

**MINUTES OF THE JOINT CITY COUNCIL MEETING BETWEEN
CITY OF TYLER AND CITY OF LONGVIEW
FEBRUARY 4, 2009**

A joint called meeting of the City Council of the City of Tyler, Texas, and City of Longview, Texas was held Wednesday, February 4, 2009 at 10:30 a.m. at the Rose Garden, 420 Rose Park Drive, Tyler, Texas, with the following present:

Mayor:	Barbara Bass
Mayor Pro Tem:	Charles Alworth
Council Members:	Nathaniel Moran Donald Sanders Ralph Caraway Steve Smith Chris Simons
City Manager:	Mark McDaniel
City Manager Emeritus:	Bob Turner
City Attorney:	Gary Landers
Airport Manager:	Davis Dickson
Budget/Human Resources Director:	ReNissa Wade
Development Services Engineer:	Michael Wilson
Director of Neighborhood Services:	Brenda Johnson
City Fire Chief:	Neal Franklin
City Police Chief:	Gary Swindle
Communications Director:	Susan Guthrie
Director of Solid Waste:	Dan Brotton
Housing Service Manager:	Andy Davis
Internal Auditor:	Keidric Trimble
Tyler Transit:	Gary Rushing
City Clerk:	Cassandra Brager Frank Rowland Regina Frick Heather Newman

CITY OF LONGVIEW COUNCILMEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES

Mayor:	Jay Dean
Councilmember:	John Sims Daryl Williams Sidney Bell Willis Wayne Frost (absent) John Bolster (absent) Sidney Allen
City Manager:	David Willard
Assistant City Manager:	Chuck Ewings
City Secretary:	Shelly Kissick
City Attorney:	Jim Finley
Director of Development Services:	Kevin Cummings

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Director of Public Works:	Keith Bonds
Director of Community Services:	Laura Hill
Director of Finance:	Angela Coen
Administration Office Manager:	Mary Ann Miller
Police Chief:	J. B. McCaleb
Senior Transportation Planner MPO:	Karen Owen
Assistant Fire Chief:	Kenny Southwell
Assistant Fire Chief:	Claude Ford
City Manager's Office:	Mary Jane Burnett
City Manager's Office:	Shawn Hara
Longview Economic Dev. Corporation:	John Stroud
Longview Tourism:	Paul Anderson Dietrich Johnson

I. CALL TO ORDER – Mayor Bass called the meeting to order.

II. INVOCATION – Councilman Ralph Caraway gave the invocation.

III. PLEDGE – Councilman John Sims, City of Longview led the pledge of allegiance.

IV. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS – Mayor Bass and Mayor Dean

Mayor Bass – Stated that part of the event today is a “Get to Know Each Other” event. In my business I do business with people I know. Working with the East Texas region we can work better trying to get to know each other so I am very excited about our program today, about our meeting here and I know it has been 4 or 5 years since we have been together. There have been a lot of faces changed on our side and I am sure on the Longview side. It is just a wonderful opportunity for us to get back together and get to know each other again.

Mayor Dean - Stated that it is a pleasure to be here today. Unfortunately we had not been here sooner, but in December Mayor Bass and I met at Longview High School and we did not know one another so I thought it was important we got to know one another. I think it is about learning more about one another, learning how our two communities can work together. We are in some changing times. Economics that we deal with today are going to leave this country very differently than what it was just a year ago. How we as a region and communities work together

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to help and improve the quality of life for our citizens will be very important. So we hope that as we move forward that we develop an agenda and issues that the two communities can work together towards the future. I see a number of people here from our staff and some our citizens as well. We want to thank you for driving over here today.

Mayor Bass – Stated that it was great to see the number of people who have come to participate today and I do recognize faces from both communities and I appreciate you giving of your time because of our citizens and our democracy that our country works. So it is wonderful to be part of that process. We have several items for discussion today.

V. ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS -

A. Consider a Resolution regarding the desire for Tyler and Longview to continue to work together for the betterment of both cities and the East Texas Region

Mayor Bass- Stated that the first thing we want to do as we get started is to consider a resolution regarding the desire for Longview and Tyler to continue to work together again for the betterment of East Texas and this region.

Mayor Dean - Stated that after looking at the resolution, obviously it is a very broad based resolution. I'm trying to open up or give us out to the Open Meetings Act to be able to discuss a broad range of agenda items if we so choose to do so. I just want to press on the fact that what we are looking at right here is how our two communities could work together in the future. We have a number of issues in our community right now such as the workforce development and some of the things we are putting in place concerns our workforce development programs. Mayor Dean asked if there was something in that particular area that might be of interest to Tyler and how we could share ideas? I think in the past it has not always been open communication. It has been somewhat tentative. What we would like to try to do is make sure that our communication is very open. We are all headed in the same direction and I think both communities when it comes to workforce development, where we recruit from, where we try to hire from is all pretty much the same. If there are places and areas that we can share resources we would like to do so. One of the things I have mentioned, Tyler has a great reputation when it comes to the developmental services. We have worked really hard at that. We want to learn more from you, how you approach workforce development and how we can continue to improve that process in Longview. Hopefully this is the beginning of some sharing of ideas, possibly resource of how we can work together on some of these issues.

Motion by Councilman Moran to approve the Resolution; seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Alworth; motion carried 12 - 0 & approved as presented

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A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCILS OF THE CITY OF TYLER AND THE CITY OF LONGVIEW, TEXAS, RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF FORGING PARTNERSHIPS FOR A STRONGER EAST TEXAS; FINDING THAT THE MEETING AT WHICH THE RESOLUTION WAS APPROVED COMPLIED WITH THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT; MAKING OTHER FINDINGS AND PROVISIONS RELATED TO THE SUBJECT; AND DECLARING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Such Resolution is No. 4015 and appears in the Resolution and Ordinance Records of the City of Longview. Such Resolution is No. R-2009-3A and appears in the Resolution Records of the City of Tyler.

B. Discussion of regional issues:

1. Regional promotion and marketing for economic development

2. Transportation and Stimulus Package

Mayor Dean – Stated that the legislative session is starting. Tyler has its day in Austin as well as Longview. If there are any particular issues that you people see that could be different from what we see, let us talk about those. This is a good time to try to get ourselves situated so we can utilize the strength of both our communities when it comes to legislative action because we all know that there are some that we cannot compete against like Houston or Dallas/Fort Worth areas. The main thing about regionalism is how we can work together to be a developing force or bring to the front what our issues are and how we get our legislators in our area involved too.

Mayor Pro Tem Alworth – Stated that I think it is just strange to be back together again. I remember joint sessions four or five years ago. The Mayor of Longview was just a plain old City Council Member at that time. I am glad to see us together again. Would point out to everybody that the City of Longview and the City of Tyler that the two cities actually cooperated very well together. We worked together through the East Texas Council Development. We worked together through the Net RMA which was a transportation issue here. If the cooperation is here then we just need to make it grow a bit more. In the area of economic development and regional promotion, the Mayor of Longview made a comment that our developmental services were good and we need to realize that actually the two groups worked together through the inspection division. So guys, we are working together. We just need to let the public know that we are. Its fun to work with my co-council member from the City Of Longview and I look forward to getting together a little bit more.

Council Member Williams – Stated that it is very important that we work together to try to get our ducks in a row. It is hard for the rural cities like our size to compete with the Metroplex like Dallas and Houston and the big cities. Dollars are short from the federal government on down. So I think it is important that we try to represent our positions. We have to make our voices be heard by getting together to do that. I think we work together really well but the public does not seem to know that. I think our media does not seem to know that but I think we can work together and everybody needs to realize that we do work well. I just would like everybody to

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know that we will continue to work together and represent our constituents down in Austin and also in Washington.

Councilman Sanders – Stated that he was proud to see us working together. We are better together. I received a call about 2 or 3 nights ago from Miss Martinez at the Police Department in Longview trying to get information on how we implemented our NEW Program. Our Director of Neighborhood Services, Brenda Johnson is in charge of our program and we are doing some things together as of now.

Mayor Bass – Asked what were some ideas as far as marketing our region better specifically to our economic development?

Councilman Moran – Stated that Mayor Dean mentioned that the legislature is in session and we are going to be having our Tyler days and Longview days down in Austin. In regards to economic development I think there are a couple of bills, one originated in the House and one also in the Senate that deal with the proposal to allow municipalities and local governmental entities to make additional half cent sales tax above the 2 cent mark where it is right now - a 2 cent cap which would in turn allow those municipalities to reduce their general obligation bond debt much like we have done with our half cent sales tax here in Tyler. It gives cities already capped out an opportunity to go another half cent. One of the keys to economic development for any city is putting itself in a fiscally responsible position so that we then can be freed up to make choices much like our personal lives. When we are indebted to folks it is a little bit harder to make decisions but when we are free of our debt we have a little bit more options. I would encourage and I am sure the City Of Longview is behind that particular amendment to encourage them to speak to their legislators and ensure that there is support for those propositions so that cities around the state can enjoy what Tyler has enjoyed and what the City Of Longview is working toward, that is to be debt free and having some freedom to do economic development. Kevin Eltife in the last legislative session had a senate bill that he was proposing did much of the same thing but as I read this week I think that is a proposal from the House side.

City Manager, Mark McDaniel – Stated that Senator Eltife House Bill is SB402 and it's a quarter cent at a local option for a City or County.

City Manager, Sydney Allen, – Stated that he and his wife moved back here in the 70's and felt this is the best placed to be in East Texas. Over the years we have traveled back and forth between Tyler and Longview. Having these two cities in East Texas complement each other.

Mayor Dean - Stated that both communities have done some great things in terms of marketing our region and community so how can we continue to do that. Kilgore brings in a new business but they live in Longview so we are dipping out of the same till. What is good for one community should be considered good for the entire region. The Senate bill would help us in an economic development by reducing our overall debt.

Councilman Moran – Stated that the Texas Municipal League and the Legislative policy this past year seemed to be a very important option to provide the cities. Longview has great influence in Austin and I would urge you when you go down to talk to your legislators that you share with Tyler. I know you are going to find support from Kevin Eltife who is already proposing such a plan. I would urge you to put pressure on those legislators to ensure that something like that would pass so that other cities could join and be debt free.

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Mayor Dean - Asked Mr. Willard to follow up with their liaison, Mr. Frost at the Texas Municipal League to make sure he is up front on both bills.

Mayor Bass – Stated that each community can elect whether they want to pass the half-cent sales tax or the property tax because it is not automatic.

City Manager, Mark McDaniel – Stated that it reduces your rollback rate from 8% to 5%.

Mayor Pro Tem Alworth – Stated that the Economic Development Corporations are looking for a place to put their new business. They are always looking for a lower tax rate if we have those tax rates they will come. That is a draw for the State of Texas. We are not like the rest of the United States. Their taxes are very high and I have always been an advocate of low tax. I believe in good service and both of our cities provide good services. We are talking about Tyler and Longview but let us not forget Kilgore, Lindale, Troup and all the other small communities. We are in East Texas together and it is a great region and we have good trees and water.

Mayor Bass – Stated that our East Texas region has faired very well. One thing we have to look at in this economic downturn is look at what the communities are doing, what the public dollars are doing in putting back into the community. It is really important that we keep the community projects going. A lot of time that is some of the strongest areas. We are going to have new schools going up in Tyler that will create a lot of money to our local economy. We have some city projects we are looking at. I am sure there is something that Longview is doing to benefit the region also.

Mayor Dean – Stated that Longview ISD has passed a \$286 million dollar bond proposal. There are not enough contractors in the City of Longview to do all of that business so we feel very confident that it is going to have an impact on the entire region. That will hopefully help us to continue to create jobs.

Mayor Bass - Stated that Tyler ISD bonds got a favorable rate and good ratings so we are look forward to all the ground breaking on our new school system during the multi-phased program.

Council Member Williams - Stated that Longview has already broken ground on two of the schools. Longview ISD is planning on building 5 new elementary schools and 3 new junior high schools and a big expansion on Longview High School. This constructing will create a lot of jobs.

Mayor Bass - Stated that we just finished a sixth new school. We are doing ours in phases.

Mayor Dean - Stated that with the President's package and what is going on between the House and the Senate there is tremendous opportunity for communities to take part in the stimulus package. We have already sent through a number of different items that we can possibly look at: transportation, infrastructure and technology. That is another area that we can work together as communities to see where there are some opportunities that we could engage in the stimulus package.

Mayor Pro Tem Alworth - Stated that we need to have projects ready to go.

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Mayor Bass - Stated that we had our MPO meeting and we looked at our final proposal. We had some district projects with TXDOT as well as non-district projects and all of the design work and everything is ready to go so we will put those on the list. We look forward to seeing what all of us get out of that stimulus package, the State of Texas and East Texas. That will go a long way to put the economy up and running. Mayor Bass asked if there were any other comments on economic development and any ideas specific to the Region that we could work on?

Mayor Pro Tem Alworth – Let us emphasize that we have education facilities here because that means we have the work forces available. Workforce is there to train. As we improve our school systems hopefully education quality will improve.

Council Member Willis - Stated I would like to emphasize that in Longview, the Longview Economic Development Corporation has a program that emphasizes education for the young people that go into the high school and give an opportunity to the students to learn a vocation. If they have children, they provide day care. They are able to get college credit while they are in high school to achieve their goals. Mr. John Stroud has also hired a lady that emphasizes the Hispanic population. She targets those young people to bring them into the workforce. The workforce in Longview is thriving. We are being recognized in the nation. There was a write-up about the education that we are doing with young people – around 17% in the nation.

We are embarking to get another business park which is going to increase job opportunities so I would like to encourage Tyler and Longview to work together with the workforce committee.

Mayor Dean - Stated that the workforce development in our state is very competitive. It is primarily due to the way the schools are reimbursed. We would like to ask Tyler to work with us and take a look at the Workforce Development Program that actually takes kids and brings them to different school districts. When I first got on the city council you really couldn't get the schools or universities to talk to one another because they felt you were encroaching on their dollars. We got the school superintendents together first, it is not just Longview there are about ten different school districts. Now they are taking these kids from one school district to another school district to learn different things from cuisine to welding principles to CAD operations.

Our problem in Longview is that we are such a manufacturing base, which is where a lot of our economy comes from. With the retirement of the baby boomers in the next 7-8 years we are going to lose up to 50% of our employees to retirement. We have to be proactive in trying to get these kids in programs. We need to convince the state that this four by four program, four sciences and four math's, does not work for every child in the school district. In our community 20-25% of the kids graduating high school go to college and/or finish and we lose the rest of these kids to Dallas or some other municipality that can provide more jobs.

We have spoken to Senator Eltife and I believe he has Senator Shapiro who is head of the education commission. The legislature needs to get us some relief on this four by four. We have to give the kids the opportunity to make a good living in our communities. I will ask John Stroud to communicate with your economic development team. Collectively we need to press that in Austin during this legislative session.

Mayor Pro Tem Alworth – Stated that we need to make our legislators know that not everybody is college material. We do not have people that can weld, or that are carpenters, or plumbers. The workforce is what grows the state. That is part of economic development.

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Council Member Willis – Stated that we need to work on insurance in the work place for the 16 year olds so they can go into Texas Eastman and work. Right now the insurance for those businesses do not cover 16 year olds which does not give them job related experience. Maybe Tyler and Longview could form a coalition to work on procuring insurance for that age level.

Mayor Bass – Stated that State Comptroller, Susan Comb, is a strong advocate and pushing an initiative on a study that showed 80% of jobs in Texas do not require a college degree. That means we need a lot more money going to those Community Colleges to help fund one and two - year programs and give people an opportunity to support themselves and their families. It is critical that we continue to take advantage of the work force.

Councilman Moran - Stated that it looks like we are freeing up families and communities to make the best decisions for themselves and taking off the strengths and regulations and opening up free markets. All of that is beneficial for economic development and education. I like what Mayor Dean is saying about providing the options so that schools and families can make that decision for themselves as to what is best for their community and their family.

Mayor Dean - Stated that one of the things that State Comptroller, Susan Comb is proposing in the budget is \$25 million to go toward scholarships to go to kids for work force programs. In the grand scheme of things it is not a whole lot of money but it is a start.

Mayor Bass - Asked for comments from the City Managers.

City Manager Willard - Congratulated Mark McDaniel on becoming City Manager of Tyler. Congratulations to Bob on his retirement. We have a great City Manager Association and we work hard with our counter parts in each cities to share ideas and keep as regional minded as we can. We depend on each other. Feel free to call on me and my staff we would be happy to serve the City of Tyler.

City Manager Willard - Introduced the staff in attendance.

City Manager, Mark McDaniel - Echoed what City Manager Willard stated and also stated that both cities have a great dialogue and opportunity to visit.

City Manger, Mark McDaniel - Introduced the staff in attendance.

Mayor Bass – Stated that with the economic situation that we have now we certainly will be talking more than we have in the past. We will be doing what is right for our region, not just each community individually.

Council Member Moran – Stated that he wanted to applaud the citizens of Longview for electing such great visionary leaders.

Council Member Sims - Stated that he hope we will get together sooner. If at anytime you need our Mayor or City Council just call we look forward to working with you any way we can.

Mayor Bass - Stated that she was excited about us getting together today, starting the dialogue and getting to know each other, start building on the foundation of working more together as a

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region. I think this is a tremendous way to do it. I thank Dietrich (Johnson) and Susan (Guthrie) for putting this together.

Mayor Dean – Stated that in closing, I think we discussed today in a sense of cooperation that we want to look into the House Bill and also Senator Eltife's SB 402 and we will get together and determine who is going to follow up. Also, with the stimulus package in particular MRA's and what projects are ready to go. Again, maybe compare where in the process the City of Tyler and Longview are. There may be some transportation projects, net RMA Projects and find out what they are because they have to be ready within 90 days.

The other problem we could look at is the workforce development and how we can take a look together what we are doing and get Tyler to give us the information to help us with the legislation that will be taking place.

In developmental services we are going forward in a new economy and how we can work together to further develop our communities to bring more of a regional sense if you will.

Talk about how we advertise, for example our Chamber could get together with your Chamber, and discuss how we are promoting this area. We can get that assigned from our standpoint and come back as part of the follow-up.

VI. Mayor Bass and Mayor Dean's adjournment of joint meeting

Motion by Mayor Dean to adjourn the meeting at 11:30 am; seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Alworth; motion carried 12 - 0 & meeting adjourned.

**BARBARA BASS, MAYOR OF
THE CITY OF TYLER, TEXAS**

A T T E S T:

CASSANDRA BRAGER, CITY CLERK