

What's Up, College Station? Transcript

Season 4, Episode 34

Grace Hallowell: What's up, College Station? I'm Grace Hallowell, and today my guest is Deputy City Secretary Ian Whittenton. Welcome back to the show. Applications for our citizens' boards, committees, and commissions (CBC) are opening soon, and we have the CBC 101 event coming up for residents interested in getting involved. As a refresher, tell us about yourself and what you do for the city.

Ian Whittenton: I am the deputy city secretary for the city secretary's office and fill in when the city secretary is unavailable. I have worked in local government here for about 20 years, including 14 with the city secretary's office. My primary duties include posting agendas, taking meeting minutes, handling Public Information Act/open records requests, and managing vital statistics.

Grace Hallowell: What changes for you during this time of year, especially heading into election season?

Ian Whittenton: This year, we have candidates on the ballot for Mayor, Place 1, Place 2, and Place 5, which became open after a council member filed for the mayor's office.

Grace Hallowell: What is your favorite part of your job?

Ian Whittenton: I enjoy meeting candidates and citizens, seeing the passion people bring to running for office, and helping residents find information or answer their questions.

Grace Hallowell: How does your work impact the community behind the scenes?

Ian Whittenton: We handle public notifications for city meetings online and on our bulletin boards, and we maintain an accessible archive of City Council meetings and agenda packets online.

Grace Hallowell: How can people contact you with questions?

Ian Whittenton: You can email our office at CSO@cstx.gov or call (979) 764-3541 to reach the city secretary's office.

Grace Hallowell: What role do the boards, committees, and commissions play in local government?

Ian Whittenton: They advise the City Council on specific subjects—ranging from solid waste to bicycle and pedestrian greenways—serving as an essential intermediary between citizens and the Council.

Grace Hallowell: Have there been recent projects where CBC input made a meaningful difference?

Ian Whittenton: The Housing Plan Advisory Committee helped create and is now implementing the Housing Action Plan, regularly providing recommendations directly to the Council.

Grace Hallowell: What opportunities are available on our boards and commissions that residents might be surprised to learn about?

Ian Whittenton: We have a library board, a historical preservation committee, and a solid waste committee. There are many unique ways residents can contribute their skills.

Grace Hallowell: What can a new member expect during their first few months after being appointed?

Ian Whittenton: After appointment, you will complete brief trainings on the Open Meetings Act and Public Information Act, take an oath of office, and connect with your assigned departmental staff liaison regarding meeting schedules and duties.

Grace Hallowell: What makes someone a strong candidate, and is prior local government experience required?

Ian Whittenton: A strong candidate is curious and committed to attending meetings. Attending CBC 101 on October 12th at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall is a great way to learn more, meet staff liaisons, and ask questions.

Grace Hallowell: What would you say to someone who feels they don't know enough about local government to serve?

Ian Whittenton: No experience is required — curiosity and commitment matter most. Many people find their personal or professional background qualifies them well.

Grace Hallowell: What do residents find most rewarding about serving?

Ian Whittenton: Members value participating in the civic process, sharing their perspectives, and helping make the community better.

Grace Hallowell: Where can someone learn about available opportunities if they cannot attend CBC 101 on October 12th?

Ian Whittenton: Visit cstx.gov and navigate to the Committees, Boards, and Commissions page to view active openings, read descriptions, and apply. You can also call our office directly.

Grace Hallowell: What is the application and appointment process, and are there key deadlines?

Ian Whittenton: The online application covers your contact information, background, and personal or professional experience. Applications are open now and close on December 31st.

Grace Hallowell: What advice would you give to someone hesitating to apply?

Ian Whittenton: Don't hesitate to take the leap. Attend CBC 101 or contact us so we can help clear up any doubts.

Grace Hallowell: For residents needing to register for upcoming elections, where should they start?

Ian Whittenton: Visit BrazosVotes.org to access voter registration forms and check your current registration status.

Grace Hallowell: What key election dates should voters keep in mind?

Ian Whittenton:

- **Voter Registration Deadline:** October 5th
- **Early Voting:** October 19th – October 30th
- **Election Day:** November 3rd

Grace Hallowell: And what are the key deadlines for board applications?

Ian Whittenton: Applications close on December 31st, but we encourage applying early.

Grace Hallowell: What else can voters do to prepare before Election Day?

Ian Whittenton: Review sample ballots at BrazosVotes.org and research the candidates and issues.

Grace Hallowell: Before we jump into our lightning round, please share the details for CBC 101 again.

Ian Whittenton: Monday, October 12th at 6:00 p.m. in the Bush 4141 Community Room at City Hall.

Grace Hallowell: Time for the lightning round! Board meetings early in the morning or late in the evening?

Ian Whittenton: Late in the evening.

Grace Hallowell: Paper or digital agenda packet?

Ian Whittenton: Digital.

Grace Hallowell: Reading meeting minutes or attending live?

Ian Whittenton: Attending live.

Grace Hallowell: Voting early or on Election Day?

Ian Whittenton: Voting early.

Grace Hallowell: Encouraging a friend to register to vote or to apply for a board?

Ian Whittenton: Both!

Grace Hallowell: Thank you for joining me, Ian.

Ian Whittenton: Thanks for having me.

Grace Hallowell: And that's what's up!