

### Observation Assessment #3

**Type of Observation:** Election Meeting

**Mentors:** Shona Huffman and Will Sowell

**Location:** Frisco City Council Chambers

**Date:** February 10, 2019

**Time:** 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

**Assessment:**

This honestly is more of a combo-Observational and Mentor visit because I was able to do a little bit of both at the meeting this past Sunday. The meeting was a strategy session with the people helping Shona on her campaign for re-election on Frisco City Council. This was the first thing I got to do in relation to her campaign, which was extremely exciting for me. Going into it, I didn't really know what to expect, from number of people attending to what they were actually going to be discussing. In all, there were 9 people there, including myself, and the conversation particularly followed information about Shona's campaign and what she will be attending to spread the word that she's running. At the end of the meeting, I was able to talk to Shona and Will separately, making up the bulk of the "mentor visit" part of this meeting.

One of the things I really wanted the chance to discuss with them was what I wrote my Observational Assessment about last week, the Frisco City Town Hall. They seemed unsurprised, both with my questions, and with the nature of the town hall itself. In particular, they stressed to me how people are generally really happy with Frisco and everything that it has to offer, but that comes across skewed in events like the Town Hall, because only people with complaints come up to the mic. This really stuck with me because it's a little upsetting to think that the vast majority of happy residents don't have as much of a say in their government as the more emotionally charged ones that regularly vote. Additionally, issues of traffic and coyotes came across to me as a little trivial, but listening to Will and Shona discuss the town hall between the two of them, they really did genuinely care about each issue, even ones maybe they disagreed on. This was so inspiring to me because honestly at the town hall, there were times where I was sitting there wondering if anyone in City Council actually cared about what was going on or if they were presenting interest for the optics. Listening to

Will and Shona without the audience, though, they were still passionately discussing the topics brought up which I thought was so cool. It particularly emphasizes to me that in order to do well in local government, the most important thing is that you care about it. You can be intelligent and interested in winning, but the position will always feel like work unless you actually care about what City Council requires of you.

Overall, listening to what they had to say about the upcoming campaign and reflecting on the town hall was such a great experience. Not only did I gain some insight into everything that is required for a campaign even as small as city council to run successfully, but I really gained some clarity into how important the desire and drive to do well in municipal government is. I can't wait to continue learning from them as they attend events and I have the chance to watch Shona campaigning in action.