



18 March 2009

To citizens of Austin, Texas:

On Tuesday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009, all the registered political candidates for the 2009 City of Austin Election were simultaneously emailed an invitation to participate in our Candidate Forum at Austin City Hall on March the 25<sup>th</sup>. This invitation required a confirmation (RSVP) by or before Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2009, along with “**a brief bio in bullet form with your concerns or remedies to keep Austin business sustainable and green (limit to 250 words total).**”

All twelve (12) Mayoral and City Council candidates did response to our invitation and agreed to be at the TGN Candidate Forum for their scheduled time by the deadline of Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2009; however, only a handful of candidates provided their brief Bio and Concerns, as it was requested in our written invitation.

We understood that some of the parties had extenuating circumstances that prevented their submitting this brief summary as it was requested by the original deadline, so we extended the deadline for submission from March 13<sup>th</sup> to March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009. All of the candidates were provided a second opportunity to provide this concise synopsis.

Their responses to our request for BIOs and ‘green’ concerns are below, in the order they were received, just as they were submitted to us. The word count, date, and time of each response received is also noted in parenthesis at the end of each candidate’s statement.

Please review each BIO response and we will see you at Austin City Hall on March the 25<sup>th</sup>, along with the candidates to hear their responses to our questions!

## **Mike Martinez**

- In my first term, I prioritized advancing Austin’s status as a national leader in environmental protection, green technology, and sustainability. Some of my accomplishments include:
  - Passing a plan to create a 30 megawatt solar plant: The largest planned solar plant in the country.
  - Sponsoring an ordinance to create the Sustainable Food Policy Board: Making locally-grown foods available at affordable prices reduces energy consumption and has a positive impact on our health and local economy.
  - Creating a task force for energy efficient upgrades: Reducing our energy consumption will help sustain growth while benefiting the environment.
  - Co-sponsoring a resolution to create sustainability practices for public events
  - Reducing plastic bags entering landfills
  - Distributing canvas bags to reduce plastic bag use: Has reduced plastic bags 50% in the first year alone.

- I plan to continue my work on environmental sustainability in my next term, and will start with several goals:
  - Improving and expanding our bus routes, and supporting a potential voter -approved expansion of rail.
  - Exploring new options to turn waste into fuel.
  - Exploring programs to increase rainwater collection.
  - Reducing our waste stream rather than expanding landfills.

With your support, I'll dedicate my next term to making the best choices for Austin's future. We still have a lot of work to do, but with creative ideas and the right leadership, we can reach our goals.

( 237 words - received 03/13 @ 1:36PM )

+++++

## **Lee Leffingwell**

I am a native Austinite, and grew up in the Bouldin neighborhood. I attended Austin public schools and graduated from U.T. in 1962.

After college I joined the Navy and became an aviator, spending five years on active duty, including service in Vietnam. After active duty, I served for 15 years in the Navy Reserve, retiring as a Commander.

In 1967, I became a pilot for Delta Air Lines, where I flew jets for 32 years. After retirement, I became a full-time community volunteer in Austin to work on environmental protection issues.

I was appointed to the Environmental Board by the City Council in 2000, and served there for five years before running for the Council myself in 2005. I won the Place 1 seat with 62% of the vote, and was re-elected in 2008 with 68%.

On Council, I've worked to make progress on big issues like transportation, public safety, and social services, but environmental protection has continued to be the driving force behind my service.

Major accomplishments include implementing a new citywide water conservation plan; implementing a new policy to improve water quality and protect open space in the Barton Springs Zone; and passing the Austin Climate Protection Plan.

If elected mayor, environmental protection will continue to be one of my highest priorities. This includes promoting environmental responsibility in mainstream business practices.

I'm proud to be endorsed by the Sierra Club and the Texas Environmental Democrats, and many of our community's leading environmentalists. Visit [AustinLeadership.com](http://AustinLeadership.com) for more information.

(250 words - received 03/13 @ 3:54PM)

+++++

## **Chris Riley**

- Born and raised in Austin; degrees from Harvard University and UT School of Law
- Planning Commission, 2001-2007; Downtown Commission, 1999-2007
- Austin CarShare: Co-Founder and Board of Directors, 2006-2008

I see the current downturn as an opportunity to put Austinites to work on environmentally responsible initiatives in at least four areas.

**Energy efficiency:** We need to help train workers, inform consumers about the savings to be gained from efficiency improvements, and offer loans and credits on utility bills for additional motivation.

**Technology:** We need to work with the Austin Technology Incubator and other partners to strengthen our position as a national center for clean energy. We can use our planned 30 MW solar plant site for photovoltaic research; step up our efforts to land a battery research consortium; offer a summertime tech boot camp for high school students; and gear up for the Pecan Street project, an effort that could transform the energy grid here and elsewhere.

**Food and waste:** We need to support ongoing efforts to promote urban farms and community gardens, so that the foundation of our food supply will be local sunshine rather than imported fossil fuels. We also need to build a regional Materials Recovery Facility to process our recyclables here in Austin, and foster spin-off technologies aimed at helping us move toward Zero Waste.

**Transportation:** We need to reduce our dependence on cars by developing a truly multi-modal transportation system, improving conditions for bicycles and pedestrians, and promoting compact, mixed-use development.

( 250 words - received 03/13 @ 11:45PM )

+++++

## **Brewster McCracken**

(a link to his Biography on his website was the response to our request –

<http://www.brewstermccracken.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/03/mccracken-biography.pdf> )

Mayor Pro Tem Brewster McCracken is serving his second term on the Austin City Council. While in office, he has focused on promoting emerging technologies—particularly film, wireless, clean energy, biotech and digital media, and on establishing mixed-use density zones along Austin’s major corridors.

He led the successful effort to make Austin a founding partner with the University of Texas in the Austin Wireless Initiative and the UT Bioscience Business Accelerator. He was also instrumental in the launching of the Pecan Street Project, which made Austin Energy the first public utility in the world to open its grid for emerging clean energy companies to test their technologies.

His initiatives in film and digital media include sponsoring the successful bond election to upgrade Austin Studios into the nation's premier digital filmmaking studio for independent filmmakers.

Brewster chairs the Council's Emerging Technologies Committee and the Land Use-Transportation Committee. He is the lead author of Austin's Commercial Design Standards and Mixed Use Ordinance, which is the region's first comprehensive enactment of Envision Central Texas land use policies. He was named a national nominee for the American Planning Association's Distinguished Leadership Award for an Elected Official for his efforts in this area.

A native of Corpus Christi, Brewster graduated from Ray High School then paid his way through Princeton on an Army scholarship where he graduated with honors. He earned a Masters in Public Affairs from the LBJ School and a law degree from the University of Texas School of Law. He holds a

( first 250 words only - received 03/14 @ 3:45PM )

+++++

## **David Buttross**

We look forward to seeing you there  
**Thank You**

( 9 words - received 03/15 @ 2:28PM )

+++++

## **Sam Osemene**

**Name:** Sam Osemene.

**Office sought:** Place 6.

**Bio:** I've lived in Austin for almost twenty years. I studied Political Science at the University of Texas. I served in the United States Navy on USS Jarrett FFG-33, Missile Cruiser in Long Beach California. I teach government at Austin Community College. I'm a candidate for Place 6 because we can do better than what we have now. My opponent supported increasing the BFI dumpsite to 70ft, opening up our environmental zones to developers, building the Water Treatment Plant #4 , building toll roads on the Edward Aquifer Zone which will open the area to developers and has consistently and persistently voted and sided with Big Business against the interest of the people. Her environmental record is abysmal and deplorable. These are some of the reasons why I'm in this race. I believe in conservation and restoration of our natural resources. This election is very important. You don't have to hold your nose to vote for Council Member Cole when you can breathe a fresh air when you vote for Osemene Sam. When elected to the Council , I will bring the common sense approach of Laura Morrison, the energy of Randi Shade, the humility of Mike Martinez and the steadiness and maturity of Lee Leffingwell to the City Hall. Vote wisely. Vote for Osemene Sam.

( 223 words - received 03/15 @ 3:39PM )

+++++

## **Perla Cavazos**

Here's Perla's vision for a greener Austin and a short bio:

As a fundamental part of a long-range, comprehensive plan for our City, we need to:

- fully realize initiatives laid forward in Austin Climate Protection Plan;
- address our transportation needs through a multi-modal system;
- continue to operate as a first-rate utility company;
- aggressively implement home weatherization;
- install and use solar panels on City of Austin buildings wherever possible;
- secure local, sustainable food sources throughout Austin and work with our regional partners to maintain farm lands;
- diversify our energy sources;
- invest in water conservation and reuse initiatives;
- and, of course appropriately allocate funding for these initiatives.

Here's Perla's bio:

- Originally from San Benito, Texas
- Raised by Grandparents in small, family business
- An 11-year Austin resident
- B.A. in Cultural Anthropology, Stanford University
- Masters in Public Affairs, LBJ School of Public Affairs
- Served as an affordable housing and economic development analyst and advocate with the Texas Association of Community Development Corporations
- Served on the Austin Planning Commission and Austin Commission for Women
- Served as a Senior Policy Analyst in the Texas State Senate
- Served as President of the Austin Women's Political Caucus
- Active participant in Austin's arts community
- Recognized by Austin Under 40 and Capital Area Democratic Women for leadership and service in the community

( 232 words - received 03/16 @ 12:21PM )

+++++

## **Sheryl Cole**

First elected in 2006, Sheryl Cole is the first African American woman elected to the Austin City Council.

A resident of Austin for over 25 years, Sheryl earned her B.A. in accounting from the University of Texas and became a Certified Public Accountant in 1986, working for two years with the Big Five accounting firm Ernst & Young. In 1989, Sheryl returned to the University of Texas for law school, earning her J.D. in 1991 and joining the law firm Wright & Greenhill. In 1995, Sheryl became staff counsel at the Texas Municipal League, where she served until 2001.

Married to Austin attorney Kevin Cole, Sheryl is the mother of three boys - Marcus, Nelson and Femi. The Coles live in the Wilshire Woods neighborhood, and are members of the Cherrywood Neighborhood Association. The family belongs to David Chapel.

Sheryl is a past president of the Lee Elementary School PTA, a former Board member of Leadership

Austin, the Austin Area Urban League, and Communities in Schools. Sheryl also served as Tri-Chair of the 2004 AISD Citizen Bond Committee, and was appointed by former mayor Kirk Watson to serve on the 1998 City of Austin Citizen Bond Committee.

As council member, I would like to get feedback on how Austin Energy and the City can engage the large issues and pursue aggressive renewable energy contracts that might seem very cost prohibitive right now. I am also very interested in how we get all people in Austin, including the minority community, involved in conservation, zero-waste, etc.

( 254 words - received 03/20 @ 12:15 PM )

+++++

**Candidates, in alphabetical order, who agreed to attend the TGN Candidate Forum, but who did not provide a respond to our request for their BIO & green concerns for Austin are:** Josiah James Ingalls, William Spelman, Carole Keeton Strayhorn, and Joe Quintero.

