

Candidate Forum District 1 Commissioner

Additional Questions

Hackwin Devoe:

1. What are your specific plans to address the drivers of our tier one status.
 - a. What are your steps of progression?
 - b. How will you include residents in these decisions.

The drivers of our tier one status are built in the language of our zoning. That is, we are attractive to industries which bring in businesses that are not conducive to family living. While we can leverage this attractiveness, there must be a healthy balance between business and residency. Currently, we are unbalanced—overly develop with logistic hubs and warehouses. When you consider the makeup of thriving communities, you will find a healthy balance of varied income earners, affordable houses, mixed use facilities, greenspaces, and pedestrian friendly (walkable) infrastructure. We need to rezone so that we can become a community in which we can live, work, and play. Economic development has a critical component that is often overlooked: People attract businesses. Businesses understand that where people thrive, they, too, will thrive.

Prudent policy making and proper planning is the way forward. I have a policy that starts with “People First” and ends with “People First.”

MY POLICY GUIDE TO DECISION MAKING:

- 1) Citizens’ input, broad support (advisory boards), recommendation; do the people want it? The people’s input is the foundation of decision-making.
- 2) Is it value adding to the physical characteristics of the community? Will it foster a Work, Live, and Play community?
- 3) How does it impact land use, transportation, infrastructure, utilities, and greenspace?
- 4) How will it be paid for? Debt management, grants, and investments are key components to balancing the budget.
- 5) Long term sustainability? Building with current and future generations in mind.

2. Can you share one thing from your plan as District 1 Commissioner that sets you apart from other candidates?

I have over 23 years of experience in doing this very work—community building. My employment with DeKalb County government dealt with the very nature of the work involved with serving the people, being a good steward of the people’s tax dollars, working with business and developers, ensuring that the needs of the community have priority. I have a Local Government certification from the UGA’s Carl Vinson Institute of Government. I have been a project manager on various assignments that dealt with public policy. I am familiar with the cogs and levers of local government. I know what it takes to build a consensus to achieve goals. Succinctly, I am ready to work on day one.

3. How will you better serve the senior citizens of Clayton County, and what additional services will be provided to senior citizens?

Clayton County has done an excellent job in serving our senior citizens with the senior centers such as the Sonna Gregory Senior Center. I would like to continue to build on this with walkable spaces and pedestrian friendly zones with street furniture and lighting. Safety is a vital component to senior living. I would ensure that we protect senior services when balancing the budget and employ programs that help with affordable housing. Seniors are the most vulnerable members of our community, and we must protect them and their interests. This is part of my platform of “People First.”

4. How are you going to engage the members in the community?

As part of my policy making rubric, community engagement is the first step. Consequently, all forms of communication will be exercised. While social media is prevalent with a large demographic of citizens, there are still a considerable number of people that are not on social media. Many seniors obtain information via newspapers, television, and townhalls meetings. It is imperative that the Commissioner be visible and touchable. I plan to have a standing meeting with the public so that all citizens can be heard, and their issues addressed.

5. It was stated that our economic development is tied to the income of residents. How do you plan, or what can be done to increase incomes and change the perception of the citizens to potential businesses?

Rezoning to accommodate residential homes and mixed-use development is the key to success. Overdevelopment of logistic centers and warehouses has turned potential residents of all income levels away from Clayton County. Just as we are attractive to businesses due to our location in the metro area and access to the airport and interstates highways, we are attractive to families as well. However, people want to raise their family in a community that is safe, walkable, and beautiful. The quality of family-oriented communities always attracts quality businesses.

6. How will you communicate with voters that don't get emails?

In my church we have a simple saying as it pertained to informing the members, "Calls, cards, and visitations." That is, you use every means available to reach people. In this light, I will employ calling-posts, mailers, and town hall meetings. The US postal system, although it is dubbed as snail-mail, is an effective way to reach people.