

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF WOOD COUNTY

2002 PRIMARY ELECTION VOTERS GUIDE

This candidate information is brought to you by the League of Women Voters of Wood County as a public service. The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization that encourages informed participation in government. It does not support or oppose any political candidate or party.

All candidates on the ballot were given an equal opportunity to respond to our nonpartisan questions. A letter was sent via USPS to all candidates at mailing addresses from the official filing forms posted by the West Virginia Secretary of State and the Wood County Clerk. A reminder notice was sent close to our deadline. Unopposed candidates were asked to provide a statement.

Candidate responses are printed exactly as received, including spelling, grammar and content. Word limit was 60 words for biography and each answer. Candidates who were asked to submit a statement to the voters were given a 120-word limit.

Early Voting at the Judge Black Annex is April 28 – May 7, and at community sites May 3-7, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays, and 9 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturdays.

On Election Day May 10, polls are open 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

For questions about the election, call the County Clerk's office. 304-424-1860

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U S HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, DISTRICT 2

► OFFICE US House of Representatives, District 2

CANDIDATE Susan Buscher-Lochocki

ADDRESS Morgantown

PARTY Republican

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Biographical Information: Born 1965, Travis AFB, CA. Mother, past-Wife, daughter, sister, etc.. Dadaist, Peace Promoter, Children's Daycamp Volunteer, Executive Board member, past-VP Events AWCZ, past-President of Unitarian Universalist's of Basel & past-U.S.Presidential Candidate 2020, Currently, Republican Candidate for WV's U.S.House of Representatives, 2nd District Seat and Director of Open Air Experimental Art Studios in WV, where humans and nature meet.

QUESTION 1. Historically, the Voting Rights Act enjoyed bipartisan support. Will you commit to supporting voting rights in the next Congress? If not, please explain what specific Federal legislation you will support to protect voting rights and remove voting barriers for all citizens of WV and other states?

ANSWER Yes, I plan to support and defend this important “act”.

QUESTION 2 Last year, the House of Representatives passed the Equality Act, which would prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity. When the Equality Act comes up in the next Congress, will you vote for it? If not, please explain your opposition.

ANSWER Yes, I would vote for this act.

QUESTION 3. WV has a responsibility to meet at least a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. What measures do you support to make sure that WV complies with IPCC Goals per the Paris Agreement?

ANSWER Live locally, work from home, add bike Lanes, small town living, plant oak trees, shut down roads on Sundays to vehicles start a saving Sundays, Go Solar voucher for rooftops only, fix roads so we can you use vehicles that are more fuel efficient convert cars and trucks to Hybrid Power promote e-bike use clean energy mass transit system.

► OFFICE US House of Representatives, District 2

CANDIDATE Angela J. Dwyer

ADDRESS Martinsburg

PARTY Democratic

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION Coatesville, Pennsylvania Birth Place -Daughter of Isabel and saxophonist “King Twigg” Linwood Mckinley Faris Smith Sr. -Mother and Father owned the famous bar “The Middle East Inn” located in Pottstown, Pennsylvania. -Graduate of Coatesville Area Senior High School -Graduate of Morgan State University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration -President of The Student Government Association at Morgan (Exceeded word limit)

QUESTION 1. Historically, the Voting Rights Act enjoyed bipartisan support. Will you commit to supporting voting rights in the next Congress? If not, please explain what specific Federal legislation you will support to protect voting rights and remove voting barriers for all citizens of WV and other states?

ANSWER Yes, I would vote to protect voters Rights.

QUESTION 2

Last year, the House of Representatives passed the Equality Act, which would prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity. When the Equality Act comes up in the next Congress, will you vote for it? If not, please explain your opposition.

ANSWER I would vote yes for the Equality Act

QUESTION 3.

WV has a responsibility to meet at least a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. What measures do you support to make sure that WV complies with IPCC Goals per the Paris Agreement?

ANSWER Canceling Climate Change is paramount. Fossil fuels and deforestation by humans has increased climate change. We must support saving energy products as a nation for reducing carbon emissions.

▶ OFFICE US House of Representatives, District 2

CANDIDATE NAME Rhonda A. Hercules

ADDRESS Wheeling

PARTY Republican

Candidate did not reply

▶ OFFICE US House of Representatives, District 2

CANDIDATE David B. McKinley

ADDRESS Wheeling

PARTY Republican

Candidate did not reply

▶ OFFICE US House of Representatives, District 2

CANDIDATE Alexander X. Mooney

ADDRESS Charles Town

PARTY Republican

Candidate did not reply

▶ OFFICE US House of Representatives, District 2

CANDIDATE Mike Seckman

ADDRESS West Union

PARTY Republican

Candidate did not reply

▶ OFFICE US House of Representatives, District 2

CANDIDATE Barry Wendell

ADDRESS Morgantown

PARTY Democratic

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION I moved to Morgantown in July 2012. Since then, I've been teaching rock music history at OLLI and served two two-year terms on Morgantown City Council from 2017-2021. I was born and raised in Baltimore. I'm married to Rabbi Joe Hample of Tree of Life Congregation. I taught in public schools in Los Angeles from 1986-2004.

QUESTION 1. Historically, the Voting Rights Act enjoyed bipartisan support. Will you commit to supporting voting rights in the next Congress? If not, please explain what specific Federal legislation you will support to protect voting rights and remove voting barriers for all citizens of WV and other states?

ANSWER

I support the voting rights protections introduced, but blocked in the Senate. I support new voting rights protections that the Supreme Court can't overturn.

QUESTION 2

Last year, the House of Representatives passed the Equality Act, which would prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity. When the Equality Act comes up in the next Congress, will you vote for it? If not, please explain your opposition.

ANSWER I absolutely support the Equality Act.

QUESTION 3.

WV has a responsibility to meet at least a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. What measures do you support to make sure that WV complies with IPCC Goals per the Paris Agreement?

ANSWER Morgantown City Council accepted a study by a WVU grad student that suggested changing light bulbs and thermostats in city buildings. West Virginia needs to move away from coal and natural gas to solar and renewable energy.

We can support for workers in the fossil fuel industry, either through retraining or an early retirement package.

WV STATESENATE, DISTRICT

WV SENATE, DISTRICT 3

OFFICE WV Senate, District 3

CANDIDATE Mike Azinger

ADDRESS Vienna

PARTY Republican

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

I have a Bible degree and master's in pastoral theology degree--perfect for politics! I work in the family self-storage business. I was elected to the House of Delegates in 2014 and elected to the Senate in 2016 and again in 2018. I also have a local Christian radio show dealing with culture, politics, and current events. Website: AzingerForSenate.com

QUESTION 1. What role do you see for state government in reversing West Virginia's population decline?

ANSWER Population loss in WV was not good in the last decade; but what many don't know is that at the end of the last decade population loss decreased, and there were even reports of population gains in 2021. Businesses like Nucor will continue to come if we continue to cut taxes and regulations, offer economic, education, and health freedom.

QUESTION 2. What changes in current election laws would you favor that would make voting safer and more accessible to all West Virginia voters?

ANSWER The problem with elections is far-leftists like Zuckerberg being allowed to pour hundreds of millions of dollars into elections across the country; elections being stolen in the middle of the night, etc. We passed a law to prevent "Zuckbucks" from happening again in WV in the last session. Voter integrity is essential to keeping our republic! →

QUESTION 3. What measures would you support that would alleviate the shortage of qualified teachers in West Virginia?

ANSWER I gladly voted for the 5% pay-raise for state employees, which included teachers (of which we have many great ones). A good education system is essential to bringing quality businesses and industry. I strongly support education choice, which is why I voted for charter schools, vouchers, and micro-schools. Education, like everything else in America, should be about freedom.

► OFFICE WV State Senate, District 3

CANDIDATE John R. Kelly

ADDRESS Parkersburg

PARTY Republican

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Educated Wood County Schools, Graduated Mountain State College, AAS; PCC (WVU-P), AAS; Glenville State, RBS. US Air Force veteran. Retired DuPont. Served on Council, 85-96, 2013-2014. Council President, 3yrs; held VP, Chairmanship of Public Works, Finance, and Personnel Committees. Five years on Area Roundtable. Elected to the WV House of Delegates 2014 to Present

QUESTION 1. What role do you see for state government in reversing West Virginia’s population decline?

ANSWER The West Virginia Legislature must continue to improve the business climate in our state. Building a fair and balanced tax base for businesses as well as our residents, providing insensitive that encourage job creation and development. Jobs that pay livable wages and provide quality of life benefits. Good jobs bring people, people won’t come if there are not jobs.

QUESTION 2. What changes in current election laws would you favor that would make voting safer and more accessible to all West Virginia voters?

ANSWER In person voting. both early and on election day has always been the safest system. Extending an additional week to early voting might give more opportunity for folks to show up at the polls. Government has a responsibility to provide adequate voting times, and our citizens need to know when elections are taking place. Responsibility is a two way street.

QUESTION 3. What measures would you support that would alleviate the shortage of qualified teachers in West Virginia?

ANSWER It is believed that one out of three teachers leave within the first three years of teaching, and 50% of new teachers after five years. Teacher pay remains an issue, insurance and benefits also come into play. Quality of curriculum and educational standards for teaching are problematic. We must get back to the basics, and leave social issues to family.

OFFICE WV State Senate, District 3

CANDIDATE Jody Murphy

ADDRESS Parkersburg

PARTY Democratic

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

The MOV is my Home. I want it to be home to our children and their children. We need to attract and retain residents, court new business, development and entrepreneurship, and grow existing businesses. I have decades of skills, contacts and know-how to make the MOV a place to live, work and play. I am committed to working, tax-paying residents.

QUESTION 1. What role do you see for state government in reversing West Virginia's population decline?

ANSWER We have to try new things: give land away, original entrepreneurship ideas, income-tax free retirement communities, offer breaks and incentives to attract companies AND workers. This MUST be a partnership with local government and communities that want to grow. State government should provide a hand up to help, but not a hand out. This has to be a partnership.

QUESTION 2. What changes in current election laws would you favor that would make voting safer and more accessible to all West Virginia voters?

ANSWER To my knowledge, there are no issues in WV regarding voter suppression, safety or accessibility. We have so many other problems in this state, why add an issue that doesn't appear in need of fixing?

QUESTION 3. What measures would you support that would alleviate the shortage of qualified teachers in West Virginia?

ANSWER Recruit and Retain tax-paying residents and their families. Taxpayers and their families have to stay in the MOV to genuinely increase pay and resources for our teachers and educational systems. We can not prop up our educational system on the backs of an ever-decreasing tax base. To improve education and teachers, we must grow!

WV HOUSE OF DELEGATES, District 10

► OFFICE WV House of Delegates, District 10

CANDIDATE Bill Anderson

ADDRESS Williamstown

PARTY Republican

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION Born: Parkersburg, WV. Education: Graduate: Williamstown High School, Marshall University, BA, West Virginia University, MA. Veteran: US Air Force. Retired Teacher. Legislative Service, Chairman, Committee on Energy and Manufacturing. Member: Finance, Pensions, Political Subdivisions, and Rules Committees.

QUESTION 1. What role do you see for state government in reversing West Virginia's population decline?

ANSWER Expansion of Broadband will enable people who can work remotely to live, work, and raise their families in West Virginia. In the last few years, the legislature has taken steps to make our state more attractive for investment. State government needs to continue eliminating regulations which discourage investment by new businesses or expansion of existing ones.

QUESTION 2. What changes in current election laws would you favor that would make voting safer and more accessible to all West Virginia voters?

ANSWER Our present election laws are serving our state well. The early voting period provides an extended period for casting in person ballots prior to election day. The absentee ballot process allows voters with issues or working away from West Virginia on election day to request and vote an absentee ballot.

QUESTION 3. What measures would you support that would alleviate the shortage of qualified teachers in West Virginia?

ANSWER Teacher shortages exist in select areas such as math, science, special education, and foreign languages. Focusing college scholarships and other aide to encourage students to specialize in these fields would help. As a state, we need to continue improving teacher salaries toward the national average.

► OFFICE WV House of Delegates, District 10

CANDIDATE J. Morgan Leach

ADDRESS Williamstown

PARTY Democratic

Candidate did not reply

WV HOUSE OF DELEGATES, DISTRICT 11

► OFFICE WV House of Delegates, District 11

CANDIDATE Roger Conley

ADDRESS Vienna

PARTY Republican

Candidate did not reply

► OFFICE WV House of Delegates, District 11

CANDIDATE Harry Deitzler

ADDRESS Vienna

PARTY Democratic

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Harry Deitzler is an attorney in Vienna. Harry graduated from WVU College of Business and Economics (1973) and WVU Law School (1976). He served as Wood County Prosecuting attorney from 1979 through 1988. He is past president of the WV Prosecuting Attorneys Association and the WV State Bar. Harry and wife Kathe are blessed with two adult children.

QUESTION 1. What role do you see for state government in reversing West Virginia’s population decline?

ANSWER Members of the legislature must work together with one another and with the governor’s office to foster a positive business climate, improve infrastructure, protect our citizens, and provide opportunities in our communities for education and recreation which will make it attractive for people to stay or relocate here to raise their families.

QUESTION 2. What changes in current election laws would you favor that would make voting safer and more accessible to all West Virginia voters?

ANSWER Unlike some other parts of the country, voting is safe in West Virginia. The challenge for some of our citizens is accessibility due to conflicts with their work schedules or travel plans, issues with transportation or mobility, or medical challenges beyond their control. I would support changes to address those concerns.

QUESTION 3. What measures would you support that would alleviate the shortage of qualified teachers in West Virginia?

ANSWER Teachers are our primary resource to educate children and adults, create positive business climate, and enable infrastructure communication for social and employment success. Beyond the obvious need for us to express appreciation for teachers’ service, we must work together in government to provide teachers with significantly enhanced pay, benefits, and working conditions.

OFFICE WV House of Delegates, District 11

CANDIDATE Bob Fehrenbacher

ADDRESS Vienna

PARTY Republican

Candidate did not reply

WV HOUSE OF DELEGATES, DISTRICT 12

► OFFICE WV House of Delegates, District 12

CANDIDATE Vernon Criss

ADDRESS Parkersburg

PARTY Republican

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

PHS Graduate Class of 1972. Graduate of West Virginia Wesleyan College. Executive in Family Businesses. Returned to House of Delegates in 2016.

QUESTION 1. What role do you see for state government in reversing West Virginia's population decline?

ANSWER Provide an environment to life, work and raise a family in West Virginia.

QUESTION 2. What changes in current election laws would you favor that would make voting safer and more accessible to all West Virginia voters?

ANSWER Keep Election machines off the internet. ID everyone that votes.

QUESTION 3. What measures would you support that would alleviate the shortage of qualified teachers in West Virginia?

ANSWER Like other professional careers, provide an environment for teachers to teach, without administrative hinderances and allow the teachers to hug their kids. Kids need hugs.

► OFFICE WV House of Delegates, District 12

CANDIDATE Jonathan Defibaugh

ADDRESS Parkersburg

PARTY Democratic

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Biographical Information: I'm a lifetime Parkersburg resident, student at WVU-P, and clever policy lover. I prefer to put parties aside in favor of bipartisan community work, and I'm eager to put what I already know from experiences like interning at the capitol together with my neighbors here in West Virginia to make our state better. JonnyForWV.com

QUESTION 1. What role do you see for state government in reversing West Virginia's population decline?

ANSWER West Virginia needs to aggressively combat "brain-drain" and a dwindling workforce. We need to incentivize education so that we have ample caretakers for those who need it, especially as we age. Encouraging strong labor opportunities and tourism also offers our neighbors an opportunity to see how beautiful our state is, alongside improving local economies.

QUESTION 2. What changes in current election laws would you favor that would make voting safer and more accessible to all West Virginia voters?

ANSWER WV is one of few states that already has automatic voter registration, which is fantastic. Our voter identification laws are also relaxed, with the option of providing a free voter ID card or dozens of other forms. However, supporting extended registration periods and protecting mail-in ballots is essential. Longer hours or even a state holiday also helps.

QUESTION 3. What measures would you support that would alleviate the shortage of qualified teachers in West Virginia?

ANSWER Ensuring finances are never a blockade to education is a must, WVU-P is a fantastic example of a low-cost inclusive school. Obvious solutions include higher pay/education funding and fostering respect for teachers and their unions. Encouraging men to engage with academia is important with dwindling participation. Demonstrate clear rewards for earning a college degree.

WV HOUSE OF DELEGATES, DISTRICT 13

► **OFFICE WV House of Delegates, District 13**

CANDIDATE Scot Heckert

ADDRESS Parkersburg

PARTY Republican

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Scot Heckert is a business owner in Wood County operating Yellow Cab, Broadway Marina, Broadway Industrial Park, and The American Riverboat Company. As the owner of these businesses, Scot has worked to bring opportunities to our community and make lasting memories with the P.A. Denny Sternwheeler as well as the recent acquisition and relocation to Parkersburg, WV of the Barge Restaurant.

QUESTION 1. What role do you see for state government in reversing West Virginia's population decline?

ANSWER We must work to counteract the population loss seen in our community. By investing in Broadband internet services, offering increased Vocational and Technical Education, as well as supporting trades we can give younger residents a reason to stay. By investing in our future we can see economic success with high-paying jobs and a productive workforce.

QUESTION 2. What changes in current election laws would you favor that would make voting safer and more accessible to all West Virginia voters?

ANSWER We've been hearing about election security and integrity ever since the most recent election. We must work hard to secure our elections. That starts by promoting transparency on a state level. We also must encourage our younger residents to register to vote and teach them how to vote. We must have common-sense voter ID enforced in our state.

QUESTION 3. What measures would you support that would alleviate the shortage of qualified teachers in West Virginia?

ANSWER WV is ranked 42nd in the nation for the quality of our Education. Our teachers work hard to support our students and I am grateful for the work they do. Our school systems need to be overhauled to ensure teachers are able to teach in the classroom and that all of our children and grandchildren have the tools they need.

WV HOUSE OF DELEGATES, DISTRICT 14

► **OFFICE WV House of Delegates, District 14**

CANDIDATE Dave Foggin

ADDRESS Belleville

PARTY Republican

Candidate did not reply

► **OFFICE WV House of Delegates, District 14**

CANDIDATE D. Shannon Kimes

ADDRESS Rockport

PARTY Republican

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Born 1977, raised Mason County, WV. Graduated CWRU Cleveland Mechanical Engineering. Owns family manufacturing business, started 1986, Kimes Steel & Rail a manufacturer of railroad construction materials. Elected to WV House 2020, serves on Government Organization, Political Subdivisions, Bank & Insurance and Workforce Committees. Rockport resident, wife Erica and three children, attends Vienna Baptist, enjoys flying and building things. www.dsk4wva.com

QUESTION 1. What role do you see for state government in reversing West Virginia's population decline?

ANSWER Spending more per capita than other states. Must demand more efficient government. Government should trust and assist its people pursuing their dreams not the dreams of Charleston bureaucrats. Homegrown WV headquartered economic development will encourage population growth while easing the tax burden on all residents. Economic development will solve most of the problems we face including drugs, depression and decay.

QUESTION 2. What changes in current election laws would you favor that would make voting safer and more accessible to all West Virginia voters?

ANSWER Implementing new technology like electronic poll books, could help reduce the need for so many poll workers. Prefer in person election day voting, from a traditional civic standpoint. Don't support lengthening the election period with alternative means of voting. Easily scanned and counted paper ballots, while leaving a permanent auditable record of the voter's intent, should be used.

QUESTION 3. What measures would you support that would alleviate the shortage of qualified teachers in West Virginia?

ANSWER Reform our failing, expensive public education system. Eliminate subjects kids don't want to learn. Provide vocational school in modern subjects students can thrive with. Interested and engage students leads to better teaching environments. Fire bad teachers and pay the best more. If students continue to leave the current broken system, there will be no need to worry about teacher shortages.

► **OFFICE WV House of Delegates, District 14**

CANDIDATE Jim Marion

ADDRESS Mineral Wells

PARTY Democratic

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Married, wife Jan, 2 kids, John and Jamie, 2 grandkids, Lauren and Zach, and 1 great grandkid, Chloe. I graduated from PSHS, 1 year at WVU. I'm retired from UPS after 27 years as a delivery driver. I'm a past treasurer for the South Parkersburg Jaycees. Through my travels I have listened to peoples problems in Wood, Wirt, and Calhoun counties.

QUESTION 1. What role do you see for state government in reversing West Virginia's population decline?

ANSWER Better and safer roads. Making education a major priority by paying teachers enough to keep them here and letting them and the B of E make the decisions about the schools. Keep state money in public education. Charter and private schools pay their own way. Bring better and higher paying jobs into the state. →

► **QUESTION 2.** What changes in current election laws would you favor that would make voting safer and more accessible to all West Virginia voters?

ANSWER No pollsters or any other interfering person within 100 yards of the polls.

QUESTION 3. What measures would you support that would alleviate the shortage of qualified teachers in West Virginia?

ANSWER 10% pay raise each year and PEIA funding paid for by a 8% increase in severance tax on natural gas. We have to get our teachers paid enough to keep them here in public education. Teaching our children in safe, well built schools by teachers that care will also bring people to this state.

► **OFFICE WV House of Delegates, District 14**

CANDIDATE Kevin Jay Siers

ADDRESS Belleville

PARTY Republican

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1982 Graduate Parkersburg High School. Fire Science Degree WVU. Former Sergeant United States Marine Corps. Desert Storm Veteran. Retired Firefighter, Chaplain Parkersburg Fire Department. WV business owner for over 30 years. Married 39 years to wife Angela. Pro Life. Support WV businesses that create good paying jobs. Pro Agriculture, Farmer, Rancher. Pro Second Amendment. Support Fire, Police, EMS

QUESTION 1. What role do you see for state government in reversing West Virginia's population decline?

ANSWER To reverse our population decline we must work to provide: Good paying WV jobs via a positive business climate. Top notch education via proper funding and transparency in the education system. Safe neighborhoods via good infrastructure and adequate Fire/Police/EMS coverage. Non discriminatory environment in which to live, work, and raise a family.

QUESTION 2. What changes in current election laws would you favor that would make voting safer and more accessible to all West Virginia voters?

ANSWER I feel our current election laws should be adhered to and enforced. There must be no connection of voting machines to the internet. Voter ID must be required.

QUESTION 3. What measures would you support that would alleviate the shortage of qualified teachers in West Virginia?

ANSWER WV teachers should have a pay scale competitive with surrounding states with similar cost of living. I also feel that creating a positive education system with community support, creating pride in the school system, will also attract quality teachers.

WOOD COUNTY COMMISSION

► **OFFICE Wood County Commission**

CANDIDATE James E. Colombo

ADDRESS Parkersburg

PARTY Republican

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Born 06/09/1943 Clarksburg WV. Moved to Parkersburg 1954, my father founded Colombo's Restaurant. Married Sharon Mellinger 1963 (4 children). Educationally, I received: HS PCHS; AA degree WVUP; BA degree Marietta College; Honorary BS degree WVU. Mayor of Parkersburg 1998-2006 (filled vacancy 2014-2015). Appointed 2008-2014 to WV Parole Board. Elected County Commissioner 2016. Have fifty plus years business experience.

QUESTION 1. What should the County Commission do to attract new businesses that pay a living wage to Wood County?

ANSWER The Commission and City support our local Economic Development Office. They have staff with the ability to represent us year-round. The Commission and City are doing a housing study to present new businesses. New corporate businesses historically pay higher wages to attract workers. This will and has reflected to wage increases for our local work force.

QUESTION 2. What are your budget priorities when it comes to competing needs among county offices and departments?

ANSWER Budgets have a traceable history which reveal prior requests and moneys spent. Department heads are interviewed to outline and explain their needs.

QUESTION 3. Do you think the county is adequately prepared to deal with an industrial accident, natural disaster, or a future pandemic?

ANSWER Sheriff's department needs are especially reviewed as it deals with the safety of Wood County citizens. Cars needed to replace, the largest expense, must have documentation showing condition, repairs and milage. Commission handles employee benefits.

► OFFICE Wood County Commission

CANDIDATE Simon Hargus

ADDRESS Parkersburg

PARTY Democratic

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Simon Hargus owns and operates First Settlement Physical Therapy , a local business with 180 employees. He grew up in Vienna, West Virginia. He graduated from Parkersburg High School, Ohio University and Western Governors University with a Doctorate in Physical Therapy and Masters in Business Administration. His expertise includes budget management strategic planning, business growth and management.

QUESTION 1. What should the County Commission do to attract new businesses that pay a living wage to Wood County?

ANSWER I think attracting new business in the 21st century begins with communities that both retain and attract people. If the elements that make up our community in Wood County - schools, parks, infrastructure, internet, emergency services, police, culture, entertainment, housing stock, etc. - are cultivated, improved and maintained, we are well positioned to attract new businesses and have existing ones flourish.

QUESTION 2. What are your budget priorities when it comes to competing needs among county offices and departments?

ANSWER I think the budget priorities begin with better and more active communication with the various departments. Commissioners need to actively attend department/county office meetings and understand and categorize their needs from immediate to desired. In general, I think priorities for the county begin with maintaining and improving infrastructure using local labor whenever possible.

QUESTION 3. Do you think the county is adequately prepared to deal with an industrial accident, natural disaster, or a future pandemic?

ANSWER If you take two large abnormal events in the last few years there are lessons to be learned from both. The COVID pandemic has taught us the need for consistent and clear communication from the health department. I also think emphasis on documentation for storage facilities to protect first responders, in case of a fire for example, is very warranted.

► **OFFICE Wood County Commission**

CANDIDATE Rick Modesitt

ADDRESS Parkersburg

PARTY Republican

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Life long resident of Wood County. Attended Parkersburg Community College and graduate of WV State Police Academy. Served 23 years as a Parkersburg Police Officer, retiring as Chief. I was twice elected to the WV House of Delegate and served 10 years as County Commissioner. Volunteer on many local non profit organizations. Business owner 36 years. I love public service

QUESTION 1. What should the County Commission do to attract new businesses that pay a living wage to Wood County?

ANSWER This is a multi task approach. We must work daily on trying to make our area a better community, offering a quality of life where new business want to locate. We must invest in infrastructure that business will need. Should work with area schools and colleges so we can provide a quality workforce. Maintain fair and reasonable taxes. Lastly, cooperation!

QUESTION 2. What are your budget priorities when it comes to competing needs among county offices and departments?

ANSWER First priority is to fund the **mandated** needs of the county constitutional officials, taking care of the "needs and musts" before the "wants". The key to budgeting success in maintaining honest and fair relationships with the other county officials, and working through the budgets line by line to adequately fund needs based on economic growth and not raising taxes.

QUESTION 3. Do you think the county is adequately prepared to deal with an industrial accident, natural disaster, or a future pandemic?

ANSWER As a former police officer, I take public safety seriously. We have outstanding and professional emergency responders who train and work well together. We have 911 committee and Local Emergency Planning Commission who meet regularly to be prepared. Sadly, my opponent has missed all of those meetings. Commissioners must be engaged and prepared to deal with any emergency. I shall!

WOOD COUNTY CLERK

► **OFFICE Wood County Clerk**

CANDIDATE Cara Atkinson

ADDRESS Waverly

PARTY Democratic

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Cara Atkinson, 56, grew up in Wood County. She is a 1985 graduate of WVU-P and a 1983 graduate of PHS. Her son Jarrett is a City of Parkersburg Fireman and a paramedic for St Joseph Ambulance. Her son Gabe is a member of the WV National Guard. She resides in Waverly with her husband, Randall, retired.

QUESTION 1. Would you like to see it made easier for people to register and vote? How would you accomplish this?

ANSWER Voting is easy. Our state laws are designed to assure this. One needs to contact the voter registration office or go online at www.wvsos.gov. It is important to have a current id to prove your Wood County address. Early Voting begins April 27. Absentee applications are being accepted now. Election Day is May 10.

QUESTION 2. Without repeating information in your biography, what experience, training or education do you have that makes you the best qualified candidate for this office?

ANSWER I have 25 years of verified experience working in the County Clerk's Office. I managed the recorders office. I have probated countless estates. I have worked in the election office as well as actual elections. I know the laws. I am the qualified candidate.

QUESTION 3. What changes could be made to enable the County Clerk to manage the many and varied responsibilities of this office?

ANSWER Varied responsibilities truly describe this job. The County Clerk wears many hats and fortunately they all fit my head! I want to keep this office a friendly viable resource for the people of Wood County. My experience allows me to provide a seamless transition with progressive leadership. I look forward to serving my county.

► OFFICE Wood County Clerk

CANDIDATE J. R. Carpenter

ADDRESS Parkersburg

PARTY Democratic

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Parkersburg Catholic, Marshall Graduate with management degree , minor in Finance. Co-owner operator of the Crystal Cafe for 19 years. Three term city councilman representing district 5. Previously I held Operations Manager, District Manager, and systems analyst positions in transportation. I was charged with improving local operations and customer service in various facilities . Insuring compliance with company procedures are followed/maintained.

QUESTION 1. Would you like to see it made easier for people to register and vote? How would you accomplish this?

ANSWER Concentrating on eligible high school voters by holding regular sign-ups at all the schools will aid in their registration. Watching for transfers into the county and providing registration forms while completing their filings will simplify a one-stop introduction into our area. Simply asking everyone that comes in for anything , would they would like to register if not already done so.

QUESTION 2. Without repeating information in your biography, what experience, training or education do you have that makes you the best qualified candidate for this office?

ANSWER I've handled budgets , public and private. My leadership reflects all aspects of HR, hiring, evaluations, and managing daily operations with staff. My commitment to transparent accountability coupled with my established integrity will handle any problems that may arise to meet or exceed any resident's issues by using all applicable laws and procedures. I want to serve my community.

QUESTION 3. What changes could be made to enable the County Clerk to manage the many and varied responsibilities of this office?

ANSWER To date everyone I've spoken to about needed changes have had no suggestions/complaints. I plan on working with Mark Rhodes, after being elected, the rest of the year ensuring a seamless transition. Also I will review any and all suggestions to improve our service to the community. I welcome the county's input and value residences feedback. I want to serve.

► **OFFICE Wood County Clerk**

CANDIDATE Joe Gonzales

ADDRESS Parkersburg

PARTY Republican

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Life-long resident of Wood County. Graduated from Glenville State College- bachelor's degree, WV State Police Academy, and the FBI National Academy 188th Session. Served 25 years with the Parkersburg Police Department. Served as Director of Intelligence Unit for Wood County Sheriff's Office. CEO of a local business, licensed WV Real Estate agent, past president of Parkersburg Area Association of Realtors.

QUESTION 1. Would you like to see it made easier for people to register and vote? How would you accomplish this?

ANSWER Currently, you can register to vote online at GoVoteWV.com, and make changes to your registration through the DMV when you update your driver's license/state ID. Unfortunately, many people are not aware of this accessibility. I would conduct more voter registration drives for high school students turning 18 before the general election and promote registration events on social media.

QUESTION 2. Without repeating information in your biography, what experience, training or education do you have that makes you the best qualified candidate for this office?

ANSWER I feel my experience as a law enforcement officer, licensed realtor, and businessman, as well as my education, gives me the ability to use common-sense business practices to run the clerk's office at the highest professional level. I would continually work to better Wood County, as I have done throughout my career.

QUESTION 3. What changes could be made to enable the County Clerk to manage the many and varied responsibilities of this office?

ANSWER Manage the responsibilities through consistency with policies and procedures according to WV state code. Continue to support the excellent employees and staff by providing further training, support, technology growth, and team-building to create a strong and successful organization. Wood County has had successful clerks for many years, and I hope to continue to expand the office and role.

► **OFFICE Wood County Clerk**

CANDIDATE Michael Harper

ADDRESS Waverly

PARTY Republican

Candidate did not reply

► **OFFICE Wood County Clerk**

CANDIDATE Mickey Hess

ADDRESS Parkersburg

PARTY Republican

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

My name is Mickey Hess and I'm a Christian, Conservative, and life-long resident of Wood County. I'm a 2019 graduate of Parkersburg South and am currently a Personal Banker at Settlers Bank. For more information, please visit my website at hess4clerk.com.

QUESTION 1. Would you like to see it made easier for people to register and vote? How would you accomplish this?

ANSWER WV has laws that make it easy and safe to register to vote and cast your ballot such as our online voter registration system, DMV automatic voter registration, and requiring a form of ID to vote. I would focus on hiring more poll workers in order to reduce wait times and poll worker shortages.

QUESTION 2. Without repeating information in your biography, what experience, training or education do you have that makes you the best qualified candidate for this office?

ANSWER Active community member and volunteer since I was 11 years old. Eagle Scout and former Assistant Scoutmaster. Former Chair of the PKB Mayor's Youth Council. Multiple certifications in business management and administration. Currently work as a Personal Banker with extensive training and experience handling finances, estates, disputes, and accounts.

QUESTION 3. What changes could be made to enable the County Clerk to manage the many and varied responsibilities of this office?

ANSWER The County Clerk's office has had exceptional service and leadership the past 9 years. I will continue to build on the retiring Clerk's successes by making the office more accessible and user friendly online, conducting safe and accountable elections, and ensuring that operations at the Courthouse are conducted professionally and responsibly.

► **OFFICE Wood County Clerk**

CANDIDATE Misty Kelly

ADDRESS Parkersburg

PARTY Republican

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

I have almost 4 years' of employment experience working for Wood County Commission as Computer Support Specialist, 1.5 years and Court Records Electronic Data Entry/Electronic-Filing Clerk, 2+ years. I earned my Associates of Applied Science, Web Application Programming degree from WSCC and a Bachelors of Applied Technology, Software Engineering degree from WVU-P. Belpre Volunteer Firefighter, 1999-2003.

QUESTION 1. Would you like to see it made easier for people to register and vote? How would you accomplish this?

ANSWER Registering to vote and voting are essential elements of the election process that must be protected. These protections cannot be accomplished by easing the safeguards of the laws that must be met for voters to register or vote in our elections. It's already made easier by utilizing the early voting access and registration services offered through multiple state funded programs.

QUESTION 2. Without repeating information in your biography, what experience, training or education do you have that makes you the best qualified candidate for this office?

ANSWER This job requires someone who is computer proficient and flexible enough to utilize multiple software packages to effectively run each office accordingly. I possess the skills to accomplish the daily operations of these offices by utilizing my direct experience and computer background working in these offices during my employment as a computer support specialist while working for the County Commission.

QUESTION 3. What changes could be made to enable the County Clerk to manage the many and varied responsibilities of this office?

ANSWER A major challenge for the County Clerk is garnering interest in people to train and work the polls on election days. There are rarely younger generations involved in this process, and I would like to look into setting up a program within the community to attract young voters to participate in the election process because they represent the future.

► OFFICE Wood County Clerk

CANDIDATE Amanda Raber-Ables

ADDRESS Washington

PARTY Republican

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

I was born and raised in Parkersburg, West Virginia. I have one daughter who is currently attending law school. I have 20 years of experience as a title abstractor and over 2 years of experience as a Tax Deputy specializing in tax sales and delinquent lands. Thank you to everyone who is supporting my candidacy for Wood County Clerk!

QUESTION 1. Would you like to see it made easier for people to register and vote? How would you accomplish this?

ANSWER Voting is a fundamental right for Americans. I plan to listen to suggestions from the people of Wood County on how to make voting easier and more convenient. I will do my best to implement these ideas.

QUESTION 2. Without repeating information in your biography, what experience, training or education do you have that makes you the best qualified candidate for this office?

ANSWER Through my experience, I have gained knowledge of title searches, taxes, county finances, recordings, assessments, land records, probate, and much more. I think these are important skills to have as County Clerk. My experience and current job as a Tax Deputy would make me an asset to the County.

QUESTION 3. What changes could be made to enable the County Clerk to manage the many and varied responsibilities of this office?

ANSWER I am a hard worker and I always strive for efficiency, which I believe has prepared me to take on the many and varied responsibilities of the County Clerk. Some changes I will implement are to strengthen relations with other county offices. I will also maintain a high standard of recording and pay close attention to procedures and details.

► OFFICE Wood County Clerk

CANDIDATE Eddie Staats

ADDRESS Parkersburg

PARTY Republican

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

I'm a father of 5 and a Christian who has a BA in Business Administration and Management from WVU. I've worked to create jobs and opportunities here within Wood County through my various businesses I own and operate. To learn more about my background visit EddieStaatsForOffice.com

QUESTION 1. Would you like to see it made easier for people to register and vote? How would you accomplish this?

ANSWER I am a small business owner who understands the importance of balancing a checkbook. Like many Wood County families I understand that we need a County Clerk with a fiduciary responsibility to their constituents. I promise that I will use my experience to cut the red tape and fight to invest in our Veterans, Elderly, and Disabled Community Members.

QUESTION 2. Without repeating information in your biography, what experience, training or education do you have that makes you the best qualified candidate for this office?

ANSWER I am a small business owner who understands the importance of balancing a checkbook. Like many Wood County families I understand that we need a County Clerk with a fiduciary responsibility to their constituents. I promise that I will use my experience to cut the red tape and fight to invest in our Veterans, Elderly, and Disabled Community Members.

QUESTION 3. What changes could be made to enable the County Clerk to manage the many and varied responsibilities of this office?

ANSWER The County Clerk's Online System is antiquated, not user friendly, and quite frankly doesn't work. I promise to implement a first of its kind online system to pay your fees, request urgent documents, and get access to the county clerk's services. I also will fight for election integrity and transparency as the true conservative in this race.

► OFFICE Wood County Sheriff

CANDIDATE Rick Woodyard

ADDRESS Mineral Wells

PARTY Republican

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Work History: 1977-2014 Wood County Sheriff Office 2014-2022 Wood County Homeland security-911 Director 2022-appointed Sheriff of Wood County. Education: West Virginia State Police Academy, FBI-National Academy, Board of Regents from Glennville State Collage, Master of Science Mountain State University. Military Experience: US Navy Reserve, West Virginia Army National Guard

CANDIDATE STATEMENT

I strongly believe that one agency cannot stand alone in combating the ever-increasing crime we face here in the Mid-Ohio Valley. It is my hope that we work together with law enforcement agencies, neighborhood watches as well as bringing new technologies to the forefront to better our community.

I feel we need to do more to combat crimes against children and protect them from the evils of this world that is why I will support enhancing an investigative effort to address these crimes. It is time we as peace officers get back into our communities to better protect and serve, we need to start listening to what the needs are of those we serve. With safer streets comes a stronger community.

WOOD COUNTY CIRCUIT CLERK

► OFFICE Wood County Circuit Clerk

CANDIDATE James Chris Alfred

ADDRESS Parkersburg

PARTY Democratic

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

I have lived in Wood County all my life and graduated from Parkersburg High School. I'm active in the community with various organizations, including Artsbridge where I served as President and Treasurer. I'm a long time member of First Presbyterian Church where I have served as treasurer for 5 years.

STATEMENT TO VOTERS

If elected, I will serve Wood County with integrity. I have over 10 years of management experience. Through my years of community service & as treasurer at my church, I have developed my organizational and administrative skills that will help me to continue serving our community & help further the efficiency of the Circuit Clerks office.

► OFFICE Wood County Circuit Clerk

CANDIDATE Celeste Ridgway

ADDRESS Williamstown

PARTY Republican

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

I am a Christian and belong to Fellowship Baptist Church. As Circuit Clerk of Wood County, I have 15 years of experience in the Office and Courts. I belong to a rescue group that volunteers, donates time and funds to helping dogs and cats in need. I work to find adopter's, rescues for the animals.

STATEMENT TO VOTERS

I want to say thanks for your support and votes in the November, 2020 election. I have utilized the years of experience to improve productivity, and made other positive changes to the Circuit Clerk's Office to better serve the public, courts and attorneys. 1799-1880 records have been turned over to the Archives Division to preserve the current state of the records, to ensure the history within them is preserved from future deterioration. A grant was received so new scanners were purchased for old records to be scanned and preserved. Myself, Deputy Clerks, and Court personnel are anxiously awaiting E-Filing. I have worked with the Supreme Court to get this process started in June. I am dedicated and honored to serve as Clerk.

► OFFICE Wood County Circuit Clerk

CANDIDATE James Chris Alfred

ADDRESS Parkersburg

PARTY Democratic

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

I have lived in Wood County all my life and graduated from Parkersburg High School. I'm active in the community with various organizations, including Artsbridge where I served as President and Treasurer. I'm a long time member of First Presbyterian Church where I have served as treasurer for 5 years.

STATEMENT TO VOTERS

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OFFICE Wood County Circuit Clerk**CANDIDATE Celeste Ridgway**

ADDRESS Williamstown

PARTY Republican

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VIENNA CITY COUNCIL**► OFFICE Vienna City Council (Unexpired Term)****CANDIDATE NAME Kelly Sassi Craft**

ADDRESS Vienna

PARTY Nonpartisan

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Vienna resident 38yrs. Married to Rob Craft 36yrs. 3 Children. Vienna Foodland 9yrs from cashier to management. Medicine Shoppe 13yrs. Dutton Pharmacy 16yrs-current. Bath and Body Works 15yrs-current. I have worked in management for 34yrs.

QUESTION 1. Without repeating information in your biography, what experience, training or education do you have that makes you the best qualified candidate for this office?

ANSWER I hold several certificates of completion in management classes. Working 38yrs in retail has helped me learn how to work with employees and the public. I have sat on city, county and select soccer boards, and volunteered at the state level soccer association. all of these experiences have taught me how to resolve difficult situations and listen.

QUESTION 2. What are your priorities in meeting the needs of the city?

ANSWER I have no priorities. It is the priorities of the citizens that are important. Listening to them over the past 1&1/2yrs is, Roads, water lines, water increases, and most importantly they want accountability and transparency.

QUESTION 3. What policies would you support that would attract new businesses that pay a living wage to Vienna?

ANSWER Sad we have to make special policies for NEW businesses to come to Vienna. When we should offer policies to support the businesses that have been here for years. Reward long term commitment, than short term businesses, thattake advantage of the "SPECIAL POLICIES" we offer them. Then close when their special policies end. A learning experience I guess.

► **OFFICE Vienna City Council (Unexpired Term)**

CANDIDATE Alice Goodwin

ADDRESS Vienna

PARTY Nonpartisan

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

I graduated in 2003 from WVU-P with an AAS in Business Technology and in 2006 from WVU with a Regent Bachelor of Arts. I was the president of the VVFD Auxiliary for over 10 years and I am employed full-time.

QUESTION 1. Without repeating information in your biography, what experience, training or education do you have that makes you the best qualified candidate for this office?

ANSWER I have over 20 years of experience working together with people in a business setting or at the fundraising event for the VVFD Ice Cream Social. I am a team player, compassionate and I have problem-solving skills. I can also think outside of the box when needed.

QUESTION 2. What are your priorities in meeting the needs of the city?

ANSWER Support Fire and Police Departments. Back our parks and sports programs for a safe, diverse, and family-focused community. Build and maintain a relationship with the city employees, the backbone of Vienna, as well local officials to provide the best to our community. Spend the taxpayer's money sensibly and provide transparency in all aspects of the duties of the council

QUESTION 3. What policies would you support that would attract new businesses that pay a living wage to Vienna?

ANSWER Work with state and local officials to provide the best infrastructure such as streets, water, and sewer. Lower B&O taxes. Talk to local business owners and see what they need to succeed. Develop new policies and programs that would make Vienna a more attractive place to start a business.

CANDIDATE Christopher Mancuso

ADDRESS Vienna

PARTY Nonpartisan

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION I was born and raised in Vienna and chose to move back last year to serve my hometown through my profession as an Architect. I earned both my BA and Master's in Architecture at University of Kentucky before moving to Denver. I currently work for Pickering Associates and attend the Journey Church in Marietta. For additional information please visit: <https://christopherpmancus.wixsite.com/mancusoforvienna-1>

QUESTION 1. Without repeating information in your biography, what experience, training or education do you have that makes you the best qualified candidate for this office?

ANSWER As a licensed architect, I have unique experiences and education making me the most qualified candidate. My profession requires me to work with cities all over the state. I understand the impact city council decisions have on their communities' growth. Daily working with budgets, clients, and city entities, I'm well prepared to serve Vienna.

QUESTION 2. What are your priorities in meeting the needs of the city?

ANSWER Health, safety, and welfare of Vienna residents are major priorities. Being a younger resident who has attended all city council meetings since moving home, I care about growing Vienna to welcome people my age. My top concerns include Jackson Pool, a comprehensive plan to hold the city accountable, and developing Vienna's parks. Vienna needs an engaged, thoughtful leader.

QUESTION 3. What policies would you support that would attract new businesses that pay a living wage to Vienna?

ANSWER I'm passionate about supporting locally owned businesses and would support any policy providing opportunities for local businesses to succeed. I understand how small businesses support local charities, keep money in Vienna, and statistically provide more jobs, and would strive to support them. This would be especially true for businesses that provide living wages for employees.

► OFFICE Vienna City Council (Unexpired Term)

CANDIDATE Jim Miracle

ADDRESS Vienna

PARTY Nonpartisan

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

I was raised in Parkersburg, moved to Vienna in 1998. I retired from the U.S. Navy where I was a Corpsman. I have been working at the Wood County Public Library, since 2013 as manager of the History and Genealogy Department. I live with my wife Mindy and our 2 dogs and 3 cats.

QUESTION 1. Without repeating information in your biography, what experience, training or education do you have that makes you the best qualified candidate for this office?

ANSWER I was a City Councilman for Vienna for 8 years (2008-2016), prior to this election. I was Vice-Chairman and helped create the Vienna Utility Board, I was chairman of the Tree and Beautification Committee. I am the Commander of Carlin.'s Battery D, Civil War Reenactors. I have worked on budgets for each of these.

QUESTION 2. What are your priorities in meeting the needs of the city?

ANSWER My priority is the citizens of Vienna. I look to support items that improve the infrastructure and make life better of my constituents. I am a fiscal conservative in nature, always remembering, as wise man once told me when took my first term; "remember it is the citizens money not yours".

QUESTION 3. What policies would you support that would attract new businesses that pay a living wage to Vienna?

ANSWER I would support tax incentives for new business', some sort of reduction in B&O taxes for current business; development of Spencer Landing and getting the pool open. I would also like to see some sort of refund to citizens from the covid relieve funds the city received.

► OFFICE Vienna City Council (Unexpired Term)

CANDIDATE Rod Smith

ADDRESS Vienna

PARTY Nonpartisan

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

I've been a Vienna resident (57+ years) and have a BS in Math from Marshall University. I'm retired from Highmark BCBS (32+ years), where I was the Underwriting Director (17 years). I'm married to Teresa Perkins Smith (38yrs) and have two children, Chase (Leslie) and Kaycee (Casey), two grandchildren, Charlotte and Monteville. Facebook: Rod Smith; Email: rodsmith.viennawv@gmail.com

QUESTION 1. Without repeating information in your biography, what experience, training or education do you have that makes you the best qualified candidate for this office?

ANSWER I have extensive knowledge in budgeting, health finance, and employee management. While at Highmark, I was entrusted the with financial and risk assessment of HMWV's Large Group Comprehensive Major Medical Market.

My leadership skills included building a team of over forty employees that served all of Highmark's Underwriting footprint in West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Delaware.

QUESTION 2. What are your priorities in meeting the needs of the city?

ANSWER 1) Infrastructure: A) Water and sewer lines repair/updates, B) Review for new bridges over Pond Run, specifically 17th, 27th, and 9th streets. 2) Recreation: A) Spencer’s landing - make it a showcase for Vienna, B) Jackson Pool improvements. 3) City Planning: Have a workable and flexible 5-year plan for the city with annual reviews for adjustments.

►QUESTION 3. What policies would you support that would attract new businesses that pay a living wage to Vienna?

ANSWER Vienna has great retail, restaurants, and hotels. We also need industry that would provide a living wage. We have the workforce to support new industry. Vienna leadership needs to be represented in Wood County economic development meetings that engage in bringing industry to our area. Vienna is a great place to live and to raise our family.

WILLIAMSTOWN MAYOR

►OFFICE Williamstown Mayor

CANDIDATE NAME Paul Jordan

ADDRESS Williamstown

PARTY Nonpartisan

Candidate did not reply

WILLIAMSTOWN CITY COUNCIL

►OFFICE Williamstown City Council

CANDIDATE Pat Peters

ADDRESS Williamstown

PARTY Nonpartisan

Candidate did not reply

►OFFICE Williamstown City Council

CANDIDATE Marty Seufer

ADDRESS Williamstown

PARTY Nonpartisan

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Answer I am a lifetime resident of Williamstown, graduate of Williamstown High School. I have four children who all attended WHS and six grandchildren. I am a West Virginia Master Gardener and was selected as the 2015 West Virginia Master Gardener of the year. I was the founder of the Bee City USA Williamstown program and currently serve as its chairman.

QUESTION 1. Without repeating information in your biography, what experience, training or education do you have that makes you the best qualified candidate for this office?

ANSWER I have served on council for 34 years, the majority of those as the finance chairman. I am very in tune with the financial needs of the city as well as limiting the fees and taxes we place on our citizens. I also serve as the Wood County Administrator and am constantly aware of legislation that affects our town.

QUESTION 2. What are your priorities in meeting the needs of the city?

ANSWER Our upcoming decisions regarding usage of the American Recovery funds is so important and can do many good things for Williamstown. I would like to see us invest a portion of those funds into renovation of the former grade school into a community center. We also need to take a hard look at improving our infrastructure starting with storm drainage.

QUESTION 3. What policies would you support that would attract new businesses that pay a living wage to Williamstown?

ANSWER First, I would continue to support having no B & O tax in our city. Secondly, I would like the council to stay in communication with and support the Wood County Economic Development Authority to attract businesses that pay good salaries into our county in which Williamstown residents could be employed in

WOOD COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION, DISTRICT A

► **OFFICE Wood County Board of Education, District A**

CANDIDATE Jeff Fox

ADDRESS Parkersburg

PARTY Nonpartisan

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Born and raised in Parkersburg, I attended Emerson, Hamilton and PHS. I have degrees from WV Tech and WVUP. I'm a 30+ year member of IBEW 968, working as a wireman and have served as recording secretary, president and financial secretary/business manager. Four years on the Parkersburg City Council. I volunteer with multiple groups throughout our community.

QUESTION 1. Without repeating information in your biography, what experience, training or education do you have that makes you the best qualified candidate for this office?

ANSWER Experience as a public servant working in legislative and committee capacities. This includes experience regarding budgets (revenues and expenditures), personnel, rules and other issues often addressed by the Board. Over 30+ years of construction and maintenance experience.

QUESTION 2. What is your opinion of the current school consolidation plan?

ANSWER Until local leaders begin to address the population loss issue, closures are imminent. Lower enrollment can mean less classrooms are full or needed. Financial data may provide justification for closure, but specific neighborhood impacts must also be considered. A thorough review on impact and an exit or repurpose strategy should be utilized on each school closure.

QUESTION 3. Do you agree with the way financial resources are allocated among administration, facilities and educational programs in Wood County? Please elaborate.

ANSWER Mostly. Many of the costs are necessities, such as the instructional costs which make up the majority of expenditures. Student transportation costs and the costs to maintain and provide utilities for school buildings are necessities too. These three departments account for roughly 79% expenditures per year. Oversight and review should be constant for a very fluid budget.

► **OFFICE Board of Education, District A**

CANDIDATE Debbie Hendershot

ADDRESS Parkersburg

PARTY Nonpartisan

Candidate did not reply

OFFICE Wood County Board of Education, District A

CANDIDATE NAME Ronald C. Michels

ADDRESS Parkersburg

PARTY Nonpartisan

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Graduate Doddridge Co HS. BS Pharmacy WVU. MD WVU School Of Medicine. Board Certified Internal Medicine/Endocrinology. Veteran UNSR Medical Corps. Private Practice Parkersburg 1987-2001. Employed VA Clinic Physician 2001-2019 (Retired 2019). Previous Clinical Teaching Appointments with Bowman Gray and WVU Schools Of Medicine.

QUESTION 1. Without repeating information in your biography, what experience, training or education do you have that makes you the best qualified candidate for this office?

ANSWER Broad life and educational experience. 5 children and 4 grandchildren

QUESTION 2. What is your opinion of the current school consolidation plan?

ANSWER With declining enrollments consolidations appear to be necessary for the most efficient use of human and financial resources.

QUESTION 3. Do you agree with the way financial resources are allocated among administration, facilities, and educational programs in Wood County? Please elaborate.

ANSWER My view is that educational resources should be prioritized to educational programs, administration and facilities in that order

WOOD COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION, DISTRICT B

► **OFFICE Wood County Board of Education, District B**

CANDIDATE Justin Raber

ADDRESS Vienna

PARTY Nonpartisan

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION Justin Raber is a life-long resident of Wood County and is serves as a member of the Wood County Board of Education and as Board President. He is a practicing attorney at Raber Law Offices, PLLC, which serves our community for real estate, domestic and other legal needs. Justin earned his Doctor of Jurisprudence from WVU College of Law.

QUESTION 1. Without repeating information in your biography, what experience, training or education do you have that makes you the best qualified candidate for this office?

ANSWER Throughout twenty-plus years as a PTA leader, I have been a voice in bringing parent and family perspectives to education and government. Building on the foundation to ask tough questions and being responsive to our community, combined with my education and experience, strong leadership is critical in continuing the momentum that has been built over the past four years.

QUESTION 2. What is your opinion of the current school consolidation plan?

ANSWER We must continue to “right size” Wood County Schools by ensuring our physical plant meets the needs of today’s student population. With underutilized schools based upon population, Wood County cannot fiscally sustain the number of schools currently being operated. Our school size is based upon student enrollment from 20-30 years ago, which is not economically sustainable for our future.

QUESTION 3. Do you agree with the way financial resources are allocated among administration, facilities and educational programs in Wood County? Please elaborate.

ANSWER Wood County Schools financial resources are focused on our first priority: academics. We must ensure that our fiscal resources are appropriated in ways that meet our student’s needs inside and outside the classroom.

Our students require the best education leaders to teach and lead our schools, the best facilities, and the best support services to meet their unique needs.

OFFICE Wood County Board of Education, District B

► CANDIDATE Jimmy Asbury

ADDRESS Vienna

PARTY Nonpartisan

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Jimmy and wife Heidi reside in Vienna and have two daughters Elle and Ava. Jimmy is a product of Wood County schools and went on to further his education at WVU. Where he earned a Masters in Safety Management, as well as a Master of Business Administration. Jimmy is a past member of the Wood County Board of Education.

QUESTION 1. Without repeating information in your biography, what experience, training or education do you have that makes you the best qualified candidate for this office?

ANSWER As a past member of the Wood County Board of Education and parent I will be able to provide guidance and a common sense approach in decision making from day one. My education and experience in safety management will be value added to help ensure safe and healthy school environments for all students and staff of Wood County Schools.

QUESTION 2. What is your opinion of the current school consolidation plan?

ANSWER I fully support providing safe and modern facilities for our children, staff and residents of Wood County. However, I do have some concerns with the proposed consolidation plan. One of my concerns with the consolidation plan is raising taxes on Wood County residents and businesses during these times of financial uncertainty with two bond levies and excess levy running simultaneously.

QUESTION 3. Do you agree with the way financial resources are allocated among administration, facilities and educational programs in Wood County? Please elaborate.

ANSWER Generally I agree with the allocation of financial resources among Wood County Schools. However, I do believe additional input should be solicited in the decision making process from students, staff, parents and community stakeholders. Personally I feel additional funds should be allocated to vocational and labor market preparation courses for our children and grandchildren who may not be college bound.

► **OFFICE Wood County Board of Education, District B**

CANDIDATE Amber B. Cross

ADDRESS Waverly

PARTY Nonpartisan

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

I'm a 2003 Graduate from Williamstown High School. I then went on to attend WVUP to earn a Bachelor of Applied Science in BA. I have a 10-year-old daughter that attends public school in Wood County, which I believe makes me a great candidate for a seat on the board. Visit Amber Cross for Wood County Board of Education

QUESTION 1. Without repeating information in your biography, what experience, training or education do you have that makes you the best qualified candidate for this office?

ANSWER Having a child in our school system, is the best training. I have been active in her schooling since she began pre-k. The last few years have been hard for kids, parents, and teachers and I plan to bridge the gap once again. I am a great listener, leader, and team player which I have learned through my profession. →

QUESTION 2. What is your opinion of the current school consolidation plan?

ANSWER I do not support the current consolidation plan at this time. In our current economy, it is not fair to ask taxpayers to pay more money for a request that can be revisited at a later date, especially those on a fixed income

QUESTION 3. Do you agree with the way financial resources are allocated among administration, facilities and educational programs in Wood County? Please elaborate.

ANSWER No, I do not agree. For example, if finances were allocated better, a bond may not be necessary for new schools due to lack of maintenance

WOOD COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION, DISTRICT C

► **OFFICE Wood County Board of Education, District C**

CANDIDATE Chad Conley

ADDRESS Mineral Wells

PARTY Nonpartisan

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

I am a Lifelong resident of Wood County. I am a recent graduate of WVU with a master's in communication studies. I am married with one child currently in the Wood County education system, and one who will be entering pre-k in Wood County next year. My campaign Facebook page is Chad Conley for Wood County Board of Education.

QUESTION 1. Without repeating information in your biography, what experience, training or education do you have that makes you the best qualified candidate for this office?

ANSWER I spent over 20 years in the military. This has given me experience in leadership. My career in the military has taught me to be a team player. I know how important our parents are to the education system. I want to put freedom back in the hands of the parents when it comes to educating our children. →

QUESTION 2. What is your opinion of the current school consolidation plan?

ANSWER This is something I can't support at this time. I just don't think it's the right time for this. With the price of gas going up and inflation, I don't think it's fair to ask the taxpayers for more money when we are still paying for previous bonds. This is something that should be revisited in the future.

QUESTION 3. Do you agree with the way financial resources are allocated among administration, facilities and educational programs in Wood County? Please elaborate.

ANSWER I don't think the current administration has been transparent enough with how they spend or distribute our money to answer this question adequately. The Wood County BOE has received over \$50,000,000 in COVID relief money, and there is only very vague information on how this money has been spent. I plan on pushing for more financial transparency.

► **OFFICE Wood County Board of Education, District C**

CANDIDATE Sarah A. Townsend

ADDRESS Washington

PARTY Nonpartisan

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

I graduated from Niceville, Florida High School. I have a BA degree in public administration from the University of Hawaii, and a MS in adult education from Marshall University. My thirty-six-year career in Human Resources management included positions at GE, Kraton, and West Virginia Division of Personnel. I was an adjunct professor at WVUP for 18 semesters.

QUESTION 1. Without repeating information in your biography, what experience, training or education do you have that makes you the best qualified candidate for this office?

ANSWER My career responsibilities included ensuring chemical operators, and managers had the knowledge and skills to effectively fulfill their job responsibilities. Unless employees have a strong foundation of knowledge/skills, their career path will be limited. I observed differences in school systems by the fundamental skills knowledge differences in employees. I believe local school systems are a key component in economic development.

QUESTION 2. What is your opinion of the current school consolidation plan?

ANSWER I understand the need for school consolidation; and I realize its impact on students, teachers, parents, and communities. It is important that any unintended negative consequences from the implementation can be rectified. Requesting taxpayers to support additional dollars to fund the school system when our school population has decreased is unpopular proposition and will require thoughtful and responsive communication plan.

QUESTION 3. Do you agree with the way financial resources are allocated among administration, facilities, and educational programs in Wood County? Please elaborate.

ANSWER As in any school system there are competing demands for financial resources. My priorities are educational programs, maintaining facilities, and then administration. Requesting taxpayers to support additional dollars to fund the school system when our school population has decreased is unpopular proposition and will require thoughtful and responsive plan.