

Clerk of Courts

Lake County Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller

Description:

Oversees the Division of Inspector General, Administrative Services, Courts Management, Information Resources, and County Finance. The Clerk is also the Secretary/Treasurer for the Lake County Water Authority; Treasurer for the Lake County Historical Society; Treasurer for Lake Emergency Medical Services, Inc.; and serves as the passport and documentary stamp agent. The Clerk serves a 4 year term.

(Vote for One)

Candidates (choose 1):

Gary James Cooney



Party: Rep

Biographical Info:

Incumbent:

Contact Phone: 352-516-8273

City of Residence: Mount Dora, Florida

Education: 1982 Bachelor of Business Administration, Accounting, Stetson University

1985 Juris Doctor, University of Florida College of Law

Website: <http://CooneyforClerk.com>

Email: gary@CooneyforClerk.com

Facebook: <http://facebook.com/CooneyforClerk>

Questions:

Q: *In which community/professional organizations have you been active?*

A: The Florida Bar Member, Grievance Committee 5A 1992 - 1995 Member, Unlicensed Practice of Law Committee District 5 1995 - 1996 Member, Section on Local Government Law 1989 - Member, Section on Environmental Law 1989 Member, Section on

Administrative Law 2001 - Lake County Bar Association Member 1986 - Director 1991 - 1992 Vice President 1992 - 1993 President 1993 - 1994 Immediate Past President 1994 - 1995 Member, Lake County Investment Advisory Committee Member, Lake County Sales Surtax Oversight Advisory Committee Member, Lake County Emergency Executive Policy Group Member, Public Safety Coordinating Council. Florida Municipal Attorneys Association 1989 - First United Methodist Church, Mount Dora Chairman, Church Council 2007 - 2010 Member, SPPR 2010 - 2011 Chairman, SPPR 2011 - 2013 Member, Permanent Endowment Committee 2013 - Director, Sonnentag Theatre at the IceHouse, Mount Dora 2017 - Director, Friends of the Lake County Horticultural Learning Center 2004 - 2007

Q: *What experiences and skills qualify you for this position?*

A: For the seven years prior to my appointment as Clerk by the Governor, I was the Senior Chief Deputy Clerk in charge of Clerk operations. During that time, I implemented a variety of efficiencies, resulting in a savings of over one million-dollars, with a 25% reduction in staff. We did all of this, while also improving customer access to court records. Your Clerk's Office was a model for Florida when we became the first clerk's office in Florida to allow electronic filing of court documents, and one of the first to accept electronic property records, and again was among the first in the State to give citizens the ability to view court records via the internet from any location using any web device, thereby eliminating the need to travel to the Courthouse. I have never lost sight of the fact that our office uses your money. As Comptroller, I manage \$150M of Lake County citizens' money on a daily basis, and also ensure \$260M of County expenditures each year are proper and authorized.

Q: *If elected, what is the first thing you would change in the Lake County Clerk and Comptroller Office and why?*

A: I am now in the process of bringing on line new technology to further enhance the efficiency of the Office. These changes, which should be in place by late fall, include the use of advanced automation that will drive further cost savings.

Q: *What improvements can be made in the management of the varied duties of the Office of Clerk of the Court and Comptroller?*

A: I personally believe your Clerk's Office has been and continues to be a leader in managing the various duties required by the Legislature. For example, due to our diligence and commitment to excellence, our office has earned the national Government Financial Officers Association award for excellence in financial reporting each year for the last 39 years. In addition, we have also earned their award for excellence in budget presentation each year for the last 26 years. However, we continually strive to exceed the performance standards established for our duties. To this end, I will be looking to increase internal cross-training educational opportunities for employees of the Office. I am also constantly looking for new methods of improving the experience of customers interacting with the Office, although we are frequently commended for our customer service.

Jason Daniel Paynter



Party: Rep

Biographical Info:

Incumbent:

Contact Phone: 352-267-6155

City of Residence: Yalaha, FL

Education: Florida Department of Law Enforcement/FSU- Graduate of Executive Commander Course Graduate of Leadership Lake Southern Police Institute/University of Louisville- Graduate of Command Officers Development Course Police Academy Graduate 1988

Website: <http://www.facebook.com/JasonPaynter4ClerkoftheCourt/>

Email: jason@electricalworksflorida.com

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/JasonPaynter4ClerkoftheCourt/>

Questions:

Q: *In which community/professional organizations have you been active?*

A: Leesburg Chamber of Commerce, Tavares Chamber of Commerce, Lake County Elks club lodge #1578, Bridges Covenant Church of Tavares

Q: *What experiences and skills qualify you for this position?*

A: Jason Paynter is a proven administrator with successful careers in the Public and Private sectors overseeing governmental procedures and compliance, resource accountability, staff studies to identify inefficiencies, and the proper use of tax payer funds. Jason Paynter's extensive history with local law enforcement has required close work with Clerk of the Court employees, as well as public servants from multiple agencies across Lake County. Jason Paynter is uniquely suited to the role of Clerk of the Court, and will use his vast personal experience with the public, and government agencies to serve Lake County citizens.

Q: *If elected, what is the first thing you would change in the Lake County Clerk and Comptroller Office and why?*

A: Jason Paynter's first objective will be the "Customer Experience," of the Clerk of Courts customers. Creating and fostering an environment anyone will feel comfortable in and treated like a neighbor is Jason's #1 priority. Anytime a civilian interacts with government agencies it can be nerve-racking and feel unwelcoming. Jason Paynter believes Lake County citizens deserve first-class customer service and he will make it his mission to deliver.

Q: *What improvements can be made in the management of the varied duties of the Office of Clerk of the Court and Comptroller?*

A: Jason Paynter is sure there are areas to be improved within the Office of the Clerk of Court and Comptroller, but currently on the outside it isn't fair to say. In this spirit, Jason will create a transition team made up of current employees, and respected peers from

role-model agencies/offices within the county. During this transitional phase improvements to be made will become clear, and Jason will use his experience in efficient administration to best serve Lake County.

County Commissions

Lake County Commissioner, District 2

Description:

The Board of County Commissioners is the primary legislative and policy-making body for the County. Each commissioner represents one of the five districts in which they reside and serves a four-year term

(Vote for One)

Candidates (choose 1):

Sean M. Parks



Party: Rep

Biographical Info:

Incumbent: INCUMBENT

Contact Phone: 352-988-7099

City of Residence: Clermont

Education: B.S. Environmental Science M.S. Engineering Management The Florida Institute of Technology

Website: <http://www.voteforsean.com>

Email: seanparks89@yahoo.com

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/Re-elect-Sean-M-Parks-for-Lake-County-Commission-District-2-358183709365/>

Twitter: twitter.com/seanparks89

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/v/rU0IP52_HhI

Other Social Media: LinkedIn Instagram

Questions:

Q: *In which community/professional organizations have you been active?*

A: I am an Eagle Scout. I volunteer with the Boy Scouts by teaching the Citizenship in Community, Citizenship in the Nation, and Environmental Science merit badges. I serve as a member of the Board of Directors for Buses N Backpacks and Brown Bags for Seniors (South Lake Community Ministries). I serve as an Ex-Officio member of the Board of Directors for the Lake County Educational Foundation. I serve on the Grant Review Committee for the South Lake Community Foundation. I volunteer and assist the Lake County Rowing Association. I am a past President for the Leesburg Sunrise Rotary Club. I am a member of the Clermont Kiwanis Club. I was recently elected by County Commissioners from around the State as Chairman of the Florida Counties Foundation (FCF), an organization that promotes advanced leadership training for local elected officials. The FCF also promotes civics courses, intergovernmental coordination, and the dissemination of best practices.

Q: *What experiences and skills qualify you for this position?*

A: I have a B.S. in Environmental Science and a M.S. in Engineering Management. I am an AICP certified planner and Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP). I own a small business. My wife Ivy and I have three beautiful children who attend Lake County public schools. We've been active serving the Lake County community for 18 years including in our church, the Church at South Lake. I have completed the Leadership Lake program. Last year I was honored to have completed the Leadership Florida program. I am active in the Lake County community, listening and learning from the people I serve. I participate regularly in "ride-alongs" with the Sheriff Department and the Fire Department and the Public Works Department.

Q: *Lake County needs to acquire land for conservation and preservation.*

A: 5

Q: *Explain your answer.*

A: Lake County's slogan is "Real Florida, Real Close". I participated in developing this new slogan and take great pride in promoting this mantra. I've heard concerns from many people in Lake County about how rapidly we are growing. I share their concern. If we are not careful, we could lose our sense of identity. There is both economic and social value in preserving native habitats and protecting wetlands.

Q: *Aside from land acquisition, addressed in the last question, describe the biggest challenge facing the County and how you plan to address it.*

A: I see a number of issues stemming from increased growth that we must address. We must make sure that new development is fiscally sustainable and is unique. We must make sure we don't become "any place America". We must support our first responders as their work load continues to grow while funding challenges increase. I support community-based policing and increased pay for police officers and fire fighters. The firefighter's role is changing. I see our fire stations becoming more community oriented providing health screening services and meeting space. Our firefighters will also help the community with disaster preparedness. Lastly, better roads are crucial. We can fund more road projects by allocating all extra penny sales tax revenues to road projects over the next ten years.

Tad Andrew Schnauffer II



Party: Rep

Biographical Info:

Incumbent:

Contact Phone: 352-551-5518

City of Residence: Minneola

Education: University of Florida -- BA Geography New York University -- MS Global Affairs

Website: <http://votetad.com>

Email: tad@votetad.com

Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/TadSchnauffer/?ref=br_tf

Questions:

Q: *In which community/professional organizations have you been active?*

A: Military Officers Association of America Veteran of Foreign Wars: Post 5277 Clermont
American Veterans: Post 1992 Mt. Dora Association of the United States Army National Rifle Association

Q: *What experiences and skills qualify you for this position?*

A: I grew up in Lake County and am proud to call it his home. I graduated from Eustis High School and have served in the Florida Guard for 11 years, leading major operations at home and abroad. My last assignment was the Deputy Program Manager for Warfighter Exercises at the National Guard Bureau where I managed a budget of 29 million dollars for exercises used to train the 50 state and four territory Army National Guards. Last year I returned from serving overseas as an Infantry Company Commander guarding the largest U.S. installation on the continent of Africa. I commanded 180 soldiers and officers in a combat zone while securing more than a billion dollars' worth of U.S. and Allied assets. I have also managed restaurants and currently manage the El Conquistador restaurant at the Mission Inn.

Q: *Lake County needs to acquire land for conservation and preservation.*

A: 4

Q: *Explain your answer.*

A: As of current, I believe we control a lot of land for conservation and preservation. I would only consider acquiring new lands for Lake County if there was a threat to our drinking water or other general threat. Areas like the Green Swamp have to be protected to ensure we have a stable future.

Q: *Aside from land acquisition, addressed in the last question, describe the biggest challenge facing the County and how you plan to address it.*

A: The biggest problem happens to be one of the 3T's of Tad: Term Limits – Transparency -- Low Taxes. The last one low taxes and an efficient/balanced budget is the biggest challenge facing our County. We need to have a balanced budget that is operating efficiently. Priorities have to be set within the budget and the taxpayers need to know

where their money is going and why. The budget will need a line-by-line review and continuous reviews to ensure that there is a minimal level of waste. This will keep taxes low and ensure that the government is getting the most out of each taxpayer dollar. Transparency will also help with this issue. It is the responsibility of elected officials to keep the citizens they represent informed of what the government is doing and why. Whether it is building roads or discussing regulations, every effort must be made to get that information out through social media, emails, websites, etc.

Water

Lake County Water Authority, At Large, District 2

Description:

The seven member Board of Trustees was established to control, conserve, protect, and improve the freshwater resources of Lake County. Each trustee serves a 4 year term.

(Vote for One)

Candidates (choose 1):

Vance L. Jochim

Party: Rep

Biographical Info:

Incumbent:

Contact Phone: 352-638-3578

Questions:

Q: *In which community/professional organizations have you been active?*

A: - no response -

Q: *What experiences and skills qualify you for this position?*

A: - no response -

Q: *What actions should the Water Authority take to conserve and protect the County's fresh water resources?*

A: - no response -

Q: *What ideas do you have to assist local governments dealing with storm water runoff?*

A: - no response -

Courtney Stokes



Party: Rep

Biographical Info:

Incumbent:

Contact Phone: 352-874-6160

City of Residence: Leesburg, FL

Education: B.S. Plant Science, University of Florida; M.S. Agronomy, University of Florida; M.S. Soil and Crop Science, Cornell University

Email: cas499@cornell.edu

Questions:

Q: *In which community/professional organizations have you been active?*

A: I am primarily involved as a sponsor or co-sponsor of a number of student groups through my job. Prior to moving back to Florida two years ago, I was a very active member of numerous campus clubs and student councils at my colleges.

Q: *What experiences and skills qualify you for this position?*

A: During my degree programs at UF and Cornell, I was involved in classwork and research involving aquatic ecosystems and, most specifically, invasive plants. As an Environmental Science teacher, I work to stay abreast of current issues pertaining to our aquatic systems and how people interact with these systems.

Q: *What actions should the Water Authority take to conserve and protect the County's fresh water resources?*

A: I believe a two-pronged approach is necessary. First, water conditions have already become degraded over many years, and continued remediation will help to clean up the water. Remediation can occur using a variety of methods, such as the existing NuRF operation and some city water treatment projects. Second, the Water Authority should work to prevent further issues. When dealing with environmental issues, prevention is often far more cost-effective than cleanup after allowing problems to occur. Stormwater treatment projects, as well as education of citizens to help them make informed decisions, can help keep pollutants out of our water. Whatever actions taken should be carefully considered in order to best utilize resources and most efficiently accomplish goals.

Q: *What ideas do you have to assist local governments dealing with storm water runoff?*

A: In addition to maintenance and evaluation and improvement of existing stormwater projects, I am interested in exploring the use of green space, new paving technologies, and other methods for reducing runoff and improving infiltration of water instead. I am also interested in the use of plants to take up excess nutrients, particularly because this can result in both water quality improvements and also community enjoyment of public areas. If water cleanup can be paired with community beautification or recreation, it increases value for citizens.

Circuit Court

5th Judicial Circuit, Group 4

Description:

The majority of jury trials in Florida take place before one judge of the circuit court. Most criminal and civil cases originate at this level. Circuit court judges serve for six-year terms.

(Vote for One)

Candidates (choose 1):

Don Barbee Jr



Party: N

Biographical Info:

Incumbent:

Contact Phone: 352-428-4454

Education: Juris Doctor - Quinnipiac University School of Law - Magna Cum Laude; (final year at University of Florida Levin College of Law); M.S. - Sociology, Southern Connecticut State Univ. - Magna Cum Laude; B.S. - Criminal Justice and Political Science, Sacred Heart University; FBI Academy, Quantico, VA - Graduate and Top Agent Award 2000; Connecticut Police Academy - graduate 1990.

Questions:

Q: *In which community/professional organizations have you been active?*

A: Florida Bar Association; Liaison to Florida Bar Juvenile Rules Committee; Hernando County Bar Association; Florida Court Clerks and Comptrollers - Board of Directors, New Clerk Academy Vice Chair and Coordinator; Florida Courts E-Filing Authority - Vice Chair and Board of Directors; Lifesouth Community Blood Center - Board of Directors; 5 Points of Life Advisory Council - Hernando County Chair; Dawn Center of Hernando County (Domestic Violence Shelter) - past Vice President and Board Member; First Hernando Youth Soccer - past Vice Commissioner, Board Member and Coach; First United Methodist Church - Staff Parish Relations Committee Oak Hill Hospital - Community Advisory Board Member Dixie Youth Softball - coach

Q: *What experiences and skills qualify you for this position?*

A: 19 years as a licensed Florida attorney spending time as a civil litigator, Assistant Division Counsel to the FBI (collateral to regular Special Agent duties), Supervisory Assistant State Attorney, Director of Court Services and General Counsel to the Clerk of Court and for last 5 1/2 years as the elected Clerk and Comptroller acting as my own general counsel the entire time. I have experience in all types of Florida law. In addition to almost two decades of varied experience in Florida law, I would bring a very unique perspective to the bench. The Clerk's Office is truly the face of our judicial system. The praises, complaints and criticisms of our justice system are heard by my staff and I on a daily basis. The constituents want consistency, clarity and efficiency from their judicial branch. I hear this message loud and clear and would work exceedingly hard to ensure their expectations are met.

Q: *Briefly describe your philosophy of the judicial role, the qualities that are most important for the role, and the greatest challenges to the role.*

A: The role of the judge is often properly equated to the umpire of a baseball game. It is not the umpire's role to define the strike zone or the rules of the game. The umpire, like the judge, must review the facts presented and make the call. It is important for our judiciary to appreciate and have a commitment to the separation of powers and not re-define the strike zone from the bench. Judges must be excellent listeners, engaged students of the law and remember to stay connected to their community. If I were honored with this new role, the greatest challenge would be the vast array of cases heard by our Circuit Courts. The newly elected judge could hear anything from criminal cases, probate, civil, family law or juvenile. I have to assume that mastering the area of law to which one is assigned is the greatest challenge for any new circuit judge.

Q: *Juvenile justice actions should emphasize civil citations, rehabilitation, and other alternatives to incarceration.*

A: 4

Q: *Explain your answer.*

A: The goal of the juvenile justice system is quite different from that of the adult system. The primary goal of our juvenile system is to re-direct behavior and properly socialize our children to be productive, law-abiding members of society. It is with this goal in mind that the suggestions contained in the question should be a high priority. The only reason "strongly agree" is not marked is because there is a small subset of our juvenile delinquent population that must be incarcerated, albeit temporarily in most situations, to protect society from the behavior and provide a more structured setting for re-socialization.

Edward C. Spaight



Party: N

Biographical Info:

Incumbent:**Contact Phone:** 352-651-3953**Education:** Western New England School of Law, Juris Doctor, 2001, Magna Cum Laude;
Siena College, B.A., Political Science, 1992, Cum Laude**Questions:****Q:** *In which community/professional organizations have you been active?***A:** Citrus County Bar Association: President 2016-2017 Florida Bar Association Wm. Reece Smith, Jr. Leadership Academy, Fellow 2016-2017 Maine State Bar Association Family Law Section: Vice Chair, 2008-2009; Secretary/Treasurer, 2006-2008 Penobscot County, Maine, Bar Association: Member, Board of Directors, 2005-2009 Inverness Primary School SAEC: Chairman 2010-2011, Member 2009-2010 City of Brewer, Maine, Planning Board: Chairman 2006-present, Member 2003-2009 I am also a Deacon at Seven Rivers Presbyterian Church, I have participated in performances at the Art Center of Citrus County, I have served as an assistant track and field coach at my daughter's high school, I have been a volunteer in my children's school and I am currently a candidate for membership with the Rotary Club of Inverness.**Q:** *What experiences and skills qualify you for this position?***A:** I have been a practicing attorney for the past 17 years -- representing real people with their legal problems. I have represented individuals and families in court on a wide range of legal matters, including Family, Civil, Corporate and Criminal cases. I was in private practice in the State of Maine. I represented individuals in divorces and child custody cases. I served as a guardian ad litem, I helped put small businesses together and served as the Chairman of my local planning board. After we moved to Florida, I went from never handling a criminal case to representing clients facing the death penalty within two years. I have been recognized by my peers as a leader in the practice of law. I have been Citrus County Bar President and was the vice chair of the Maine State Bar Family Law Section. I have given seminars to attorneys and judges on Family Law and Juvenile Delinquency Law. I worked my way through law school and I have served in all three branches of state government.**Q:** *Briefly describe your philosophy of the judicial role, the qualities that are most important for the role, and the greatest challenges to the role.***A:** I believe in judicial restraint. It is the role of the judiciary to follow the Constitution and to adhere to the laws as they are handed down by the Legislature. I understand the impact the courts can have in the lives of individuals, families and businesses. It is very important for cases to be addressed fairly, legally and as quickly as possible so that families are not completely destroyed by years of fighting in the courts, and businesses are not crippled by protracted litigation. A judge must be able to handle a heavy caseload effectively and efficiently and must always treat all people involved with the court system -- clerks, bailiffs, attorneys and litigants -- with respect. Legal matters are often contentious and emotional and it can be a challenge for a judge to keep his cool when everyone around him is losing theirs. I believe I have the necessary experience, temperament and respect for both the office I am seeking and for the people I hope to have the privilege to serve.**Q:** *Juvenile justice actions should emphasize civil citations, rehabilitation, and other alternatives to incarceration.***A:** 5**Q:** *Explain your answer.***A:** Nobody wants to criminalize children. Study after study has shown that children are not just little adults, but that children's brains -- including the capacity for executive thought and impulse control -- do not stop developing until sometime in their mid-20's. The Legislature has recognized this reality and has given clear direction that rehabilitation, civil citations and alternatives to incarceration are to be a primary focus of the juvenile justice system. I have represented children in Juvenile Court for several years. I believe that it is critically important for children to be represented by an experienced attorney, who is intimately familiar with the juvenile justice system. We can, and we should do everything possible under the law to help children who have committed crimes to learn from what they have done, to understand that all actions have consequences and -- where appropriate -- to have the chance to enter adulthood without the stain of a criminal record.

School Boards

Lake County School Board, District 1

Description:

The School Board determines the policies needed to operate and improve the public schools of the District. This includes overseeing all decisions related to both paid and volunteer school personnel, providing adequate instructional materials and technology, ensuring appropriate upkeep of school property, and visiting the schools to observe, give suggestions for improvement, and advise citizens.

(Vote for One)

Candidates (choose 1):

Dr. Perry Berkowitz



Party: N

Biographical Info:

Incumbent:

Contact Phone: 352-326-8035

City of Residence: Leesburg, Florida

Education: Bachelor of Science in Education: State University of New York at Cortland

Masters in Education Administration: Harvard University Doctorate in Education

Leadership: University of Massachusetts Additional graduate work at Knox College; NYU;

Iona College; State University of NY at New Paltz and at Oneonta

Website: <http://PerryForTheBoard.com>

Email: perryberkowitzcampaign@gmail.com

Facebook: <http://perryberkowitzforschoolboarddistrict1>

Twitter: twitter.com/pberkowitz

Questions:

Q: *In which community/professional organizations have you been active?*

A: 2016 - present: Elected Secretary/Treasurer Plantation at Leesburg Home Owners

Association (3000 homes) 2016 - 2020 Elected North Lake County Hospital District Board

of Trustees 2017- present: Interfaith Council of Lake County Board Member 2013-

present: Lake Concert Band Member- Treasurer since 2017 2013- present: Leesburg

Sunset Rotary Member- Board of Directors since 2016 2013- present Plantation at

Leesburg Theatrical Group member- Vice-president since 2017 2013- present Plantation Democrats Club member- vice-president since 2017 2003-2004 Rotary International District Governor District 7170 2006- 2013 Saint Catherine's Center for Family and Children Albany, NY 1993 - 1996 Leadership Rockland Board of Directors, Rockland County, NY

Q: *What experiences and skills qualify you for this position?*

A: 2001 -15 Associate Professor, Education Leadership, the College of Saint Rose, Albany, NY 2008 -12 Chair: Department of Education Leadership 2001 - Sole Proprietor, PLB Consulting, Organizational Development and Leadership Training 1996-01 Superintendent of Schools, Vestal, New York 2000-01 Adjunct Professor, SUNY Cortland 1988-01 Adjunct Professor, Binghamton University 1991- 96 Superintendent of Schools, Nyack, New York 1984- 91 Superintendent of Schools, Sidney, New York 1977- 84 Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Sidney, New York 1976- 77 Adjunct Professor, SUNY Delhi, New York 1975- 77 Principal, Sidney Senior High School, Sidney, New York 1973- 75 Assistant Principal, Shepherd Hill Regional High School, Dudley, Massachusetts 1973- 74 Adjunct Professor, University of Massachusetts, graduate school of education 1972- 73 Principal, Charlton High School, Charlton, MA 1972- 73 Student Teacher Supervisor, Elementary Education, U of Massachusetts

Q: *Describe one or more specific measures you would support to improve the ability to attract and retain high quality teachers.*

A: Why am I running? ☐ Lake County Schools serve 43000 students, 26 percent of whom are living in poverty. Over 2400 of them are considered *homeless. These students need full access to enriched curricula. They must have their talents discovered and nurtured. They need access to all curricula in all disciplines in every school. In short, I want to work to insure that all students have equal opportunities for an education that enriches their minds, bodies and hearts. ☐ I want to work to insure that school leaders and teachers are provided with: (1) A clear mission, (2) The authority to carry out that mission, and (3) Freedom from micromanagement. ☐ I want to work to insure that students' and teachers' voices are heard especially when they plead for measures that will help them feel safe in their schools and especially when overwhelmingly they tell us that: they do not want teachers to have guns in schools!

Q: *The District should allow qualified school administrators to carry guns under the provisions of Florida's newly enacted school guardianship program.*

A: 1

Q: *Explain your answer.*

A: School Administrators are educators. They lead teachers and as such their job is to support teaching and learning. They chose education of children as their profession, not law enforcement. Carrying concealed weapons changes that perspective drastically! The National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO) warn against arming school personnel: "NASRO strongly recommends that no firearms be on a school campus except those carried by carefully selected, specially trained school resource officers, who are by definition active, sworn law enforcement officers. (Two of the reasons are shown below) 1. Law enforcement officers who respond to an incident at a school could mistake for an assailant a teacher or any other armed person who is not in a uniform. 2. Anyone who hasn't received the extensive training provided to law enforcement officers will likely be mentally unprepared to take a life. especially the life of a student assailant." (See <https://nasro.org>) I agree!!!

William John Mathias



Party: N

Biographical Info:

Incumbent: INCUMBENT

Contact Phone: 352-326-3434

City of Residence: 5117 Banana Point Dr. Okahumpka, FL 34762

Education: Master of Arts in Organizational Management

Website: <http://billmathias.com>

Email: mfec@aol.com

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/MathiasLakeCoSchoolBoard/>

Questions:

Q: *In which community/professional organizations have you been active?*

A: American Legion Post 101- Bushnell, FL Awarded lifetime membership for service. St Paul's Catholic Church - Leesburg, FL Since 1982 St. Paul's Catholic School Board : Service 2000-2008 Lake Tech (Vo-Tech) Advisory Board, Eustis, FL Service: 1983-1992 Lake County School Board 2012 - present

Q: *What experiences and skills qualify you for this position?*

A: Our board current strength is its diversity and respect for each other. With 36 years as founder of Mathias Foodservice I bring a unique business perspective. I was recognized for my leadership in 2017- 2018 as School Board member of the year for Florida. I received the Lake County Chamber Alliance 2018 Public Service award for my service on the LCSB

Q: *Describe one or more specific measures you would support to improve the ability to attract and retain high quality teachers.*

A: I have worked for six years for equity in per student funding. This year we received a one time compression of \$2.9m. The work now is to get this one time funding a permanent part of the FEFP. This ultimately would mean an additional \$12m per year. This in large part would benefit teachers and our classified workers. I supported the Superintendent reduction in district staff redeploing almost \$2m for the benefit of teachers. I will continue to support the reduction of high stake test(s).

Q: *The District should allow qualified school administrators to carry guns under the provisions of Florida's newly enacted school guardianship program.*

A: 1

Q: *Explain your answer.*

A: As you know I have advocated for this program. I believe we have an obligation to do everything to protect our kids. In addition to the guardian, I supported the paradigm change in how our teachers respond to an active shooter. I also recognize that you could have fifty armed guardians and it will not stop a mentally sick person from doing harm. The key is early identification and intervention. I support out .75 mileage increase to create a sustainable funding source for mental health services in our schools.

Michael Reuben Merrill Sykes



Party: N

Biographical Info:

Incumbent:

Contact Phone: 910-545-5766

City of Residence: Mascotte

Education: Bachelor of Applied Science in Business Administration from Campbell University in 2016

Email: mikesykesforschoolboard@gmail.com

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/VoteMikeSykes>

Questions:

Q: *In which community/professional organizations have you been active?*

A: I am a part of the Lake County Education Association.

Q: *What experiences and skills qualify you for this position?*

A: I have Business degree, 12 years experience in the Marine Corps, and I am also a teacher in this county currently. Understanding the budget, what teachers need, and don't need, and any and all aspects of security within our county can be accomplished through these experiences.

Q: *Describe one or more specific measures you would support to improve the ability to attract and retain high quality teachers.*

A: Having teachers placed at the front, instead of last, through ensuring that a contract is complete BEFORE the teachers start the school year is a very good start. We CAN NOT have teachers spend their 196 day contract working their hardest to find out in the end that their efforts weren't worth anything. The next piece is making sure that our teachers have a voice and are heard in this county. If our teachers want to get ahold of a board member, they should have every right to. Making sure they are educated on how to do that is key.

Q: *The District should allow qualified school administrators to carry guns under the provisions of Florida's newly enacted school guardianship program.*

A: 1

Q: *Explain your answer.*

A: As a combat veteran, there is no one that will understand what it takes to point a weapon at another human being and potentially end their life. In the military, we are trained constantly under strict discipline and repetition to ensure that we will be able to act immediately in the face of danger. When given the options by the state, the only option that made sense was to put resource officers in our schools. These individuals are trained, constantly think about the worst case scenario, and how to effectively engage a target in their daily duties. This keeps their training fresh in their minds and allows them to be ready at all times. An Administrator's mind is on a whole host of different

responsibilities day in and day out. The security aspect would only be a collateral duty. Complacency sets in and the risk to the students is increased. The different emotions that affect your mind and body during those moments and can lead to additional students being hurt.

Lake County School Board, District 5

Description:

The School Board determines the policies needed to operate and improve the public schools of the District. This includes overseeing all decisions related to both paid and volunteer school personnel, providing adequate instructional materials and technology, ensuring appropriate upkeep of school property, and visiting the schools to observe, give suggestions for improvement, and advise citizens.

(Vote for One)

Candidates (choose 1):

Stephanie Luke



Party: N

Biographical Info:

Incumbent: INCUMBENT

Contact Phone: 352-516-2578

City of Residence: Eustis

Education: Masters Degree in Mathematics and Science Education with an emphasis in Technology

Email: mytlea23@icloud.com

Facebook: <http://Stephanie Luke for Lake County School Board>

Twitter: twitter.com/mytlea23

Questions:

Q: *In which community/professional organizations have you been active?*

A: Eustis Women's Service League, Kiwanis of Umatilla, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, Florida Council of Teachers of Mathematics

Q: *What experiences and skills qualify you for this position?*

A: I have been an educator for 18 years, serving in multiple capacities. I have worked as a teacher in Lake County, as the Elementary Mathematics Program Specialist and then as the Project Manager for Evaluation and Compensation before exiting the county to begin

working as an instructor for the University of Central Florida. During my time at UCF, I also supervise student teachers and coordinate their internship experiences, while also consulting throughout the United States in the area of Mathematics. This continuous study of education has allowed me to effectively make decisions regarding allocations of funding that will work and that are teacher & kid approved. I also have established relationships with teachers, administrators, and parents throughout our county which allow me to have a conduit when making decisions that impact schools in the county (I.e. allocations, resources, and policies). These relationships have been key to my success on the board for the past four years.

Q: *Describe one or more specific measures you would support to improve the ability to attract and retain high quality teachers.*

A: Three years ago we increased the starting salary of beginning teachers in an effort to attract high quality educators. In addition, the establishment of the Tavares High School Teaching Academy is a "grow your own" program that seeks to promote students to successfully complete a teacher education program and then return to Lake County for their career. In regards to retention, we have recently revamped our beginning teacher program to more effectively support new teachers so they're more likely to stay. I also feel strongly that our administrators are the key to teachers staying or going. If they value the work of their teachers and support them, they will stay. People don't leave jobs, they leave bosses... if we can continue to work towards establishing trust and respect, and overall professionalism, our teachers will stay. This is a relationship piece that the current board and administration continue to promote.

Q: *The District should allow qualified school administrators to carry guns under the provisions of Florida's newly enacted school guardianship program.*

A: 4

Q: *Explain your answer.*

A: Considering that Sherriff Grinnell must ordain these qualified administrators as special deputies before they're able to carry a concealed weapon, I am in agreement to this protection effort as doing nothing is not the answer. That being said, we will also continue to strive to place an officer (police or sheriff's deputy) at every school and further I plan to work with our new representative and Representative Sullivan to ensure the language in the senate bill allows us to adequately protect our children without limiting the ability to hire an outside security firm who employs retired veterans and police officers to protect our children. Most compelling to me is that my very own children are sitting in classrooms in Lake County and I want all our children protected from evil that exists in this world everyday and with the best protection we can offer.

Peter Tarby



Party: N

Biographical Info:**Incumbent:****Contact Phone:** 352-483-6354**City of Residence:** Umatilla, Florida**Education:** AA Degree Business**Questions:****Q:** *In which community/professional organizations have you been active?***A:** I have been involved with several local Chamber of Commerce for individual causes. Family member Umatilla Historical Society. Member Realtor Association of Lake and Sumter Counties.**Q:** *What experiences and skills qualify you for this position?***A:** I served 15 years at Umatilla High School as a Substitute Teacher and Varsity Coach. 9 years on the Umatilla City Council. -- 5 years as President or Vice President. Past Mayor of Umatilla. Past President of the Florida League of Cities for Lake County. Served several years on the Impact Fee and Solid Waste Committee for the Lake County Commission.**Q:** *Describe one or more specific measures you would support to improve the ability to attract and retain high quality teachers.***A:** We need better support and mentoring for new teachers, better pay and improving the current evaluation system for all teachers.**Q:** *The District should allow qualified school administrators to carry guns under the provisions of Florida's newly enacted school guardianship program.***A:** 4**Q:** *Explain your answer.***A:** The current Board has voted 3-2 in favor of the policy and I am totally confident in Sheriff Grinell that he will with great due diligence find those who have volunteered and are able to handle this awesome challenge in our schools to find the right administrators who can successfully pass the rigorous requirements. I would hope that we can work with our local police departments to find better solutions.

Municipal

Clermont City Council, Seat 3

Description:

The City is governed by five elected city council members, including the mayor. The Council appoints and oversees the work of the City Manager, who, serving as the chief executive officer, administers all city operations. Each commissioner serves a 2 year term.

(Vote for One)**Candidates (choose 1):****Gail Ash****Party:** N**Biographical Info:****Incumbent:****Contact Phone:** 407-614-2634**Questions:****Q:** *In which community/professional organizations have you been active?***A:** - no response -**Q:** *What experiences and skills qualify you for this position?***A:** - no response -**Q:** *Describe the biggest challenge facing the community and how you plan to address it.***A:** - no response -

Q: *What action would you take if you perceived a fellow council member had a conflict of interest in a matter before the Council and did not disclose it?*

A: - no response -

Jack Kruse



Party: N

Biographical Info:

Incumbent:

City of Residence: Clermont

Education: Bachelor of Arts Degree in Business from Rowan University

Email: kruseformayor@cfl.rr.com

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/607670352917071>

Questions:

Q: *In which community/professional organizations have you been active?*

A: - no response -

Q: *What experiences and skills qualify you for this position?*

A: - no response -

Q: *Describe the biggest challenge facing the community and how you plan to address it.*

A: - no response -

Q: *What action would you take if you perceived a fellow council member had a conflict of interest in a matter before the Council and did not disclose it?*

A: - no response -

Keith Mullins



Party: N

Biographical Info:

Incumbent:

Contact Phone: 352-978-1704

City of Residence: Clermont

Education: BBA Marketing Western Michigan University

Facebook: <http://Vote Keith Mullins for Mayor>

Questions:

Q: *In which community/professional organizations have you been active?*

A: South Lake Chamber of Commerce (past president), Clermont Downtowm Partnership (treasurer), South Lake Kiwanis (past president), Leadership Lake County class of 1991, South Lake Animal League (past president)

Q: *What experiences and skills qualify you for this position?*

A: Served 18 years on Clermont City Council, Chaired Lake County Citizens Sales Tax Oversight Committee, Served on the Board of Lake Emergency Medical Services, I have managed departments in multi-million dollar businesses and currently own a small business, I have shown the ability to bring various parties together to compromise and solve issues for the good of the community.

Q: *Describe the biggest challenge facing the community and how you plan to address it.*

A: Recently the community has become fragmented and distrustful and disrespectful of each other. As Mayor I can set the tone of the meetings and return Clermont to the friendly town it once was. Together we can build a future where we can work, live and play together.

Q: *What action would you take if you perceived a fellow council member had a conflict of interest in a matter before the Council and did not disclose it?*

A: The first step would be to meet with the City Manager and City Attorney and ask them to look into the matter. Based upon their answers I would follow the advice of the League of Cities Ethics Attorney. Florida Sunshine Laws would need to be followed, as my mother counseled me years ago, "Two wrongs don't make a right."

Fruitland Park Commissioner, District 2

Description:

The Commission consists of five members each representing one district within the city. Commissions are elected by the voters who live in their district. The Commission appoints and oversees the work of the City Manager, who, serving as the chief executive officer, administers all city operations. Each commissioner serves a 4 year term.

(Vote for One)

Candidates (choose 1):

Fred Collins



Party: N

Biographical Info:

Incumbent:

Contact Phone: 352-399-6175

City of Residence: Fruitland Park, FL

Education: Graduate Wentworth Institute of Technology

Email: fredandjanc@brighthouse.com

Other Social Media: Although I am very computer literate, I refuse to participate in Facebook or Twitter.

Questions:

Q: *In which community/professional organizations have you been active?*

A: I took over a failing baseball league (8 teams) in Boston and reorganized it into 22 very successful teams (ages 6 through adult). That league, Savin Hill Baseball, is still very active and successful to this day. When our local church, St. Williams in Dorchester, MA, burned down I was made president of the Rebuilding Committee. The church was rebuilt in two years. President of the Staff Pastor Parish Relationship Committee at Keystone United Methodist Church in Odessa, FL 2004. Member of the Choir at Keystone United Methodist Church in Odessa, FL 2002-2004. President of the Windsor Park Homeowners Association, Odessa, FL 2005-2006. My wife and I started a golf league in the Village of Pine Ridge (pineridgeaces.com) with 16 golfers on January 7, 2016. We accept golfers from all villages and presently have 375 active members. Lifetime member of The Villages Homeowners Association Region & CDD: 11

Q: *What experiences and skills qualify you for this position?*

A: I worked for 13 years in Civil and Highway Engineering prior to entering the world of corporate management. I oversaw the day-to-day function of a high-tech sheet metal company and in its first year, sales went from under \$1 million per year to consistently over \$1 million per month thereafter. I negotiated thousands of contracts, big and small and culled great relationships with vendors. I have the experience to review proposals, determine the viability of the proposal, ascertain the benefit of the project, and ensure that it is carried out in the most fair and cost-effective manner.

Q: *Describe the biggest challenge facing the community and how you plan to address it.*

A: The biggest challenge is uniting The Villages and Fruitland Park. The upcoming election will be the first opportunity that the Villages residents of Fruitland Park will have to participate in the city government. If elected I will be a strong voice for the residents of

The Villages. I will make sure that the city overall has the best police and fire protection possible, while maintaining cost effectiveness. I will ensure that proposed projects are for the benefits of the entire city.

Q: *What action would you take if you perceived a fellow commissioner had a conflict of interest in a matter before the Commission and did not disclose it?*

A: I would have no choice but to call for a special meeting of the Fruitland Park Commissioners to address the issue and demand that the Commissioner in question recuse him/herself from the matter or resign.

August J. Kellerman

Party: N

Biographical Info:

Incumbent:

Contact Phone: 618-967-3534

City of Residence: The Villages,Fl.

Education: Four years high,three years trade school,six years in the Air Force

Email: augiek46@yahoo.com

Questions:

Q: *In which community/professional organizations have you been active?*

A: While living in my home town in Illinois I was an active member of the American Legion for thirty years,a fifty year member of the Illinois brick layers union,member of the UMWA for seventeen years,IMRF member for eight years.

Q: *What experiences and skills qualify you for this position?*

A: I served as Finance Commissioner in my home town of Pinckneyville,Illinois for four years.I then was elected as Mayor for another four years.

Q: *Describe the biggest challenge facing the community and how you plan to address it.*

A: One of the challenges I would address is finding funds to help promote a closer relationship between the various departments of City Hall and community members.Hosting open monthly forums, to discuss various options that could help our community prosper.

Q: *What action would you take if you perceived a fellow commissioner had a conflict of interest in a matter before the Commission and did not disclose it?*

A: I would ask the city council members and Mayor to go into an executive session in order to discuss this matter.

John Mobilian



Party: N

Biographical Info:

Incumbent:**Contact Phone:** 352-571-4193**City of Residence:** The Villages**Questions:****Q:** *In which community/professional organizations have you been active?***A:** I have worked for Mission House in Jacksonville, feeding the homeless for 2 years.**Q:** *What experiences and skills qualify you for this position?***A:** I was a professional airline pilot, responsible for the lives of my crew and passengers. Many life altering decisions had to be made every time I went up in the air. I know how to balance a checkbook.**Q:** *Describe the biggest challenge facing the community and how you plan to address it.***A:** Fruitland Park is growing exponentially and that will cause problems. Keeping track of the growth and the monies collected will be the responsibility of the Commission. Making sure the burden of the tax load will not be carried by one section of the community.**Q:** *What action would you take if you perceived a fellow commissioner had a conflict of interest in a matter before the Commission and did not disclose it?***A:** I truly don't like this question before I even take the seat. Obviously, if illegal activities were happening, I would say something to the party at hand.

Referenda

Approval of additional three-quarter mill ad valorem tax for school safety and mental health service

Description:

BALLOT QUESTION: Shall an additional three-quarter (0.75) mill of School District ad valorem millage tax, beginning July 1, 2019 and ending June 30, 2023, be approved for the implementation of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act and for enhancement of school safety, security, and mental health services, creating a sustainable funding source critical to improving safety for our children, prevention programs and services, and emergency response?

Vote Yes**Biographical Info:****Questions:****Q:** *What a Yes and No vote means.***A:** A 0.75-mill property tax will begin July 1, 2019 and end June 30, 2023, generating about \$16 million per year to help the district hire school safety employees and pay for recommended in-house alternative education programs, in-school suspension programs and school hardening measures that would make buildings and classrooms more secure.**Vote No****Biographical Info:****Questions:****Q:** *What a Yes and No vote means.***A:** Taxpayers would not pay the additional 0.75-mill property tax.