

## Talk of the City - City of Houston Faces New Challenges in 2012

Written by Tony Morris  
Thursday, 05 January 2012 13:09

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*Forward Times Staff Writer*

Now that it's 2012, there is a whole new set of challenges ahead for the City of Houston and the City Council. The morning of the inaugural is full of excitement as families of the just elected City Council as well as Mayor Annise Parker are waiting to be sworn in as the new City Council for the next two years. This inaugural was different because of the two additional Council persons of the newly added Districts "J" and "K." The Hobby Center is filled with friends and families who were invited to witness an event which is an important part of the democratic process. This is the end product of the voting process that demonstrates the peaceful transition of power that has been taking place for the past 147 years. There are dignitaries from all over the country who were invited as guests to take part in this unique ceremony. The Hobby Center has been the place of many grand events and is a fitting venue for this kind of event and was used in the past for an inaugural.

Mrs. Sue Christian (Director of Special Events) has done a great job of putting this event together as she has done many times before. I want to say congratulations to her for being the proud parent of a new baby boy. Susan has brought together past and present guests who were and are important alumni of the administrations of the City of Houston. This event has always been historic; however, this year's inaugural is very special to Mayor Parker because it is the beginning of her second term which was peppered with controversy and major challenges. The Mayor took on these challenges with a vigor that has not been witnessed in a long time.

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As an attendee of this prestigious event, I see that the swearing-in ceremony is now over and the entertainment has started. Everybody is having a great time and the families are excited about the entire day of festivities ahead of them. We are going over to City Hall so that the newly sworn-in officials can take their seats on City Council, which was expanded from 15 to 17. The City Council Chambers is packed with families and onlookers that were at the Hobby Center for the inaugural. The City Council Horseshoe is crowded and the Council members are squeezed because the Mayor has decided not to make a construction change to the council chambers. At this point in the day, nobody cared about the cramped quarters.

Mayor Parker is using the oversized gavel to bring order to the chamber so that the new City Council will come to order. The first order of business is the introduction of the new City Council members and their families to the other members of council. Everyone was very cordial and polite, which was to be expected because of the occasion. The question is, how long will the politeness last? I will not dwell on that for now because this is a special day for everybody, even me. The Mayor has just recessed the Council and the chamber is emptying so that Mayor Annise Parker can have her first Press Conference of 2012.

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