



# City of Rowlett Meeting Minutes City Council

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Tuesday, May 27, 2008

5:30 PM

Municipal Building - 4000 Main Street

As authorized by Section 551.071(2) of the Texas Government Code, this meeting may be convened into closed Executive Session for the purpose of seeking confidential legal advice from the City Attorney on any agenda item herein.

The City of Rowlett reserves the right to reconvene, recess or realign the Regular Session or called Executive Session or order of business at any time prior to adjournment.

## 1. CALL TO ORDER

*Mayor Pro Tem Rushing called the meeting to order at 5:37 p.m.*

## 2. INVOCATION

*The invocation was led by Pastor Kurt Horting, Still Water Community Church.*

## 3. POSTING OF COLORS AND THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

*The Posting of the Colors and the Pledge of Allegiance were led by the Rowlett Color Guard.*

## 4. PRESENTATIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS

### 4A Administration of Oaths of Office and personal remarks from City Councilmembers, Places One, Three and Five.

*Mayor Pro Tem Rushing stated "Now we'll swear in each of the candidates that won our most recent election. First, will be Place One; if you would join me here at the dais. They have all already taken an official Oath of Office so that we would have a seated Council in case we needed it this past week."*

*At this time, Mayor Pro Tem Rushing ceremoniously swore in Councilmember Doug Phillips.*

*Councilmember Phillips stated "I'm not real big on speeches but I want to say thank you to the citizens of Rowlett for their support and I look forward to serving you for the next three (3) years as a councilmember."*

*At this time, Mayor Pro Tem Rushing ceremoniously swore in Councilmember Jackson.*

*Councilmember Jackson stated "Before I get going with thanking everybody, I want to make a little introduction here. You probably could tell I come from a pretty good size family; children and grandchildren. I have to my immediate right my wife, Emily; next to Emily*

is my daughter, Hillary, the youngest one; next to Hillary is my oldest daughter, Beneta; next to Beneta is my oldest granddaughter, Victoria; and next to Victoria, I better look at these guys and see if I can tell who they are, and next to these guys is Patrick II and next to Patrick is Mr. Melvin. And we have with us a distinguished guest from the Sierra Leone Embassy, she's here representing Mr. Bockari Stevens, the Sierra Leone Ambassador to the United States; she's Ms. Rasie Karobo and she's the head of the Chancery at our Embassy. We thank you and welcome you to Rowlett.

I'll make this quick. These people have been looking forward to this for a while, myself included. First of all, I want to thank God for affording me this opportunity to be elected to the Council. I want to thank the community also for their support; I have a lot of people that work real hard for this campaign. And my family, again I thank my family; and thank my friends. I have quite a bit of them in the audience. That kind of surprised me for a Tuesday afternoon. Again, I already mentioned the VIP here with us today.

Ladies and gentlemen, the elections are over and God has allowed us to be victorious. Now its time for us to roll up our collective sleeves and go to work for the people that have entrusted their future with us. All the promises that we've made during the campaign, it's time to put them into practice. We need to start by looking at our taxes. For some that are here that are visitors to Rowlett, I'm almost ashamed to let you know that we pay one of the highest taxes in north Texas; for those that are here, you already know that, myself included. I've lived here for twelve (12) years and I struggle to pay it but now that you have allowed me to sit on your Council, I'm going to try to see what we can do by either reducing that or trying to help get other people, some big corporations, some big businesses into the City so we can lift that burden from everybody. We also need to look at the utilities and trusting enough, it seemed like the taxes and the utilities are going hand in hand. High taxes, high utilities. I pay it because I have to but I wish we could all get together and try to do something about it. One thing I think we could do to try to bring the utilities down is to work with the neighboring cities, Garland, Dallas, and Rockwall. Try to work on joint projects and see what we could do to help our people that have put their trust in our hands. The economy in the United States, there's no secret about it. We know by the gas prices; we know by the grocery prices; we know by a lot of other prices. All of them have gone up. I'm a small business owner; I've got contracts with a lot of people and none of them have volunteered to increase my contract with them because of the economy. I'm afraid to ask because they might say 'come on; let's look at your contract all over again'. So I have to put up with it but then we as a Council are going to try to work, myself and my colleagues, try to do our best to help the people in the community. In another three (3) or four (4) years we've got two (2) major projects that's going to be on the tick in Rowlett. We'll have the George Bush Extension and we'll also have the DART Light Rail. They both will be coming into town. So we're going to try to get our house in order; we're going to try to improve our infrastructure. You can tell, some of you that drove down here today, how the traffic...all the construction is going on in the highways. We're going to try to get all of that straightened out so hopefully when these projects come through, we will be in a position to reap the full benefits of all of it.

Rowlett has twenty-five percent (25%) of its land left available for development; so there's no room for error. A lot of you here are not from here but the good people in television land would like to know this. So there's no room for error. So I'm sure of myself and my colleagues, they are very good people, are going to try to do our best to take care of business in such a way that the land that we have left we'll use to the best of our ability.

Finally, again I want to thank all of my brothers, my sisters, and my friends that helped me out in the election. I'm not trying to drum this up but I found out during my campaign that I was I think the first black to run for office in Rowlett. I understand the first black to hold an office. You probably hear me speak with a little funny accent here; somebody told me 'you're fine; you have an accent from East Texas'. No, I'm not. I was actually born and raised in Sierra Leone in West Africa. I've been here some thirty some years; went to

school; finished high school here and college, family, children, house, friends, and a business. So I want to thank you for the trust that you've put in myself and all these wonderful people here; and hope by God's grace we'll be able to make you guys proud. God bless."

Mayor Pro Tem Rushing stated "And last, but of course not least. We have Place Five which is Chris Kilgore. We had to wait just a minute; Chris just landed at Love Field at 4:00 p.m. this afternoon so this is a fast trip over here.

At this time, Mayor Pro Tem Rushing ceremoniously swore in Councilmember Chris Kilgore.

Councilmember Kilgore stated "The only people in this room wondering if I'm going to have any comments are the ones that don't know me. I had the opportunity during the election cycle to speak with the radio-control group and there were a number of us there and Patrick and Doug were sitting up front and they went first because Ken, the President, called them over because they were the closest. Ceaser Hancock and I were sitting a little bit further to the back and Ken looked over and said whichever one of you wants to go; I immediately started to offer to let Ceaser go first and I fully anticipated he'd say 'oh no, you go first' or something like that; you know the usual, you go first, but much to my surprise Ceaser jumped right up and made the comment, he said 'I've seen this guy talk and I'll be here all night waiting my turn, so I'm going'. I'd like to recognize a few people that are here tonight. Obviously, there are a whole lot of folks behind any successful candidate...all of the candidates. Ann and Hays Hettinger, a very grand couple from Rockwall who helped on the polling day; I have four (4) of my seven (7) grandchildren here. Braden, the oldest of this particular group, you saw help swear me in; and the twins better known as the 'Twin Paths of Destruction', are here on a special mission. There's a rumor that's been circulated that some folks think we need a new City Hall; if this place is still standing after they leave tonight, I guarantee it's good for another twenty (20) years, so we'll see. My son, Shawn and his wife Leslie, and the little one there, Ethan. One of the former Councilmembers told me from a long time ago that he really enjoyed being on the Council. Being on the Council was a very enjoyable and enriching experience; what he hated was running for Council. Having run for it twice, I can tell you I can absolutely affirm that last sentiment about running for Council. And I'll get back with you in a year on the being on Council part. It does, like I said before, it takes a lot of folks to make this happen. First and foremost, I'd like to thank the people that voted for me, for their trust and their confidence in casting their votes. Other folks...some of the folks that stood behind me, there are too many to name but just a couple I want to call out. One of course is my lovely wife, Sally, who's my biggest supporter and fan; she worked hard in the campaign, as well. I don't think that she's fully recovered from hand addressing all of the envelopes and everything else that goes with it; also she was my fashion police. On a couple of occasions I heard 'you're not going out' in that special voice that I know so well; 'you're not going out dressed like that, are you?' And of course, I understood the answer; I knew what I had to say. The other woman in my life during the campaign was Laurieanne Dygowski. I don't believe that she's here tonight but the number of things that she did was just unbelievable. It was website design; card design; sign design; getting flyers printed; getting flyers distributed; getting people to walk neighborhoods; she was just unbelievable. She was also the master of lists. I got email lists all the time. The email I didn't get from her though that I know she really wanted to send to me was following a list of ten (10) things that I needed to do that week was that 'Chris, I didn't mean for you to just select any two (2) of the ten (10)'. Another person that's been very helpful over the years is Jeffrey Sheldon. Jeff and I have been friends for five (5) years. Jeff is a very idea rich, a wonderful sounding board; I've gotten a lot of ideas; tested a lot of ideas with Jeff and of course, I've frustrated Jeff, as well. Every once in a while he's had to say 'you're not really going to say that, are you?' The list of people that have been instrumental in this goes on and on; again, too many names; just suffice to say 'thank you'.

I'm also mindful that the election...or my election was to Place 5 on the Council. Place 5, that chair, has been occupied for the last nine (9) years by a single individual, Al Alberts. I

see he's actually here tonight. A lot has happened over the time that Al was on Council; a lot of great things in Rowlett and the Councils over the years in which Al was a member of the Council have done a lot of great things and instituted and put into place a lot of great programs. And the more I go back and the more I look at what they did, the more I am impressed. Now there's a very different style between myself and Al and Al and I have very different...or have different opinions on exactly how we get to where we want to go but there's absolutely no question that Al and I agree and have always agreed on where Rowlett needs to be. And I think that's probably true of most of the Council; what we want for Rowlett. But I am very humbled to take over that seat; I think it's a very special privilege and I hope to prove myself worthy of it. Al has done a great job.

I'm very excited to be on this Council. This is a very diverse Council; it's very rich in talents, a lot of different talents, and very rich in experience. I think that many folks are going to be surprised. I think the Councilmembers on this Council are going to be a lot more independent than some people think that they might be; however, it's going to be a very professional Council. It's going to be a Council of deliberation; it's going to be a Council of consensus building and critical review of the issues. This back and forth is going to result in good decisions. Now it's tough times and we're not going to be able to do everything we want to do or do it as fast as we want to do it and that's just the reality of the situation. But the decisions that you get from this Council, I fully believe will be the best that they can be. I'm very excited about the opportunity to serve on this particular Council and am pleased to be a part of it and looking forward to it. Thank you all very much. God bless America.

Mayor Pro Tem Rushing stated "And that concludes our presentation of the new Councilmembers. We're all now seated at the dais and this is your new Council. And I would accept a motion."

**A motion was made by Councilmember Jackson, seconded by Councilmember Kilgore, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Ayes:** 6 - Mayor Pro Tem Rushing, Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Gottel, Councilmember Phillips, Councilmember Jackson, Councilmember Kilgore, and Councilmember Maggiotto

**Excused:** 1 - Mayor Harper

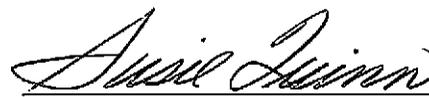
## 5. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro Tem Rushing adjourned the meeting at 6:02 p.m.

## RECEPTION WILL FOLLOW ADJOURNMENT

  
Cindy Rushing, Mayor Pro Tem

Date Approved: June 17, 2008

  
Susie Quinn, City Secretary