

# TEXAS MUNICIPAL CLERKS CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

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## TMCCP Legislative Update Seminar

Featuring Moderator Alan Bojorquez, Principal, Bojorquez Law Firm, PC, & A Panel of Expert Consultants

Embassy Suites Conference Center, San Marcos, Texas • August 17-18, 2017

### ABOUT THE SPEAKERS



**Alan Bojorquez** • *Principal, Attorney at Law, Bojorquez Law Firm, PC*

*Moderator*

Alan has Merit Certification in Municipal Law from the Texas City Attorneys Association. His firm has a state-wide practice with 13 lawyers officing in 5 regions. Alan previously served as a staff attorney for the Texas Municipal League. He graduated from Texas Tech University with his Bachelor of Arts in English, Master of Public Administration, and Doctor of Jurisprudence. Alan is on the Board of Directors of the Texas City Attorneys Association, and is Texas Chairperson for the International Municipal Lawyers Association. He is on the Board of Directors of Scenic Texas, and founded the Texas Center for Municipal Ethics (a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation). Alan was the Chairperson for the 2015 and 2016 University of Texas School of Law's annual Land Use Planning Conference. He authors TMCA's *Texas Municipal Law & Procedure Manual* (6th ed).



**Christina Worrell Adkins** • *Attorney, Elections Division, Office of the Texas Secretary of State*

*Topic: "Elections"*

Christina Worrell Adkins is an election law attorney in the Elections Division of the Texas Secretary of State. In her position with the Texas Secretary of State, Ms. Adkins is one of the state's appointed voting systems examiners and works extensively with election technology issues including developing standards and training election officials. She has practiced in both civil and criminal law and has previously worked for the Texas Workforce Commission and as the assistant to the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts. Ms. Adkins graduated from the University of Texas at Austin with a degree in English and Mexican-American Studies. She received her juris doctorate from Southern Methodist University in 2008.



**Brandon Aghamalian** • *President, Focused Advocacy*

*Topic: "Insights & Perspectives"*

Brandon Aghamalian is an expert on local government, transportation, economic development, property tax, and cultural arts issues. As president of Focused Advocacy his emphasis is representing local governments before the Texas Legislature.

Prior to becoming a partner at Focused Advocacy, Aghamalian founded and managed a local government advocacy practice group, representing dozens of municipalities before the state. Additionally, he worked on behalf of the Texas film and television industries to create and fund a \$60 million incentive program to keep and expand production activities in Texas. Earlier in his career, Aghamalian served as the chief of staff for several powerful members of the legislature and later was named the Director of Governmental Affairs for the City of Fort Worth—the seventeenth largest city in America.

His accomplishments in the areas of tax policy and economic development extend back to his work inside the Legislature where he played instrumental roles in the crafting and passage of the Texas Economic Development Act, along with substantial redesigns of Texas' workers compensation insurance system and Texas Workforce Commission job training programs.

Aghamalian's successful management of numerous client projects, many of which led to millions of dollars in tax incentives, the expansion of facilities and the creation of new jobs, has led him to become a trusted and sought after adviser to business leaders across the state.

Aghamalian earned his law and master's degrees from the University of Texas at Austin, and his bachelor's degree in accounting from Texas State University in San Marcos, Texas, where he also was a NCAA scholarship track athlete and student body vice president.



**Bradford E. Bullock** • *Attorney, Partner, Russell Rodriguez Hyde Bullock, LLP*

*Topic: "Sex Offender Restrictions"*

Bradford E. Bullock practices trial and appellate law, defending local governments and their officials in complex state and federal litigation claims, including those brought under the First Amendment, RLUIPA, the Fair Housing Act, Section 1983, the Voting Rights Act, state and federal takings claims, and the Texas Tort Claims Act, among others. He graduated from St. Mary's School of Law (1995), and received a B.A. from St. Mary's in International Relations, Magna Cum Laude (1992).

As part of his appellate practice, Mr. Bullock has argued and/or briefed high-profile cases on behalf of cities, including *Merced v. City of Euless*, *NAACP et al. v. City of Kyle*, and *Stop the Ordinances Please v. City of New Braunfels III* (The "Can Ban"), among others. He has also served as an assistant city attorney for the cities of San Antonio, Euless and Boerne, where he drafted ordinances regulating sexually oriented business, signs, zoning and subdivisions, and "dark skies," among others. Bradford is a regular lecturer and author on a wide range of matters

ranging from the regulation of sexually oriented businesses and the First Amendment to the Fair Housing Act, sex offender residency restrictions, and governmental immunity. He is a member of the Texas City Attorneys Association and the International Municipal Lawyers Association.

Bradford is admitted to practice in all courts in the State of Texas, the United States District Courts for the Northern, Western and Southern Districts of Texas, the Fifth Circuit and the United States Supreme Court.



**Snapper Carr** • *General Counsel, Focused Advocacy*

*Topic: "Insights & Perspectives"*

Snapper Carr is widely recognized among legislators and industry representatives as an expert on municipal, telecommunications and utilities issues. As the company's general counsel, Carr represents the needs of local governments before the Texas Legislature and helps private-sector clients understand and navigate local government processes.

Before becoming a partner at Focused Advocacy, Carr served as general counsel and legislative consultant for HillCo Partners, a legislative and public affairs consulting firm, from 2006 through 2009. During his time at HillCo, Carr assisted in the drafting and passage of more than 100 statutory changes, including historic legislation regarding water regulations and supply. Carr was responsible for managing and developing an extensive public and private sector client base that relied on his extensive knowledge and capabilities to effectuate significant public policy changes.

From 1998 – 2006, Carr held the position of Legislative Counsel and Associate for the Texas Municipal League (TML), representing municipal interests before state and federal legislative, administrative and judicial bodies. From 1994 and 1998, he was the Chief Committee Clerk for two Texas House standing committees – the Committee on State Affairs and the Committee on Land and Resource Management. He also has provided media and issue consulting services for numerous political and public relations campaigns.

Carr has served on numerous civic, educational and political boards, including the Austin Electric Utility Commission, which oversees one of the states largest municipally owned electric utilities, Austin Energy. Carr currently serves as an appointed member of the advisory council for the Annette Strauss Institute for Civic Participation and the University of Texas Exes Association's Public Affairs Committee.

Carr has been the recipient of many professional and academic awards, including the prestigious James W. McGrew Research Award from the American Society for Public Administration and the Judge Susan Covington Service Award for Pro Bono Legal Work. He also was recognized as a finalist for the American Bar Association's National Appellate Advocacy Competition.

Carr earned his J.D and bachelor's degree in communications from The University of Texas at Austin.



**Georgia Crump** • *Attorney and Chair, Energy & Utility Practice Group, Lloyd Gosselink*

*Topic: "Utilities"*

Georgia, a true renaissance woman, has lived in Michigan, London, California, New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and Australia. She rode donkeys in the mountains of Kashmir, collects spoons and rocks from her travels, plays piano, gardens, cooks, and speaks some French, Spanish, and German.

Georgia is an avid reader from McPhee to Gould and Faulkner to Furst. She has an enviable hold on a life well-lived, with plenty more adventures—Alaska and the Galapagos, to name two—on her radar. Every outstanding law firm must have a glockenspiel virtuoso, and Georgia is ours.

Georgia chairs the firm's Energy and Utility Practice group and focuses on utility- and telecommunications-related issues, and municipal law. She represents both private and municipal clients and has been actively involved in municipal law and utility administrative law throughout her legal career.

Her substantial experience includes representing individual and coalitions of municipalities at the Railroad Commission of Texas and the Public Utility Commission, representing municipalities and privately-owned water and wastewater utilities at the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, advising municipalities in the development and leasing of dark fiber facilities, and assisting municipalities in gas and electric franchise negotiations and renewals.



**Leela Fireside** • *Assistant City Attorney, City of Austin Law Department*

*Topic: “Budgets & Taxes”*

Ms. Fireside is an Assistant City Attorney in the City of Austin Law Department. Her areas of practice include bond and other public finance matters, contracts, budget, tax-related matters, fees, public-private partnership agreements, and ordinance review.

Ms. Fireside has a B.A. in Philosophy from Ithaca College in Ithaca NY (1984). She received her J.D. from the University of Texas at Austin (1988).

Ms. Fireside was an attorney with the Office of Public Interest Counsel at the Texas Water Commission (predecessor agency to the TCEQ) and an Assistant Attorney General in the Texas Attorney General’s Office.



**Brie Franco** • *Intergovernmental Relations Officer, City of Austin*

*Topic: “Insights & Perspectives”*

Brie has more than 15 years of experience in intergovernmental relations and legislative affairs at the federal, state, and municipal levels.

In her previous role, Brie oversaw El Paso’s legislative affairs agenda for the 84<sup>th</sup> Texas legislative session. She formerly worked as a lawyer in private practice in both Austin and El Paso.

For five years she was vice president and general counsel for Velocity Credit Union. In addition, Brie served as general counsel to State Senator Eliot Shapleigh (D-El Paso) for five years.

She earned a Bachelor of Arts in International Relations from Stanford University and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Texas at Austin School of Law.



**Frank Garza** • *Attorney, Shareholder, Davidson Troilo Ream & Garza, PC*

*Topic: “Open Government”*

Frank J. Garza joined the firm in 2002, is a member of the firm’s Management Committee, and maintains a practice in public law and employment law. He currently serves as city attorney for the cities of Balcones Heights, Bulverde, Helotes, Hondo, Karnes City, Kyle, Olmos Park, Rockwall, and Terrell Hills. He currently provides legal guidance to the cities of Alamo Heights, Leon Valley, Pecos, Richmond, Sabinal, San Antonio, San Marcos and Windcrest. Mr. Garza serves as general counsel to various other governmental entities including Brooke Development Authority, Port Authority of San Antonio, City of San Antonio Civil Service Commission, City of San Antonio Police and Fire Civil Service Commission, Alamo Area Metropolitan Policy Organization, VIA Transit Authority, Cibolo Canyon Special Improvement District, Westside 211 Special Improvement District, and Westside Development Corporation.

In April of 1997, Mr. Garza was named City Attorney to the City of San Antonio. As City Attorney, he managed the City’s Legal Department, which included 125 employees, 54 being attorneys. He was directly responsible for advising the city manager, city council, staff members and other city officials concerning the legal duties relevant to their office.

As an assistant city attorney for the City of Dallas, Mr. Garza provided legal representation to all city departments in the employee grievance and disciplinary process, as well as provided legal advice to all city departments in responding to claims and lawsuits involving labor and employment matters. During his tenure with the City of Dallas, Mr. Garza developed the sexual harassment policy, drug testing policy and related policies. He was lead counsel in over ten employment and civil rights jury trials. Also during this time, he argued on six occasions to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals and twice to the State Court of Appeals, writing two Briefs in Opposition for Writ of Certiorari to the United States Supreme Court.

He served as president of the Board of Directors of the Texas City Attorney’s Association in 2013 and is a member of the International Municipal Lawyers Association. He is on the Board of Directors for University Hospital Foundation and the Consejo Education Foundation. Mr. Garza has taught more than thirty Continuing Legal Education Courses in the areas of municipal law, ethics, and employment law. Since 2003 Mr. Garza was appointed as an adjunct professor in the Masters of Public Administration program at St. Mary’s University and teaches classes entitled “Ethics and Public Officials” and “Basics of Municipal Law.”



**Catarina Gonzales** • *Senior Associate, Denton Navarro Rocha Bernal & Zech, P.C.*

*Topic: "General Administration"*

Ms. Gonzales a Senior Associate and leads the Government and Regulatory Affairs practice at Denton, Navarro, Rocha, Bernal & Zech, P.C. She possesses an extensive knowledge of public and environmental law, including government and legislative relations, air and water quality issues, energy issues, flood control issues, land use, and state and federal rulemaking. Ms. Gonzales previously served as the committee clerk and counsel to the Texas House Committee on Local Government Ways and Means and represented the Office of the Harris County Judge before the Texas Legislature for three legislative sessions. She now serves local governments performing city attorney services and lobbying on their behalf before the Texas Legislature. Ms. Gonzales is a 2011 recipient of the Houston Business Journal's "40 Under 40" award and was a League of Women Voter's "Rising Star" award honoree.

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**Ryan Henry** • *Attorney, Law Offices of Ryan Henry, PLLC*

*Topic: "Public Safety"*

Ryan Henry graduated with honors from New Mexico State University with dual bachelor's degrees in Criminal Justice and Psychology in 1995. He attended law school at Texas Tech School of Law and graduated in May of 1998.

While attending law school, Ryan began clerking for the Lubbock City Attorney's Office. As a result, he began defending governmental entities even before he graduated from law school, and so began his career supporting local governments. Upon graduation, Ryan began working in Brownsville, Texas, with the same focus. In June of 2002, Ryan moved to San Antonio and joined a local law firm doing the same thing. In 2012 Ryan started the Law Offices of Ryan Henry, PLLC. In June 2016 Ryan was listed as one of the best lawyers in municipal law by S.A. *Scene Magazine* in the San Antonio area.

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**Margaret Lloyd** • *Vice President, Scenic Texas Board of Directors*

*Panel: "Signs & Trees"*

Margaret Lloyd, Esq., Scenic Texas Board Vice President and Scenic America Board Vice Chair, is a retired Texas attorney. From 2002-2009, Ms. Lloyd served as executive vice president and public policy director for Scenic Texas. She helps lead the scenic organizations in their mission to protect and preserve our visual environment. Over the past 15 years, she has worked with federal, state, and local public officials, sign regulators, and land use attorneys with issues relating to the implementation and enforcement of the federal and state Highway Beautification Acts. Ms. Lloyd also served as an appointed member of the Texas Department of Transportation's Outdoor Advertising Rulemaking Advisory Committee.

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**Natasha Martin** • *Associate Attorney, Graves Dougherty Hearon & Moody*

*Topic: "Environment & Transport"*

Natasha's practice focuses on Administrative and Regulatory litigation with an emphasis in environmental and utility law. She has represented clients in contested cases and complaint proceedings before the Texas Commission of Environmental Quality (TCEQ), the Public Utility Commission of Texas, the Texas Alcoholic and Beverage Commission and the State Office of Administrative Hearings. Natasha has experience counseling clients on regulatory permitting for electric, water and wastewater Certificates of Convenience and Necessity (CCNs), and water rights permits.

Prior to law school, Natasha worked as a technical permit reviewer for the TCEQ for nearly four years. In this position, she reviewed mechanical and agricultural air permit applications in accordance with state and federal laws. While at TCEQ, Natasha worked on a variety of matters including contested case permits, New Source Review (NSR) and Prevention of Significant Deterioration permits, and enforcement proceedings.



**Kim Mickelson** • *President, Texas Chapter, American Planning Association*

*Topic: “Land Use & Development”*

Ms. Mickelson is an attorney and planner whose practice is concentrated in the representation of governmental and non-profit corporations. She specializes in and represents cities across Texas and in Illinois on land use matters, including zoning and platting, economic development, airport law, special districts, and cemetery law. She is licensed in both Texas and Illinois, and writes and speaks frequently on planning and land use law issues nationally. She is a visiting associate professor of practice in the Master’s Program, Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning Department in the College of Architecture at Texas A&M University.

Ms. Mickelson is an honors graduate of the Plan II program at The University of Texas, and The University of Texas School of Law and the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs. She attended Schiller International University in Heidelberg, Germany, studied municipal and historic preservation at in Krakow, Poland, during graduate school, and was a post-graduate research fellow at the University of Belgrade. She is a member of the Texas Bar Association and serves on the Government Law Section Council, the Texas City Attorneys Association, the Houston Bar Association, the American Planning Association (APA), and the American Institute of Certified Planners. She serves on the University of Texas Libraries Council, and is a former board member of Preservation Texas and Preservation Chicago. She is president elect of the Texas Chapter of the American Planning Association, and the editor of *A Guide to Urban Planning in Texas Communities*.

Association and serves on the Government Law Section Council, the Texas City Attorneys Association, the Houston Bar Association, the American Planning Association (APA), and the American Institute of Certified Planners. She serves on the University of Texas Libraries Council, and is a former board member of Preservation Texas and Preservation Chicago. She is president elect of the Texas Chapter of the American Planning Association, and the editor of *A Guide to Urban Planning in Texas Communities*.



**Laura Mueller** • *Associate, Bojorquez Law Firm, PC*

*Panel: “Signs & Trees”*

Laura worked at the Texas Municipal League for the past nine years, serving the last six as assistant general counsel. She received her Doctor of Jurisprudence from the University of Texas School of Law. She authored amicus curiae briefs on the following subjects: Billboard Regulation, Reserved Powers Doctrine, Civil Service, Elections, Unions, Takings, Open Meetings, Public Official Liability, Land Use, and Annexation. While with TML, Laura participated in over 100 speaking engagements.



**Ross Ramsey** • *Executive Editor & Co-Founder, The Texas Tribune*

*Topic: “Insights & Perspectives”*

Ross Ramsey is executive editor and co-founder of *The Texas Tribune*, where he writes regular columns on politics, government and public policy. Before joining the *Tribune*, Ross was editor and co-owner of *Texas Weekly*. He did a 28-month stint in government as associate deputy comptroller for policy and director of communications with the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts. Before that, he reported for the Houston Chronicle from its Austin bureau and for the *Dallas Times Herald*, first on the business desk in Dallas and later as its Austin bureau chief, and worked as a Dallas-based freelance business writer, writing for regional and national magazines and newspapers. Ross got his start in journalism in broadcasting, covering news for radio stations in Denton and Dallas.



**Gunnar Seaquist** • *Attorney, Bickerstaff Heath Delgado Acosta LLP*

*Topic: “Personnel & HR”*

Gunnar focuses his practice on litigation and counseling on behalf of both public and private entities. Before joining Bickerstaff, he practiced for over five years in the General Litigation and Tax divisions of the Texas Office of the Attorney General. He has extensive experience in litigation, having tried cases to both judges and juries. Gunnar represents clients in matters involving commercial disputes, personal injury, land use, real estate, construction defects, employment practices, eminent domain, voting rights, statutory and constitutional rights, and regulatory compliance. Gunnar also advises private clients on compliance with state and federal laws and administrative regulations, and counsels governmental entities on issues of open government, governmental procedure, and contracting.



**Ryan Turner** • *General Counsel & Director of Education, Texas Municipal Courts Education Center*

*Topic: "Municipal Court"*

Ryan Kellus Turner is General Counsel and Director of Education for the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center. Prior to joining the Center in 1999, he served as Briefing Attorney for Judge Sharon Keller at the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals. Ryan obtained his juris doctorate from Southern Methodist University School of Law. He received his Bachelor's Degree in Psychology with highest honors from St. Edward's University, Austin, Texas, where he now teaches as an adjunct faculty member in the School of Behavioral and Social Sciences. Mr. Turner is currently Deputy City Attorney for the City of Dripping Springs and has served as a Special Assistant County Attorney for Kendall County. He is the co-author of the books *Lone Star Justice: A Comprehensive Overview of the Texas Criminal Justice System* and *The Municipal Judges Book*.

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**Robert Wood** • *City Administrator, City of West Lake Hills*

*Panel: "Signs & Trees"*

Robert is City Administrator of the City of West Lake Hills, Texas, a position he has held since 2007. He has also served as City Manager of the City of Flatonia, Texas. He is a two-time graduate of the University of Texas with a B.A. in Economics and a Masters of Public Affairs from the LBJ School, and is a member of the Texas City Management Association and the International City/County Management Association.