



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **CITY OF TAYLOR BIDS FAREWELL TO LONG-TIME CITY EMPLOYEES** *Fire Chief Ekiss and Finance Director Dennis to Retire in March, 2019*

**TAYLOR, Texas** –This spring the City of Taylor will bid farewell to two long-time employees who have both contributed to the City’s growth and development over the past 15 years. Fire Chief Pat Ekiss and Finance Director Rosemarie Dennis both announced their retirements in the fall of 2018; both will retire on March 31, 2019.

Chief Ekiss has managed and directed the administration and operations of the City of Taylor Fire Department since 2010. Under his leadership, the department has provided the Taylor community with the emergency and non-emergency services, emphasizing safety, professionalism, and Customer Service as top priorities. With the support of City Council and administration, the Fire Department upgraded or replaced its entire fleet, ensuring that the professionals protecting the City have high quality equipment and tools to do their jobs. Chief Ekiss led the Department as they made inroads in cancer reduction for firefighters, both with the implementation of updated policies and procedures and the purchase of proper equipment. In addition, the Department’s ISO rating has improved over the years and it is poised to improve even more. The Chief also implemented a succession program for the Department, ensuring that Department personnel are able to pass their knowledge on to new recruits and that the department has a strong leadership development program in place.

Chief Ekiss is a Texas Commission on Fire Protection certified Head of Department, Master Firefighter, Fire Instructor II, Wildland Firefighter, Hazardous Materials Technician, Fire Investigator and Fire Inspector and Field Examiner. He is also a Texas Department of State Health Services certified EMT/Paramedic. He has served as an instructor with TEEX, Texas A&M University Extension Services for the past 33 years and has led two of his departments through the ISO review process resulting in substantially improved ratings for both. A 36 year veteran of Fire Service, Chief Ekiss has also served as Fire Chief in Forest Hill, Texas, and in multiple capacities in Arlington, where he spent the bulk of his of his career.

Interim City Manager Jeff Jenkins said that Chief Ekiss leaves a strong legacy for the City of Taylor. “We have been so fortunate to have Chief Ekiss in charge when we have had emergency situations in our City. He knows how to manage an emergency and he keeps everyone calm with his leadership skills and command abilities. He has been invaluable in shaping the Taylor Fire Department into a first-class emergency response unit. He also understands the history and significance of fire prevention, and the



policies he has put into place have made our City stronger and safer. We are grateful for his leadership, and we are a better City for having had him on board.”

Rosemarie Dennis is the Finance Director for the City, responsible for advising the City Manager, Mayor and City Council Members on budget, financial, and accounting matters. Her major areas of responsibility include financial administration and planning, accounting, payroll, utility billing and collection, risk management, and budget operations. Ms. Dennis has served two terms with the City of Taylor: she served as an Accountant for the City from August, 2004 – January, 2006, then came back as the Director of Finance in September, 2006.

Ms. Dennis has twelve years in banking experience and nineteen years of municipal finance experience. She holds a Bachelor in Science in Business Administration and a Master’s in Business Administration from the University of Central Texas (aka Texas A&M University-Central Texas). Ms. Dennis has been an active member of the national Government Finance Officers Association and Government Finance Officers Association of Texas. For ten years in a row during her tenure, the City of Taylor was awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting, and received the Distinguished Budget Award for five consecutive years.

Mr. Jenkins said that Ms. Dennis has contributed to the City’s financial strength. “She makes sure that our i’s are dotted and our t’s are crossed, and ensures that our finances are up to date and transparent for the public. She has worked very hard for the City and we have always been able to count on her to make sure that we are being fiscally responsible. We will miss her leadership and guidance.”

The City is currently conducting Executive Searches for both positions with Strategic Government Resources (SGR), a firm that provides a comprehensive scope of executive search services.

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