

Texas City Manager Association Annual Conference
June 19-22, 2025.

Per the City Manager employment agreement section 12, the *“Employee agrees to provide and turn in all receipts for such expenses and to provide the City Council with a report of what information was learned or obtained at the next reasonable Council Meeting after attending a conference or training session.”*

The training session was located Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center. The total cost for registration was \$350 registration and \$75. The City Manager did not seek reimbursement for hotel, mileage, or per diem.

As part of the training, I attended the following:

Thursday, June 19, 2025

I did not attend on this day due to a scheduling conflict. The day's events included a Golf Tournament from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and a pre-conference session titled "Navigating the Tightrope: Becoming an Effective Change Agent" from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. As I do not golf and the pre-conference session overlapped with the city's 5:00 p.m. budget workshop, I was unable to participate on this day.

Friday, June 20, 2025

- 8:30- 9 Registration, 9-10:30 am Opening Session titled Choose Your Story, Change Your Life: Rewriting the Stories You Tell Yourself. This session was presented by Kindra Hall, *Wall Street Journal* bestselling author, speaker, and storyteller. She addressed ICMA practice groups 5 (Personal Resiliency and Development), 6 (Strategic Leadership), and 13 (Human Resources Management and Workforce Engagement). Her presentation took her original research, case studies, and stories and offered a new perspective on the inner workings of people's psychology and understanding the psychology behind strategic storytelling. She describes storytelling as a way to shift the individual mindset to a collective understanding, ultimately accomplishing an overall goal.
- 11-2 p,m was Morgan's Wonderland Tour. Or a session on No More Silos, Build Your Tribe - Enhancing Community Engagement: Best Practices from a Government Perspective. There was also an awards lunch during this time. I did not attend. Instead, I attended the SAMCo State of the Transit with the Mayor during this time. Local and regional elected, business and civic leaders came together at the Boeing Center at Tech Port for the 2025 State of Transit luncheon. The program underscored VIA's ongoing transformation and growth as the agency works to meet the evolving needs of the San Antonio region. Highlights included progress on major initiatives such as the VIA Rapid Green and Silver Lines and the Better Bus Plan, both designed to deliver faster, more frequent and more reliable service for customers today and into the future.
- 2-3:15 pm - Attended Big City Problems, Small Town Budget this was a panel discussion hosted by Erin Corbell, City Manager, City of Lampasas; Randy Criswell, City Manager, City of Wolfforth; and Jason Little, City Manager, City of Melissa. This session focused on the challenges faced by small cities addressing issues similar to large cities, while operating within constrained budgets. It addressed the importance of mutual aide, grants and leveraging funds to do large projects.

- 3:30-4:45 - Attended Responsible AI in Local City Government it was a panel discussion hosted by Phillip Urrutia, Assistant City Manager, City of Garland, Akeal Hawkins, Dillon Morgan Consulting, and Solomon Israel, Dillon Morgan Consulting. The session addressed critical policies and safeguards needed to ensure ethical and responsible AI usage. We received real-world examples of its deployment in cities such as digital assistance that helps residents apply for permits, track licenses or file requests, help draft grant proposals, translate city forms, chatbots, generate visuals, recommend traffic changes, meeting schedules, or ways to allocate resources more efficiently.

Social Events beginning at 6:00 p.m. – did not attend

Saturday, June 21, 2025

- 9- 10:15 General Session titled 12 Strong: An Extraordinary Mission of Commitment, Purpose, Heroism, and Hope. The presenter was Mark Nutsch, Green Beret Commander. Mark Nutsch discussed the first successful Special Forces campaign that took place in the immediate aftermath of 9/11. He told the heroic story of how he and his team leveraged guerrilla tactics on horseback, his 12-man team successfully outmaneuvered the full military force of the enemy to a historic victory in overthrowing the Taliban. He shared insights on leadership and team dynamics in overcoming insurmountable odds and related this to City management strategic planning and leadership, resulting in personal resiliency and personal and professional integrity.
- 10:30 -11:45 am Legislative wrap-up this session was hosted by Bill Longley, General Counsel, Texas Municipal League; and Monty Wynn, Director, Grassroots and Legislative Services. We reviewed the 2025 legislative session and how these changes could impact our community.
- Noon to 1:30 p.m. lunch
- 1:30- 3:30 Ethics Training - I am required to take this training course every other year this is my year to take this course. It was hosted this year by Jessica Cowles, Ethics Director, International City/County Management Association. It is a good reminder of how to maintain ethics in various situations by fostering fair, honest, and ethical behavior in your personal and professional life.
- Focus was mental health and Facing city Management Breaking points hosted by **Chad Wright**, Founder/Coach, Forward Partners. This was really a paid advertisement for counseling sessions but was a good reminder that taking a step back can provide clearer insight on projects or workplace problems.

Sunday, June 22, 2025

8:30 – 11:00 am: Breakfast and closing session. The closing session was hosted by TCMA President Jay Abercrombie, City Manager, City of Henderson; and TCMA President-Elect Emily Crawford, City Manager, City of Brownwood. This was an official kickoff of the 100 year celebration of TCMA and introducing our new president Emily Crawford. Looked at the history of City Management, where we started and where we are today.