

# SEMINAR FOR NEWLY ELECTED COUNTY JUDGES AND COMMISSIONERS

January 14-17, 2025

Texas A&M Hotel and Conference Center  
College Station, TX



TEXAS A&M  
**AGRI**LIFE  
EXTENSION

V.G. YOUNG INSTITUTE OF  
COUNTY GOVERNMENT

# SEMINAR FOR NEWLY ELECTED COUNTY JUDGES AND COMMISSIONERS

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## **V.G. YOUNG INSTITUTE OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT**

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## WELCOME LETTER



On behalf of the V.G. Young Institute of County Government, a part of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, I welcome you to the Seminar for Newly Elected County Judges and Commissioners. We are pleased to offer this opportunity where you can develop a deeper understanding of your duties, authorities, and responsibilities as a member of a commissioners court, as well as develop critical networks, all in an effort to better serve your county.

I offer a special word of appreciation to the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas and the Texas Association of Counties for their partnership in offering this seminar to you.

If you need anything, please let a member of our staff know. We will be happy to assist you.

### WELCOME TO COUNTY GOVERNMENT!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter McGill". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Peter J. McGill, Ph.D.  
Director, V.G. Young Institute of County Government  
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### SCHOOL HOST

Welcome! The Seminar for Newly Elected County Judges and Commissioners is sponsored as a program of the V.G. Young Institute of County Government, a part of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.

### CONTINUING EDUCATION

24 continuing education (CE) hours have been approved for individuals participating in this conference. Please turn in the Institute Copy of your credit form at the registration desk no later than noon on Friday, January 17, 2025.

### SCHOOL INFORMATION

- Please keep personal belongings with you at all times.
- Please silence cellphones, and refrain from taking calls during sessions.
- Out of respect to speakers, there is a strict adherence to the time schedule.
- Visit the Institute's website (<https://vgyi.tamu.edu>) to download authorized school handouts and presentations available after the conference.

### EVALUATIONS

Evaluations are in the conference packet. Please complete and turn in at the registration desk no later than noon Friday, January 17, 2025.

## GENERAL INFORMATION (CONTINUED)

### TEXAS A&M HOTEL AND CONFERENCE CENTER

- Check-in: 4:00 p.m.
- Checkout: 11:00 a.m.
- Hotel Business Center located in the lobby is open 24 hours.
- Fitness center is available with guestroom key access.

### DINING AT THE HOTEL

- Brazos-Proper Kitchen open 7:00-10:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m., 5:00-9:00 p.m.
- The Junction Market & Cafe open 6:30 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.
- Block T Bar & Grill open 4:00-11:00 p.m.

### LOCAL CONTACTS

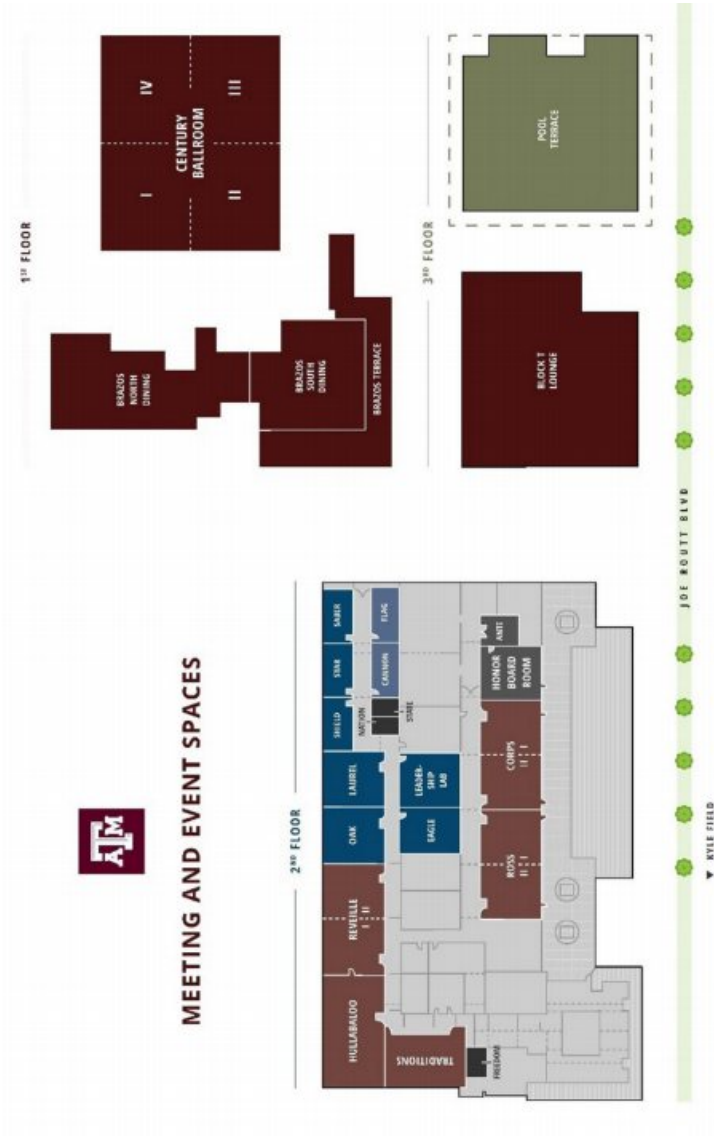
- Texas A&M Hotel and Conference Center, (979) 260-2235
- CapRock Urgent Care, open 8:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.
- Emergency assistance: 911

### 2025 V.G. YOUNG INSTITUTE SCHOOL FOR COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURTS

The 2025 School for County Commissioners Courts will be held in Bryan, Texas, at the Brazos County Expo, February 18-20, 2025.

SEMINAR FOR NEWLY ELECTED COUNTY JUDGES AND COMMISSIONERS

CONFERENCE MAP



## AGENDA

### TUESDAY, JANUARY 14

Noon                      **Registration**

**OPENING GENERAL SESSION**

Presiding: *Dr. Peter McGill, Director,  
V.G. Young Institute of County Government*

1:00-2:00 p.m.      **Welcome & Introductory Remarks**  
*Dr. Rick Avery, Director, Texas A&M  
AgriLife Extension Service*

**Constitutional Basis of County  
Government**

*Speaker: Mr. Jim Allison, Senior  
General Counsel, County Judges and  
Commissioners Association of Texas*

2:00-2:50 p.m.      **Powers, Duties & Responsibilities**  
*Moderator: Hon. Tramer Woytek,  
Judicial Resource Liaison, Texas  
Association of Counties*

*Speakers: Hon. Kirk Frye, Parmer  
County Commissioner  
Hon. Larry Woolley, Johnson County  
Commissioner*

*Dr. Peter McGill, Program Director,  
V.G. Young Institute of County  
Government, Texas A&M AgriLife  
Extension Service*

## SEMINAR FOR NEWLY ELECTED COUNTY JUDGES AND COMMISSIONERS

- 2:50-3:10 p.m.    **Break**
- 3:10-4:00 p.m.    **Sources of Revenue and Types of Expenditures**  
Speaker: *Mr. Nathan Craddock, Tom Green County Auditor*
- 4:00-5:00 p.m.    **Budgeting in County Government**  
Speaker: *Mr. Nathan Craddock, Tom Green County Auditor*
- 5:00-5:30 p.m.    **County Purchasing**  
Speaker: *Mr. Scott Arledge, Director of Purchasing, Denton County*
- 5:30 p.m.            **Adjourn**
- 6:30-8:00 p.m.    **Welcome Reception –**  
Letterman’s Club at Kyle Field  
Sponsored by: *Texas Association of Counties and V.G. Young Institute of County Government*

## WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15

- 7:30 a.m.            **Continental Breakfast**

### **GENERAL SESSION**

Presiding: *Hon. Susan Redford, Executive Director, Texas Association of Counties*

- 8:30-9:20 a.m.    **Property Tax Issues**  
Speaker: *Hon. Curtis Parrish, Lubbock County Judge*



SEMINAR FOR NEWLY ELECTED COUNTY JUDGES AND COMMISSIONERS

- 9:20-10:10 a.m. **County Regulatory Authority**  
Speaker: *Mr. Eric Magee, General Counsel, County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas*
- 10:10-10:30 a.m. **Break**
- 10:30-11:00 a.m. **County Litigation and Legal Representation**  
Speakers: *Ms. Misty Pahl, Claims Litigation Examiner, Texas Association of Counties*  
*Mr. Mike Thompson, Associate General Counsel, Texas Association of Counties*
- 11:00-11:50 a.m. **Personnel Issues**  
Speaker: *Ms. Lorie Floyd, HR Consultants Supervisor, Texas Association of Counties*
- 11:50 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. **Lunch**
- 1:00-1:50 p.m. **Open Records and Records Management**  
Speaker: *Mr. Paul Miles, Associate General Counsel, Texas Association of Counties*
- 1:50-2:40 p.m. **Guide to Texas Ethics and Disclosure Law Ch. 171 & 174**  
Speaker: *Mr. Paul Miles, Associate General Counsel, Texas Association of Counties*
- 2:40-3:00 p.m. **Break**

## SEMINAR FOR NEWLY ELECTED COUNTY JUDGES AND COMMISSIONERS

- 3:00-3:30 p.m.    **Election Issues**  
Speakers: *Hon. Heather Hawthorne, Chambers County Clerk*  
*Ms. Jennifer Doinoff, Hays County Elections Administrator*
- 3:30-4:20 p.m.    **Subdivision Regulations**  
Speaker: *Mr. Eric Magee, General Counsel, County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas*
- 4:20-5:10 p.m.    **County Roads**  
Speaker: *Mr. Bob Bass, Partner, Allison, Bass & Magee, LLP*
- 5:10 p.m.    **Adjourn**

### OPTIONAL EVENING SESSION

- 6:30-8:30 p.m.    **Open Meetings Act and Public Information Act Video Viewing and Certification**

## THURSDAY, JANUARY 16

- 7:30 a.m.    **Continental Breakfast**

### GENERAL SESSION

Presiding: *Dr. Peter McGuill, Director, V.G. Young Institute of County Government*

- 8:30-9:30 a.m.    **Conducting a Commissioners Court Meeting**  
Speaker: *Mr. Jim Allison, Senior General Counsel, County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas*

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- 9:30-9:50 a.m.    **Break**
- 9:50-10:40 a.m.    **Effective Operations of Commissioners Court**  
Moderator: *Hon. Susan Redford, Executive Director, Texas Association of Counties*  
Speakers: *Hon. Ben Zeller, Victoria County Judge*  
*Hon. Roger Morris, Oldham County Commissioner*
- 10:40-11:30 a.m.    **Additional Duties and Responsibilities**  
Speaker: *Mr. Charles Kimbrough, Partner, Bickerstaff Heath Delgado Acosta LLP*
- 11:30 a.m. -  
1:00 p.m.    **Working Lunch: County and Judicial Issues in the Legislature**  
Moderator: *Mr. Jim Allison, Senior General Counsel, County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas*  
Speakers: *Mr. Rick Thompson, Program Director, County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas*  
*Mr. Adam Haynes, Policy Director, Texas Conference of Urban Counties*
- 1:00-1:50 p.m.    **Working Effectively With the Legislature/State Government**  
Speaker: *Mr. Jim Allison, Senior General Counsel, County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas*  
*And Invited Legislators*

SEMINAR FOR NEWLY ELECTED COUNTY JUDGES AND COMMISSIONERS

- 1:50-2:40 p.m.    **Law Enforcement and Jail Issues**  
Speakers: *Hon. Brian Hawthorne, Chambers County Sheriff*  
*Hon. Bill Stoudt, Gregg County Judge*  
*Mr. Brandon Wood, Executive Director, Texas Commission on Jail Standards*
- 2:40-3:00 p.m.    **Break**
- 3:00-3:50 p.m.    **Emergency Management Issues – County Role**  
Speakers: *Chief Nim Kidd, Vice Chancellor for Disaster and Emergency Services, Texas A&M University System & Chief of the Texas Division of Emergency Management*  
*Dr. Rick Avery, Director, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service*  
*Mr. Al Davis, Director, Texas A&M Forest Service*  
*Mr. David Coatney, Director, Texas Engineering Extension Service*
- 4:00-5:00 p.m.    **Open Forum**  
**Small Counties <15,000 Population**  
– Century Ballroom  
Moderator: *Hon. Tramer Woytek, Judicial Resource Liaison and County Relations Officer, Texas Association of Counties*  
Speakers: *Hon. Roger Morris, Oldham County Commissioner*  
*Hon. James Teal, McMullen County Judge*

SEMINAR FOR NEWLY ELECTED COUNTY JUDGES AND COMMISSIONERS

**Medium Counties 15,000 to 50,000**

**Population** – Ross Room

Moderator: *Hon. Susan Redford,  
Executive Director, Texas Association  
of Counties*

Speakers: *Hon. Wade McKinney,  
Henderson County Judge  
Hon. Byron Ryder, Leon County Judge*

**Medium/Large Counties >50,000**

**Population** – Corps Room

Moderator: *Mr. Jim Allison, Senior  
General Counsel, County Judges and  
Commissioners Association of Texas*

Speakers: *Hon. Jen Crownover,  
Comal County Commissioner  
Hon. Ben Zeller, Victoria County Judge*

5:00 p.m.

**Adjourn**

## FRIDAY, JANUARY 17

7:30 a.m.      **Continental Breakfast**

8:00-9:15 a.m.      **Open Forum**

### **Small Counties <15,000**

**Population** – Century Ballroom

Moderator: *Hon. Tramer Woytek  
Judicial Resource Liaison and County  
Relations Officer, Texas Association  
of Counties*

Speakers: *Hon. Roger Morris, Oldham  
County Commissioner*

*Hon. James Teal, McMullen County  
Judge*

### **Medium Counties 15,000 to 50,000**

**Population** – Ross Room

Moderator: *Hon. Susan Redford,  
Executive Director, Texas Association  
of Counties*

Speakers: *Hon. Wade McKinney,  
Henderson County Judge*

*Hon. Byron Ryder, Leon County Judge*

### **Medium/Large Counties >50,000**

**Population** – Corps Room

Moderator: *Mr. Jim Allison, Senior  
General Counsel, County Judges and  
Commissioners Association of Texas*

Speakers: *Hon. Jen Crownover, Comal  
County Commissioner*

*Hon. Ben Zeller, Victoria County Judge*

## SEMINAR FOR NEWLY ELECTED COUNTY JUDGES AND COMMISSIONERS

### **GENERAL SESSION**

Presiding: *Hon. Susan Redford, Executive Director,  
Texas Association of Counties*

9:15-10:15 a.m. **Communication & Social Media**  
Speakers: *Dr. Peter McGill, Director,  
V.G. Young Institute of County  
Government*  
*Hon. Jen Crownover, Comal County  
Commissioner*

10:15-10:30 a.m. **Break**

10:30-11:30 a.m. **So What? Now What?**  
**Session: Q&A Wrap-up**  
Speakers: *Mr. Jim Allison, Senior  
General Counsel, County Judges and  
Commissioners Association of Texas*  
*Hon. Jen Crownover, Comal County  
Commissioner*  
*Hon. Byron Ryder, Leon County Judge*

11:30-11:45 a.m. **Closing Remarks**  
Speakers: *Hon. Susan Redford,  
Executive Director, Texas Association  
of Counties*  
*Dr. Peter McGill, Director, V.G. Young  
Institute of County Government*

11:45 a.m. **Adjourn**

THANK YOU  
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## SEMINAR FOR NEWLY ELECTED COUNTY JUDGES AND COMMISSIONERS

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Texas A&M AgriLife Extension is an equal opportunity employer and program provider.  
The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County  
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