo



CM Zimmerman

Planning and Neighborhoods Committee (3rd Monday at 4:00pm)



Chair: Casar



CM Renteria



CM Gallo



CM Tovo

Public Safety Committee (4th Monday at 4:00pm)



Chair: Zimmerman



CM Casar



CM Houston



CM Pool

Public Utilities Committee (3rd Wednesday at 3:00pm)



Chair: Garza



CM Zimmerman



CM Kitchen



CM Troxclair



ABOUT JQ+TSEN / Established in Austin in 2010 by Stephanie Tsen and Gary Jaster, JQ+Tsen (JQT) combines the talents of two structural engineering firms, Jaster-Quintanilla (JQ) and TsenStructural. Committed to technical expertise, exceptional service, and a quality product, JQT provides comprehensive structural engineering solutions for the private and public sectors. Jaster's vast experience and proven track record on many project types coupled with Tsen's focus on historical preservation, sustainability, and high-design projects creates a robust partnership with a collaborative, and creative, approach to structural engineering.

JQ+TSEN LEADERSHIP/ JQT benefits from decades of local engineering experience. Gary Jaster, PE, brings a wealth of engineering and institutional knowledge to the team. He draws on his 40 years in the industry, 37 years of which have been in Austin. He has extensive experience in engineering design, research, management, and construction administration for commercial, institutional, residential, educational, municipal, and industrial engineering projects. He has provided structural services for projects across the region, state, country, and even the world.

Stephanie Tsen, PE, LEED Green Associate, has 15 years of structural engineering experience that includes feasibility studies, analysis and design, project management and construction administration. Her project type experience ranges from high-end residential to wastewater/raw sewage facilities; from small, artistic canopies to historic buildings to large school campuses. She has experience with nearly all building materials, including steel, concrete, wood, concrete masonry block, brick, adobe, and rammed earth.

JQ+TSEN PROJECT EXPERIENCE/ JQT works with owners, architects, engineers, and general contractors in a variety of market sectors including municipal, education, federal, commercial, and historical preservation. Some of JQT's past and current projects include the following:

"NexusHaus" is an affordable, plus-energy, one-story home designed by the students from the Technische Universität München and the University of Texas at Austin for the **2015 Solar Decathlon Competition**, hosted by the US Department of Energy. JQT is providing structural engineering services and coordinat-



"NexusHaus" rendering by student team

ing amongst professional, student, and faculty volunteers to ensure a safe structure for public display in Irving, California. This project is currently in the design phase.

The Cooling Tower Improvements for the Domain District Cooling Plant is a City of Austin and Austin Energy project to decommission the existing 30-year old towers and replace them with newer, more reliable, and more efficient cooling towers. The plant currently serves more than 3.5 million square feet of customer facilities equaling more than 8000 tons of peak cooling. JQT is providing structural engineering services on the Jacobs team. This project is currently in the predesign phase.

Commissioned in 2013 by the City of Fort Worth for its Public Art Program, the **Ammonite Sculpture at Fossil Creek Bridge** serves as a visual testimony to the area's fossil-rich surroundings. Hand forged by architect and metal worker Lars Stanley, FAIA, the sculpture stands 8 feet



wide and 10 feet tall. JQT provided structural engineering services for the sculpture and its two points of attachment to the existing concrete bridge. This project was recently completed.

The Lago Vista Independent School District opened their new \$29.6 million high school to students in August 2014. Built to accommodate at least 1200 students, the 110,000-square foot

Lago Vista High School Campus includes a two-story classroom building; a main building with a library, cafeteria, and a grand stair; competition gymnasium; practice gymnasium, vocational shop; band hall; and a performing arts center. Additionally, a football field



Lago Vista High School, photo by Patrick Wong

house is carved 12 feet into the land to provide locker rooms and a weight room at field level and an outdoor concession and observation deck at the public entry level. JQT provided structural engineering services for the buildings of the new high school campus. This project was recently completed.

Council Sent Decker Lake Golf Course Proposal to Committees to Obtain Feedback

The controversial plan to develop 735 acres of undeveloped and fenced-off public land into two golf courses will receive further discussions in two Council Committees by the Economic Opportunity Committee on April 13th at 2:00pm, and the Open Space, Environmental, and Sustainability Committee on April 29th at 2:00pm, before the full Council votes on the issue expected in May.

Planning and Development Review Department to Begin Accepting Online Credit Card Payments

The new service, *Austin Build + Connect (ABC)*, will allow contractors to pay for invoiced trade permits using a credit card or electronic check. A small group of contractors are currently participating in the pilot phase to ensure payments are properly processed through the City's permitting system and posted to the City's accounting system. The site will be become available for all users on March 30, 2015.

Austin City Council Seeks Applicants for Municipal Civil Service Commission

Deadline to apply is 5 p.m. April 22, 2015. If selected by City Council, these two Commissioners will serve three-year terms. The Commissioners terms will begin once appointed by City Council. The time commitment for Commission business is anticipated at 20 - 30 hours a month. Commissioners serve on a voluntary basis.

The City Council seeks these qualifications in applicants:

1. City of Austin resident.
2. Qualified voter of the City.
3. Preferred experience or knowledge of the administration of human resources or labor relations.
4. Preferred experience or knowledge in labor/ employment law.

Lyft, Uber operational at Austin's airport

Transportation Network Companies Lyft and Uber are permitted to provide on-demand transportation services at Austin-Bergstrom International Airport on a temporary basis. The ridesharing companies have reached an agreement with the City of Austin, Department of Aviation to operate at the airport for a temporary period, not to exceed 45 days, until a long-term agreement can be reached between parties.

Open Government Symposium Focus on Legislation, Litigation, Ethics/Compliance Programs

The City of Austin will host its second Open Government Symposium April 9 featuring legal experts discussing open government issues including legislation, litigation, trends and the role of an ethics and compliance program in supporting government transparency.

The event will be from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Austin City Hall, 301 W. Second St. The event is free and open to the

public and attending attorneys can receive Continuing Legal Education credit at no cost.

To register for the symposium visit austintexas.gov/opengov2015. When responding, specify the panel(s) you would like to attend.

Charts Show Spending Status of Voter-Approved Bonds

In support of the City of Austin's focus on public transparency, the [Capital Planning Office](#) has put [interactive charts online](#) that show the spending status of the City's voter-approved general obligation bonds. These bonds are a source of funding for many capital improvement projects such as park and road projects.

The charts include bond funds that have already been invested in capital improvements projects from the 2013, 2012, 2010 and 2006 bond programs as well as funds that are under contract and what's left remaining. The data will be updated quarterly.

Austin Travis County Integral Care Selected to Develop Facility for Chronically Homeless

The City has selected Austin Travis County Integral Care to develop and maintain a facility with at least 50 Housing First Permanent Supportive Housing units to house and provide services for the chronically homeless. Now in design, the facility is expected to cost \$12.6 million, with the City contributing \$3 million of [2013 Affordable Housing Bond Program](#) funding.

Last year, City Council adopted a [community goal to create 400 Permanent Supportive Housing units](#) over the next four years to house people experiencing homelessness. The new facility will contribute to reaching that goal.

NEW Zero Waste REBATE (up to \$1,800) for Austin Businesses!

Qualifying businesses can earn up to \$1,800 in rebates to start, expand or improve recycling, composting or other zero waste programs.

Qualifying Austin businesses have **two ways** to save:

1. **Create new zero waste programs such as recycling, composting or other waste diversion procedures.** Contract for recycling and/or composting services and receive up to \$900 for start-up costs and 50 percent off monthly service invoices up to \$150 per month.
2. **Improve and expand existing recycling, composting or waste diversion programs.** By increasing the amount of materials diverted from Austin landfills, businesses can receive rebates up to \$1,800.

To find out if your business is eligible, please visit austintexas.gov/zwbizrebate, contact Austin Resource Recovery staff at (512) 974-9727.