

The New Faces of City Council

Part 1 : Harry Thomas

By Brit Macias



Our San Angelo City Council has some new faces the public should get to know. One of those new faces is Harry Thomas, elected in the May 7th election of this year for his first term on City Council.

CRN sat down with District 3 Councilman Thomas to discuss some of his priorities while serving our great city. One of the major items of interest the eight-year Air Force Veteran spoke extensively on is public safety for military, local law enforcement, and fire fighters.

“I believe in protection. I believe that the young men and women that are putting their lives on the line every day for us, for our individual freedoms, need to be supported, so I’ll do anything I can do to help support those people.”

Thomas voiced his support of public safety in regards to San Angelo’s own law enforcement and fire fighters, as well as the private citizens, mentioning several needs for our local Fire and Police Departments, concluding that, “The citizens of San Angelo really deserve to have the best trained police officers and fire fighters that we can afford.”

As citizens, some of you may be wondering what our leaders’ outlooks are in the light of recent tragedies our country has seen. How does that affect San Angelo? Thomas had much to tell CRN regarding such matters. “We live in West Texas. Maybe we don’t live in San Bernardino, CA, maybe we don’t live in Orlando, FL, or Boston, but we’re just as liable to have somebody who wants to do harm to the citizens, for whatever reason, here as we do anyplace else. How do we respond to that? How do we take care of those issues? How do we prepare the citizens?”

What does Thomas believe is important in those potential moments? “Public information to me is very, very key and how the leadership in the police department responds to those particular issues is very, very important as to whether or not you have citizens that can be calm about the situation or citizens that are up in arms and really want to try to do something regardless of who that individual is that would do that harm.”

Thomas also informed CRN of his current big project: The Avenue P flooding situation. Right now, there are 30 properties and 17 property owners Thomas is working closely with to find a solution to the flooding on Avenue P that occurs any time it rains in that area. He has been sitting down with those individuals and informs CRN that two of his major priorities are roads and water/sewer lines.

Regarding water infrastructure, Thomas states, “that is an important part of economic development. An important part of keeping Goodfellow here, the largest employer that we’ve got.” Thomas explains to CRN what attracts employers and businesses to San Angelo is infrastructure and, “Water is number one.”

Thomas is also interested in maintaining parks for the simple fact that national and international companies look at such things when deciding to build a location in a city. “One of the things they look at is quality of life,” Thomas explains.

He would certainly know, as he worked for Goodyear (where he was employed for 40 yrs) when the Chamber of Commerce produced a film to send to potential managers for major international employers to show what San Angelo has to offer by way of quality of life—and parks are a major part of that. Goodyear utilized that video to show potential managers as they considered working here.

Regarding budget planning soon to be underway in Council, Thomas is a self-proclaimed “numbers guy,” due to his time at Goodyear, stating, “I will ask those (numbers) questions, and I don’t have a problem doing that.”

As far as the budget is concerned, what is the stance of the Numbers Guy on property tax? “I will be one that will try to hold the property tax rate at what it is today. I’m not going to adjust it up, but I’m not going to vote to adjust it down either. There are too many projects in the city that need to be done; too many things that for some reason or other the can was kicked down the road for a period of time and we’re starting now to fix some of those types of things that need to be fixed.”

There you have it, an inside look into one of the new faces of City Council.

Stay tuned for Part II of the New Faces series.

Until Next Time...

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