
MANUSCRIPT VERTICAL FILES

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Item(s): The Paul C. Laird Papers. Copies of newspaper articles, speeches, and correspondence relating, primarily, to Dr. Laird's term as mayor of Irving, 1957-1959.

Producer: Dr. Paul C. Laird

Donor: Dr. Paul C. Laird

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Historical Sketch

In 1953, Dr. Paul Laird opened a medical practice as a general surgeon in Irving, Texas. The ensuing years were a time of rapid growth for the city. During the mid-1950s, Dr. Laird served as president of the Irving Rotary Club, was a board member of the Irving Chamber of Commerce, and served on the Chamber's street committee. As a member of the Chamber of Commerce, he participated in the groundbreaking for the University of Dallas in 1955.

In 1957, Dr. Laird entered politics, running for the office of mayor. The 1957 municipal elections, coming on the heels of a divisive battle over the firing of the superintendent of the Irving Independent School District, attracted seven mayoral candidates and twenty-six office-seekers for the six city commission places. Dr. Laird was elected mayor.

He served one two-year term, 1957-1959. During his term in office, the city commission adopted Robert's Rules of Order for conducting their meetings. To cope with the rapid expansion of home building in the city, the commission established a plumbing code; adopted the Southern Building Code; and commissioned an updated master plan for city growth. In addition, the commission established a Park Board; approved the reappraisal of property within the city limit; passed a hospital authority act; and the mayor delivered the first "State of the City" speech.

Dr. Laird died in November 1992 at the age of sixty-nine.