

**Drew Rees**

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## About the Candidate

I am 42 years old and grew up in Tulsa. I went to Jenks Schools, K -12 and graduated from OSU in 1990 with a bachelor's degree in Finance, and a minor in Economics. I earned my Juris Doctorate Degree in 1993 from the University of Tulsa.

I have worked in Local Governmental Law for 18 years. I served 9 years with Tulsa's City Attorney's office in the Litigation Division. I was a Senior Assistant City Attorney when I became Tulsa's City Council Attorney in 2002, where I have served for the past 8 years.

As a successful trial attorney, I defended the City and taxpayers from false workers' compensation claims, excessive personal injury lawsuits, and I defended our police officers from frivolous civil rights lawsuits filed by prisoners. As the City Council Attorney, I have advised the Council and Mayor in virtually every major issue since 2002. I have helped Tulsa move forward in issues such as the EMSA opt-out program, the Baseball Stadium Trust, the Annexation of the Fairgrounds, Vision 2025, and the creation of the Drug House Abatement Taskforce. I am also part of the Council Management Staff and assist in preparing the annual budget for both the City Council and the entire City of Tulsa.

## How have I Prepared?

As the attorney for the Tulsa City Council over the past 8 years, and an Assistant City Attorney for 9 years before that, I have extensive experience with all local government issues and relationships. I also visit the County website and agendas to try to stay abreast of current issues, while other issues, such as Vision 2025 I have access to by virtual of my position as Council Attorney.

Over the last 18 years, I have met many County employees and have friends that work for the County. Since I announced I was a candidate for this office, and since County employees are at-will employees, I have tried to avoid placing any of the County employees in the difficult position of being seen talking to the opponent of current elected officials. However, given my background and relationships, I anticipate having an excellent working relationship with the staff.

## Why I'm Running

Tulsa County and its cities are at a cross-road. The next several years will provide great opportunities for all cities in Tulsa County. But, there will be several obstacles which must be overcome. Good relationships and open communication with each city will be essential for us to obtain the best results for our community. Those communications and relationships do not exist today. I have the background to understand the issues, the ability to see the various sides of an issue, and personality to talk and work with everyone, whether or not they agree with my point of view.

County government should work to the fullest extent possible to assist its cities in providing the best services at the lowest possible cost to the taxpayers. Co-operation should always come before confrontation. Mutual respect and professionalism should always prevail. I will work with all of our cities, no matter how big or small, to find ways we can reduce costs, increase efficiencies, and promote economic development, while preserving each city's individual identity and character.



## #1 Issue of My Campaign

Making Tulsa County government better is the key issue of this campaign. County and city relationships have plummeted since 2002. If we are to make our community better, we must reverse this trend.

All facets will improve with better relationships between the County and its cities. Economic Development will improve when the grass is cut, highway lights are turned on, and we have a complete highway loop around the metro area designated as interstate. Businesses are helped if we can streamline permitting processes. Quality of life is improved by more efficient use of tax dollars by combining services, such as sand and salt purchases for a better price, or parks maintenance to eliminate redundancies. Through cooperation, we open government for our citizens by fair representation for cities on County boards, and limit government through greater efficiencies and cost savings.

## Top 3 issues for My District

If trends hold, this decennial census will show the cities surrounding Tulsa will have a greater population than Tulsa itself. This brings great opportunities, but also some obstacles.

#1 Economic Development. The County should be working with each of its cities to promote economic development for the cities and county as a whole. Ideas such as a new bridge across the Arkansas River along 145<sup>th</sup> East Avenue; seeking an Interstate designation for the existing Creek Turnpike; or a General Aviation Airport in Broken Arrow, each provide unique opportunities to promote economic development without cannibalizing industries from other cities in the county.

#2 As cities strive to cope with growing demands

on infrastructure with limited resources, the County should be there to offer help with professional advice, services, or specialty abilities. Whether combining purchase orders for reduced bulk pricing, using the Sheriff's Department's mounted patrol, or combining resources for quicker and less expensive street maintenance, the County should be willing to help its cities meet their needs.

#3 Roads and Bridges. As Broken Arrow and Bixby continue to expand the needs to improve our roads becomes more and more pronounced. It is time we start improving our two lane roads, which have served their purposes, to streets designed and built for today's needs and tomorrow's development. For example, it is clear that in the near future, a bridge across the Arkansas River and east of Memorial will become a necessity for development and public safety.

## Communication between the Commissioner and Citizens is important. If elected, what are your ideas to increase the flow between them?

I have several tools I want to bring to Tulsa County. First, at least one meeting a month should be after 5:00pm to allow citizens another opportunity to see and provide comments to their County Commissioners.

Second, I want to put the backup materials for agenda items on-line, so constituents can see the documents, their elected officials are basing their votes on.

Third, I would like to bring web streaming to the meetings, again allowing citizens another opportunity to see their elected officials in action.

And finally, a crucial facet of open government is participation by all its constituencies. I will work for fair representation for all of the cities on Tulsa County Boards, Authorities, and Commissions.

Each of these ideas should be able to be accomplished with little or no expenditure of public funds.