



Newly Elected Officials Workshop

2021 Speaker Bios

CHRIS NICHOLS – The Nichols Firm, PLLC



Chris Nichols has been in private practice for 19 years. He received his J.D. from Texas Tech University School of Law in 2001 and his B.A. from Baylor University in 1996. Nichols is the owner and managing attorney for The Nichols Firm, PLLC, where he and his legal team focus on representing local governments and special districts such as cities, economic development corporations, TIRZs, and others. In addition to his city attorney and general counsel appointments, Nichols also serves as special counsel to many municipalities regarding complex economic development projects, where he provides guidance and resources from project inception to completion.

CHRIS BREAU – Whitley Penn, LLP



Christopher Breau is a partner in the Houston office of Whitley Penn, LLP, a regional public accounting firm where he concentrates on providing auditing services and other assistance to cities, school districts, and other public sector clients. As a certified public accountant for more than 25 years, he has had the good fortune to work with many city councils, school boards, and commissioners' courts to understand the opportunities and challenges they face as they navigate the waters of public finance and operations.

RON COX – Ron Cox Consulting



Ron Cox is the founder and principal of Ron Cox Consulting. Founded in 2006, Cox has worked with 71 cities and 10 other affiliated organizations. His firm specializes in municipal consulting services, including strategic planning, staff development, executive recruitment, and advice on many different day-to-day management and specialized development issues. Cox has an extensive background in the governmental arena starting in 1972. He served as city manager for four different Texas cities and worked with development councils and the East Texas Council of Governments. Cox has also served twice on the Board of Directors of the Texas City Management Association and served as its president in 1997-98. He served on the Board of Directors of the Texas Municipal Retirement System, and the Texas Municipal League Intergovernmental Risk Pool. In 2005, Cox was awarded TCMA's Lifetime Achievement Award, an exceptional honor.

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MEAGAN COUGHLIN – Houston-Galveston Area Council



Meagan Coughlin is the director of communications for the Houston-Galveston Area Council and leads the organization’s strategic communications in collaboration with the agency’s departments and programs. She brings nearly 20 years of public relations and communications experience from the nonprofit, human resources, and higher education sectors. As a Mississippi native, Coughlin joined the agency in 2017, and prior to arriving in Houston, she worked as the director of international communications and protocol for Mississippi State University’s International Institute. Coughlin is a Mississippi State graduate with a degree in communication and public relations and earned her Accreditation in Public Relations (APR) in 2015. The APR certification is a distinctive credential in the public relations profession recognizing a mastery of strategic communication practices, competencies, and ethical standards in the communications industry. Coughlin serves as the president of the Public Relations Society of America Houston Chapter, the premier public relations organization and one of the largest chapters in the country.

