



PRESS RELEASE

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Controller Chris Hollins Unveils Portrait Gallery of Former Houston City Controllers in City Hall Several History Making Houstonians Participate in Opening Ceremony

HOUSTON — The history of the City of Houston came to life on Wednesday, April 16th at City Hall when City Controller Chris Hollins welcomed several of his predecessors to celebrate their service as City Controllers at the formal unveiling of their new portrait gallery.

"The individuals featured in this photo gallery played a pivotal role in shaping our city's financial landscape, and I am pleased to join with them, in person and in spirit, to recognize their service and dedication to the people of Houston," said Controller Hollins. "Each Controller brought a unique vision and style of leadership to this office, working to build trust in our community by holding government accountable to serve Houstonians."

Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia (D-TX-29), who served as City Controller from 1998 to 2003, joined Hollins for the ceremony. Said Congresswoman Garcia, "Serving as City Controller was one of the most demanding roles I've ever held—not only was I the Chief Financial Officer for the fourth-largest city in the nation, but also the financial watchdog for the people of Houston. Balancing both responsibilities was no small task, but it gave me the skills and perspective to take on just about anything I've faced since."

Also joining Hollins was former Houston Mayor Annise Parker, who served two terms as City Controller from 2004 to 2010 and later three terms as Mayor from 2010 to 2016. Parker noted, "I learned that good governance starts with knowing where every dollar goes. As City Controller, I saw firsthand the challenges and opportunities within our finances—and as Mayor, that knowledge helped me lead with both accountability and vision."

Other former City Controllers in attendance included Ronald Green, the first Black Houstonian to serve as Controller, and Chris Brown, the immediate past Controller.

Controller Hollins noted that the dedicated work of his predecessors laid a strong foundation for a prosperous Houston. He called on Houstonians to appreciate their past service, which helped lay the groundwork for a bright and financially sound future for our city.

Here is a brief overview of Hollins's predecessors since 1945, and a statement about the accomplishments of each:

- Roy B. Oakes (1945-1972) laid the groundwork for modern financial oversight, acting as a vigilant watchdog over city funds.
- Leonel Castillo (1972-1977) was the first Mexican-American Controller, expanding the office's influence and advocating for civil rights alongside financial issues.
- Kathryn J. Whitmire (1978-1982) became the first woman to serve as Controller, balancing fiscal responsibility with political engagement. She later became the first woman to serve as Mayor of Houston.
- Lance Lalor (1982-1988) intensified the Controller's role in budgetary discussions, advocating against excessive spending.
- George Greanias (1988-1996) faced historic conflicts with Mayor Bob Lanier, establishing the importance of independent oversight of financial matters.
- Lloyd E. Kelley (1996-1998) took the office in a new direction, promoting collaboration with the Mayor while navigating controversy.
- Sylvia R. Garcia (1998-2002) continued the tradition of independence, implementing significant improvements in efficiency and transparency.
- Judy Gray Johnson (2003) streamlined operations, ensuring fiscal prudence and earning an esteemed 'AAAF' rating for the City's debt.
- Annise D. Parker (2004-2010) helped secure crucial voter-approved reforms, exemplifying strong leadership and later serving as Mayor.
- Ronald C. Green (2010-2016) achieved significant savings through refinancing and prudently managed the city's vast debt portfolio.
- Chris B. Brown (2016-2024) focused on both efficiency and effective governance, partnering with Mayor Sylvester Turner to achieve historic pension reform.



Houston City Controller Chris Hollins and Predecessors: (From left to right) Former Controller Chris Brown, Former Controller Ronald Green, Controller Chris Hollins, Former Mayor & Former Controller Annise Parker, and Congresswoman & Former Controller Sylvia Garcia



Controller Chris Hollins and Congresswoman & Former Controller Sylvia Garcia



Controller Chris Hollins and Former Mayor & Former Controller Annise Parker



Reflections of Controllers Past: (From left to right) Former Mayor & Former Controller Annise Parker and Former Controller Ronald Green with reflections of the other members of the Portrait Gallery

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ABOUT CITY OF HOUSTON CONTROLLER'S OFFICE:

Established in 1903, the [City of Houston Controller's Office](#) is the cornerstone of financial oversight and accountability for America's fourth-largest city. With a mission to uphold Houston's fiscal integrity and protect resident's tax dollars, the office oversees a broad spectrum of the City's financial operations, including its budget, investments, and debts. Committed to transparency and fiscal responsibility, the Controller's Office is key to maintaining the economic vitality of Houston, contributing to its status as a thriving metropolis for its diverse community.

ABOUT CONTROLLER CHRIS HOLLINS:

Chris Hollins, serving as Houston's City Controller since January 2024, brings a dynamic approach to City governance and financial management. With a rich background in legal practice and management consulting, coupled with innovative leadership as Harris County Clerk, Hollins is dedicated to enhancing the city's fiscal practices and community engagement. Educated at Morehouse College, Yale Law School, and Harvard Business School, Hollins's commitment to accountability and service excellence drives his mission to build a financially resilient Houston. Residing in the Third Ward with his family, his work is deeply informed by his strong community ties.