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Bianca Redmon
Chief Financial Officer

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE:

To build community trust by providing council members and residents with easy online access to meaningful financial data

CHALLENGE:

Well before the Texas Comptroller’s office launched the Transparency Stars program in 2016, chief financial officer Bianca Redmon had open data on her radar. That’s because three years prior, the City of Balch Springs had merged with the DC6 Municipal Utility District (MUD) — a move that promised to result in lower taxes, lower water bills, and better service for residents.

Naturally, the consolidation of the MUD into the City was a big undertaking and once the dust settled, the City began to focus on transparency initiatives. They wanted to open the City’s financials up to council members and the public at large so everyone could see for themselves how funds and resources were being collected and allocated on their behalf. The goal was to foster understanding through transparency and establish a strong foundation of community trust.

Redmon began considering transparency solutions, and alternatives that not only fit the City’s budget but could also communicate complex fiscal data in a way that the average citizen could easily understand. “Our city has an aging demographic and not everyone is computer-savvy, so it was especially important for us to find an online solution that was simple, accessible, and intuitive.”



SOLUTION:

In 2018, the City of Balch Springs partnered with ClearGov to launch an online Financial Transparency Center — one that would also help meet the standards of the Texas Comptroller’s Transparency Stars program. They’ve since applied for and been awarded a coveted star in the area of Financial Services, one of five categories in the program. This particular star recognizes outstanding efforts to make spending and revenue information available online.

The Comptroller’s office has very strict requirements about how data should be presented. Redmon said, “ClearGov has been amazing. The Client Success team bent over backwards to help us meet our Transparency Star requirements, including implementing the open checkbook feature (which I love).”

Of course, there are four more stars in the program and Redmon is already eyeing ClearGov’s project pages as a way to fulfill the requirements necessary to achieve recognition in the area of Economic Development. “I’m really excited about ClearGov’s project communications tool. It’s the perfect platform to share information about capital improvements with our residents.”

“Customer service is a big deal for Balch Springs, considering how small a city we are. Having a dedicated point of contact that’s there for you and quickly available has been tremendous for our transparency program. ClearGov has been great — always there for us when we need them.”



Bianca Redmon
Chief Financial Officer

CLEARGOV PROFILE

BALCH SPRINGS WEBSITE



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CLICK TO VISIT
Balch Springs Website

The Texas Comptroller’s Transparency Stars program has strict requirements about how financial data is presented online. Chief among those requirements is the ability to display material in a user-friendly, understandable format that includes graphics, visualizations, and downloadable assets.