2018 CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

MAURY COUNTY, TENNESSEE | GENERAL/PRIMARY ELECTION
Maury County, Tennessee
August General/Primary Election
August 2, 2018

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Maury County Mayor

Candidate Name: Amanda P. Kelton (I)

1. Why are you running for this position?

I am running because I want to help improve my community. I am a professional leader. It is what I love to do, and I’m good at it. I am also focused on community. I volunteer and advocate for local causes. And I can’t help but work incredibly hard. I am precisely the sort of person who should be running for office. More specifically, I am the type of leader we need as County Mayor where I hope to not only help improve process but inspire others to serve their community as well.

2. What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)

During my time in the Army, I was exposed to an organizational culture committed to integrity, team building, and selfless service. There is an art and science to leadership, I think that this is something we often forget when we elect people to office. I grew up in a family of modest means. I worked various odd jobs, but mostly I worked my way up the ladder at Chick-fil-A, eventually serving as Director of Operations for Chick-fil-A Columbia during a period of award winning growth and prosperity. Some people may look down on this experience, but if you do a little research, you will find that the Chick-fil-A organization is highly regarded for it leadership development programs. It is also an organization that places great emphasis on servant leadership and community stewardship. After leaving Chick-fil-A I went on to work as Director of Operations for one of the largest events services companies in Nashville. I also have a degree in Business Management from CSCC.

3. 85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?
Investment in education is an investment in our future. It is important for us to not only improve traditional education in the county by fully funding our public schools, but we must also encourage life-long learning, professional development, and vocational skills training for everyone. In the Army we used to say that training is not just something we do ... it’s what we do. Training, learning, growing is a never-ending process, and if we wish to achieve great things in education and build a skilled workforce in this community, we need to promote a culture which values education. As Mayor I will bring this mindset and will actively work to improve education wherever possible.

4. **While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern.** Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?

We need a common-sense approach to growth management that does not needlessly impede progress but makes sure that no one gets left behind. The hard-working residents of Maury County, in general, have been falling behind as development favors commuter culture over local job growth. We must be committed to improving our community and not just inviting more people into it. We can either let this become a faceless suburb, or we can leverage this demand for growth, invest in our people, and build a better Maury, preserving the small-town character and rural charm while increasing opportunity and improving quality of life.

5. **Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important.** Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

I am a firm believer in forward thinking and long-term planning. I feel like this is something that the County is currently lacking. As Mayor, I plan on pushing for more detailed planning when it comes to growth and infrastructure. Ideally, we will do much more with the tax dollars we collect by eliminating waste and improving efficiencies, but if our team determines that the best course of action is raising taxes, I will support it fully. I am also in favor of consolidating the grant writing process and hiring a dedicated professional grant writer to make sure we are not missing out on any opportunities.

6. **Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.**

Transparency and information availability are areas that the county can definitely improve upon. The county website needs to be overhauled and county data needs to be made more readily accessible for use by citizens and businesses. We need to start taking advantage of new technologies and websites that would give the county the ability to livestream meetings, and can instantly keep the residents up to date on information and announcements; I have extensive experience in this sort of implementation. I am also concerned about information security in the county government. While I was serving in the U.S. Army, I held a Secret Level Security Clearance. I take information security very seriously, and if elected I plan on making it a priority.
Recent news has been littered with reports of businesses and governmental agencies falling prey to scammers, hackers, and ransomware attacks. I intend to make sure that our county government is doing everything possible to safeguard its information systems as well as the private data of its residents and local businesses.

7. **If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?**

I believe that for leadership to be effective it must be proactive and dynamic – adapting to fit both the situation and the available team. I believe that a successful team is the product of effective communication, hard work, and dedication to organizational improvement. In preparation for the role of Mayor I have been meeting with so many people who work with the County Government, and I can say that there is a lot of potential. What we need is active leadership that helps facilitate cooperation and motivates the team to excel.

8. **If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?**

I believe the Chamber does a great job of attracting new members and holding events. I would love to see the Chamber and government working together more often. Events such as the Mayor’s Breakfast should be held more often, and I would encourage the Chamber to address the County Commission more frequently. As I have stated before, I think the county needs to be much more proactive about long term planning. I view the Maury County Chamber and Economic Alliance as an essential partner in setting a prosperous course for our shared future.
Candidate Name: Charlie Norman (I)

1. Why are you running for this position?

   Having served as the Maury County Mayor these past four years, I am eager to continue addressing the needs of our community with forward thinking plans concerning education, employment opportunities and the quality of life for our citizens in Maury County.

2. What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)

   Foremost I have the experience of serving Maury County as Mayor for the last four years. I’m a retired Captain, Training Officer, and Chaplain with the Columbia Fire Department. In addition to being a team leader/builder, I’ve coached our youth in baseball and soccer for many years. I strive to be open minded and listen, recognize strengths in those I am leading, and exhibit honesty about ideas regarding what is possible and what is not.

3. 85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?

   Partnership and cooperation between the county and the school board is key to the success of our education system in Maury County. There are programs in place today that are preparing our students for the future, whether college or vocational education and I will continue to support these programs. Columbia State Community College is a great asset to Maury County that offers a variety of career entry programs as well as transfer and university parallel majors to students who wish to pursue a baccalaureate degree at a four year college or university. As mayor, I will continue to work with the local educational entities as well as business leaders to get their input as to their needs for education and employment preparedness.

4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County
was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?

All Middle Tennessee Counties are experiencing tremendous growth and with that comes many concerns. I’m confident that Maury County has the ability to thrive even with the growth we are experiencing. My plans are to continue working on our strategic plan and allocating resources to ensure we are proactive in dealing with our infrastructure needs as well as our schools and parks. As mayor, I have been very involved with TDOT and the MPO and will continue discussions with our state and community leaders to discover solutions to our future needs.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

Rapid growth increases the demand for new or upgraded school facilities and infrastructure; however, raising taxes should be a last resort to fund our citizen’s needs and services. The overall budget alone cannot generate enough revenue to support such rapid growth. I support increasing the wheel tax as opposed to property taxes. Last year Maury County Clerk’s Office processed 95,000 transactions; therefore, if the wheel tax increased by $10.00, an additional $1 million in revenue would be added to the county’s overall budget. Secondly, we need to look at the adequate facilities tax which has not increased since its original passage in 1991. Adequate facilities, a tax collected from developers, generates funds to meet the need of increased growth and development. These are potential solution for increased revenue without placing the burden on the backs of the taxpayers.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

My goal is to continuously build and strengthen the working relationship with the Maury County Chamber and Economic Alliance for the overall benefit of not only the members but for the citizens of Maury County. I will strive and encourage others to maintain a positive outlook for our county’s future and all that is incorporated with being responsible to our citizens, family and friends. As Mayor, I will go to great lengths to further the goals of the Chamber’s membership to make Maury County a great place to live, work and raise a family.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

A successful team requires established goals and the commitment to achieving those goals. A crucial requirement is that of a leader who openly communicates, cooperates, and serves as a motivator to others. Appreciation and recognition is also an important characteristic to a successful team as well as recognizing each member’s contribution to the team.

8. If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?
To support, in any way possible, moving Maury County forward to a prosperous future for generations to come.
Candidate Name: **Andy Ogles (R)**

1. **Why are you running for this position?**
   As the co-author of the largest tax cut in Tennessee history, I am uniquely qualified to manage the difficult financial challenges ahead as our county faces unprecedented growth. In 2013, Maury County’s principal debt was $60 million, today in 2018 we have $163 million dollars in debt. Going forward we will need strategic planning in terms of infrastructure build out, debt planning and long term tax management. I am running to lead Maury County through this challenging time of unprecedented growth while continuing to improve our education system, our infrastructure and our quality of life.

2. **What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?**

   * Executive Director – Laffer Institute, advised the White House and Governors across the country on tax policy.
   * Executive Director – Americans for Prosperity, advocate for lower taxes and less government regulations.
   * Chief Operating Officer – Abolition International, managed non-profit with operations in 12 countries.
   * Advisory Board, Americans for Prosperity
   * Board of Directors, Director – Vote For Faith
   * Board of Directors, President – DDCA
   * Board of Directors, Nurses for Newborns
   * Board of Directors, YMCA

3. **85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?**

   Common Core was a failed policy nationally because a one size fits all education system could never accommodate educational and vocational needs for different regions of our country. The same is true here in Tennessee, thus Maury County needs to be a leader in introducing new
vocational programs into our school system that offer job ready training to those students that prefer moving into the work force rather than college upon graduation. As someone who has a personal relationship with each of the candidates running for Governor, I intend to leverage my relationship with the next Governor in order to roll out and expand vocational programs in Maury county in order to meet the current and future needs of our ever growing economy here in Maury county.

4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?

Fundamentally I am against raising taxes. Growth is a blessing but if not managed properly growth can be a curse that results in burdensome debt and tax increases that were otherwise avoidable. Case in point, over the last few years Maury County has taken on an incredible amount of debt, seen a tax increase, a property tax reassessment while at the same time the state has increased the gas tax. Leveraging my background in economics and tax planning, we need to lay out a truly realistic growth plan that encompasses population growth, school and infrastructure needs with forecasting for future budget, debt and revenue needs off set by population and business growth; such a plan will serve as a road map as we work to avoid the many financial pitfalls of aggressive county growth.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

In 1981 Ronald Reagan passed the Economic Recovery Act which resulted in unprecedented economic growth and recovery. By following the Laffer curve, President Reagan struck a balance between taxation, growth and debt. Though a national example, the same applies today here in Maury County. Going forward, we will need to conduct a deep analysis of our revenue sources as compared to our current and future needs whilst striking a balance between future debt, tax modernization and growth. With proper planning and leadership Maury County can serve as a model of how a rural county manages historic growth; we can either hire and pay an outside consultant with the appropriate tax and economic background or we can save taxpayers money and hire that person as our Mayor.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

As a former small business owner who started a successful restaurant and real estate investment business I understand the frustrations of having to contend with local government. As county mayor I will work with the business community to improve working relations and remove unnecessary local barriers. Secondly, I will embrace input from the local business community as we grow and preserve our historic downtown area in order to prevent future county missteps such as the metal maintenance building in downtown Columbia which needs to
be removed and replaced with a Justice Center and a jointly funded city-county parking structure.

7. **If elected, how would you define/describe a successful term?**

When elected, I will hold monthly meetings with business owners and quarterly meetings for constituents to constantly solicit input as to how we can improve government efficiency, manage growth and improve our schools. A successful first term will be defined by hitting community driven goals that focus on our growth, our schools and efficiency while maintain low taxes and avoiding unnecessary debt.

8. **If elected, how do plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?**

From running and growing a small business to managing an organization across international boundaries, my success in leadership has been driven by my willingness to listen, seek feedback, implement change and the ability to build coalitions. As Mayor, I look forward to working with our Chamber and our IDB to grow and diversify the economy here in Maury County. My roots in Maury County go back to the late 1800s, Maury County is part of my heritage; it is my family’s home and more importantly it is my children’s future; I will work tirelessly with all stakeholders to improve and preserve our growing community.
Candidate Name: Sonny Shackelford (I)

1. **Why are you running for this position?**

   We need a strong experienced leader in Maury County; as that leader, I will be bringing 40 years of business experience, of which eight years were spent as county commissioner. I spent my elected terms advancing the economic strength and quality of life for all of Maury County citizens, which are the key reasons I entered the race.

2. **What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?**

   Over the last 40 years, I have served on numerous Civic, Charitable and Association boards serving as President and if you couple that with my service as County Commissioner and the leadership roles at the commission, I am the most qualified to serve as the next Maury County Mayor.

   - Past Chairman of Maury County Commission
   - 2010 to Present Serving on the County Commission
   - Past Chairman of Maury County Budget Committee
   - 2010 to 2018 Serving on the County Budget Committee
   - 2016 Maury Alliance Chairman’s Award for Volunteerism
   - Past President of the Family Center
   - Past President of the Maury County Home Builder’s Association
   - Past President of the Exchange Club
   - 40 plus Years Successful Business Man
   - Married to Patricia Hickman Shackelford, Teacher at Joseph Brown Elementary

3. **85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?**

   As your Maury County Mayor, I will be a voice to make the investments necessary to produce the desired higher education or vocational outcomes, so our children will excel regardless of the career path they choose.
4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?

I believe we must develop a plan to address major infrastructure challenges. I have developed “Project Blueprint Maury”, which will provide a common-sense approach to planning for immediate and future growth. My plan is to be proactive, not just reactive, to solve these important issues. For example, 1) Bear Creek Pike expansion to 4 lanes, 2) Solution to the downtown parking shortage 3) Expand broadband access county-wide. 4) New Schools in Columbia, additions to Culleoka and Spring Hill then repairs for existing schools in all areas of the county. 5) Downtown solution for the court system and Clerks office in Columbia.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

I would say that raising taxes on the property owners is a last resort to solve some of the problems that we have in our communities. We must keep growing our tax base with new industries, small businesses and additional new investment in Maury County. The new growth will go a long way in paying for much needed projects.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

1) Work with the City of Columbia to extend East 6th Street to Tom Hitch Parkway, as a new development opportunity. 2) capitalize on our Duck River resource flowing thru Columbia, which is virtually undeveloped. We have enormous potential if we utilize our underperforming assets by unlocking its value to our communities.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

As your new Maury County Mayor, I will be a team player and a leader that will work with our County Commissioners, Elected Officials, City Leaders, School Board, Industrial Development Board and every citizen to find common ground on solving our most important issues to move Maury County to the top performer in the region.

8. If elected, how do plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

I will work to assist the Maury Alliance to accomplish its strategic five-year plan of action while providing ongoing leadership for all future community and economic improvements for Maury County.
County Commission, 1st District

Candidate Name: Ronnie Attkisson (I)

1. Why are you running for this position?

I feel that I have the business sense, common sense, leadership ability and experience to contribute to the commission and move this County in the direction we need to move.

2. What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?

I served on the Maury County Fair board for several years, held the highest elected positions in both the Columbia Elks Lodge and Columbia Masonic Lodge, elected President of the Tennessee Elks Association that was about 8,000 members strong, local business owner of a company that I started working for in 1983 and became sole owner in 2013, and grandfather to eight students in the Maury County School System.

3. 85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?

As far as education, certainly giving our students the best opportunity to learn in an adequate, safe and properly staffed school would be my answer. And to support the County school system through proper funding and working together would be the best way that I, as a commissioner could have an impact. The Maury County Industrial Development Board is always looking at bringing not only industry, but jobs to Maury County. As a commissioner I would support their efforts to continue their work.

4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?
One of my concerns is that with growth there is so much demand on the “infrastructure” that is in place such as roads and water. We need to make the right decisions to plan on improvements in those areas to meet the demands. The County must have the relationship with State officials, that it takes to get major road improvements done. Marshall County for instance has had several major projects completed or being done now.

5. **Regarding livability and taxes**, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. **Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?**

As far as vibrant downtown, that would not be anything that the commission would have any control over. The educational facilities issue and downtown parking will continue to be important. With the continued growth which is stimulating development, especially in the northern part of the county will also generate additional taxes through property taxes and sale taxes collected. I would not want to raise taxes if at all possible, if the long term revenue would be able to fund these areas.

6. **Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.**

I believe that the demolition landfill needs to be a priority. We should not depend on other counties to take our demolition landfill materials, such as brush, building materials, cement blocks and old furniture. Maury County needs to step up and make the decision to address our own refuse instead of dumping on others.

7. **If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?**

A successful team is one that will work together to make Maury County the very beset place to live, work, invest, raise a family and educate their children. Twenty-two commissioners will rarely agree on everything, but when we don’t agree, make what you feel as the best decision and move on.

8. **If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?**

I will make every effort to work alongside the organization to promote the assets that Maury County has.
Candidate Name: **Ken B. Banks (R)**

1. **Why are you running for this position?**

With the tremendous influx of people moving to Maury County, I can bring the perspective of an experienced Real Estate Broker to the Commission.

2. **What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?**

(A) Can relate to people from different walks of life. (B) Farm upbringing experiencing risks and hard work. (C) Graduated from MS State Univ. with degrees in Agri. Economics and in Bus. Mgmt. (D) Twenty plus years Mgmt. experience working in the Corporate world. (E) Married to Bonnie Banks, where together, we are self-employed with two small businesses; Opening as Principle Broker at the new Keller Williams Realty office in Parkway Plaza on Nashville Hwy where we both are licensed realtors. Hold several designations including the highest honored CRS—Council of Residential Specialist. Together, we are also at Gold Leadership Level with doTerra Essential Oils. (F) Founders of a 501-C, tax-deductible Foundation to educate, support, and fight against a form of child abuse at www.ParentalAlienation.info. (G) Current member of the local chapter of GWRRA—Goldwing Motorcycle Association, promoting safety and supporting education. (H) Participate in our church.

3. **85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?**

I achieved my college education while working on the family farm and commuting to classes. I graduated with no college debt. Our community college and Schools specializing in Technical Training are vital to our future.

4. **While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation.**
Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?

Our outgoing governor has expressed interest in bringing fast speed internet throughout rural Tennessee; in today’s fast paced world, that would go far in helping our families’ children be able to work on school projects in their own homes on the computer. It would also open up more opportunities for those who work at home and maintain an office at home. Also, planning to widen roadways before being inundated with traffic congestion is another subject of great importance.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

One of the Core Principles of being Republican is to work for lower and fairer taxes. As families, we have to live within our means. Sometimes that requires tough choices. In my campaign, I have said that I do not have all the answers, but I am willing to listen and add to the discussion. Having lower tax structures and no state income tax is one of the reasons we see people coming here from places like California where the cost of living there has gotten prohibitive. Let’s be wise and keep focused and balanced as we prepare for Maury County growth.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

Supporting law enforcement as we seek Quality education, safety and controlled discipline in our schools. Work to keep a strong local economy and combat drug abuse and related crimes. Working to educate people on earning and budgeting their money and decrease the use of high interest payday loans just to survive.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

Team members do not excel in the same strengths and roles; Let’s combine our strengths and utilize the individual differences to look for long term solutions.

8. If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

By bringing a background of education, experience, work and common sense to work as a team member to make fair and balanced decisions.
Candidate Name: Donna L. Cook (R)

1. **Why are you running for this position?**

   I’m running for the Re-Election of Maury County Commissioner to continue my service to the people in District 1. I want to help make Maury County a great place to live, work, receive an education, and help support existing, and new businesses to grow.

2. **What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?**

   My experience for the position of Maury County Commissioner includes 4 years as a Maury County Commissioner. Prior to this as a private citizen, I attended, and spoke before many County Commission, and School Board meetings working with elected officials, and department heads. My private sector employment experience includes managing healthcare budgets along with the generation of revenue, and marketing as an Office Manager for over 20 years.

3. **85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?**

   As a County Commissioner I’ll continue to support the funding of our schools facilities, teachers, and curriculum as our business community must have a skilled, trainable workforce, and the tax payers deserve a return on their investment.

4. **While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?**

   Maury County is blessed with the many opportunities the rapid growth is bringing along with the challenges this growth can bring. With our growth comes an increase in revenue so my biggest concern will not be the revenue required to meet the needs but excessive spending
which can occur. If we make wise decisions with conservative leadership who understand budgeting, and good fiscal spending practices along with oversight, and accountability we can work together to overcome any obstacle regarding the rapid growth in Maury County.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

I agree that educational facilities, roads, keeping our downtown vibrant, and the increase in traffic are extremely important issues to me as a County Commissioner.

- I fully support the schools system in Maury County, and every child deserves an opportunity to receive a great education in a facility which is well maintained. The tax payers in Maury County deserve, and expect a good return on their investment in our Schools however oversight, and accountability must be expected as we continue to reinvest in the improvement of our schools facilities, and educational curriculum.
- I fully support keeping our downtown vibrant as studies show a downtown is what keeps a county thriving. I fully support the building of a several story parking garage in our current employee parking pad with a walkway bridge to the square making excess easy to our vibrant downtown reducing traffic concerns.
- The increase in traffic can also be met with a proactive approach understanding that new roads can be built, existing roads can be widened, and traffic lights can be timed appropriately to alleviate high traffic congestions throughout the county.
- Additional fees should be increased within the many agencies that are directly impacted by the increase in growth such as renewals, utilities, broadband, permits, and the many developers who benefit financially from the growth should also share in the cost of growth by an increase in fees.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

As Maury County continues to grow our needs to keep pace with this growth must be met with a commitment to unity, and being proactive instead of reactive. I also believe new technology and new ideas should be embraced to meet the demands of growth. If we think outside the box and understand change can be a good thing, and are committed to working in together to solve problems our county can prosper. We can make Maury County be a great place to live, work, and receive an education.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

A successful leader understands that division doesn’t solve problems but working in unity with many people with individual skills in varies industries solve problems.

8. If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?
I fully support the efforts, and members of the Maury County Chamber, and Economic Alliance. I will continue to work together in unity to face the many challenges, and opportunities our rapid growth will bring to Maury County.
Candidate Name: Don Morrow (I)

1. Why are you running for this position?

I am running for County Commission for District One. I am running in order to help make Maury County the best it can be. As a native of Maury County, I have invested a lot of time in both civic and political areas to insure that our county continues to be a place that we would want to raise a family.

2. What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?

I have 12 years of experience in county government. I have served as chairman of both the Health and Environment and Safety Committee. I think that the best qualification that I possess is common sense. Government is all about people and trying to meet their needs, from education to making their homes safe a night.

3. 85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?

We need to welcome new business coming to our area. We need to make sure that as a county, we make it easy to do business and at the same time, protect the landscape of our community. Industrial parks are important to growth and jobs, however, they need to be placed in areas that will bring the least traffic and should not be close residential areas. I feel that vocational education is important and that we should strive to offer this valuable training to those that may decide not to attend a traditional four year college.

4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?
Growth is always costly. I have always been an advocate of being proactive in place of reactive, however, it is hard to plan for the numbers of families that are moving to our area. First, we need to manage the tax payer’s money and utilize it to its fullest capacity. Secondly, we must be aggressive in addressing issues such as schools, roads and solid waste. Lastly, we must work together as a governing body to insure results, one certain occasions we should agree to disagree and do what is best for the citizens of Maury County.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

Schools and roads are of utmost importance when dealing with growth. Business looks at your educational system, roads, and workforce. Education: it is not just about brick and mortar, it is about the product that is coming out of our schools. We must strive to have the best public education available. Taxes: growth can help pay for itself when you start getting the tax base on residential housing coming in. However, the growing pains are in the beginning stages. A county’s only source of revenue are taxes and fees and when the lack of either start affecting our schools or public safety, there is room for concern. Maury County is fortunate to be financially sound. This enables us to borrow money at good rates. We have been wise with the use of our money which helps us when we make a bond offering. This advantage helps us perform without raising taxes.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

I have always been a supporter of Maury Alliance. I think that the current staff is doing a remarkable job with communication to the business community. I feel that members of the Alliance need to be kept updated on growth, new businesses opening, and projections as to what may be headed our way, etc. The communication to the county commission is also very important. We use it to gauge workforce, new industries looking at our area and other needs.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

If elected, I will be a team player. I have worked with three county commissions and it is all about staying humble and keeping the best interest of the citizens in mind. A successful team is one that puts all egos aside and focuses on the problems at hand. The decisions we make affect people more on a daily basis that any other governmental body. The commission sets the tax rate, funds the schools, roads, jail, solid waste, and much more. So, working as a team is the only way to move this county forward.

8. If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

If elected, I plan to continue to work with the Chamber and Economic Alliance. The investment that we make in economic development is crucial. At the end of the day, we must all work and live together. Taking pride in our community will show to those that may be thinking about moving their families to the area.
Candidate Name: Eric Previti (I)

1. **Why are you running for this position?**

   I wish to continue to serve my community. I am honored to have been able to do so for the past 4 years.

2. **What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?**

   I have 4 years’ experience as a current county commissioner and have a working understanding of current and upcoming issues facing the county.

3. **85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?**

   Lobbying for repairs to the existing facilities, such as the replacement of McDowell Elementary. Many of our schools are in poor condition. It’s time to replace McDowell so the children have a better learning environment.

4. **While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?**

   We need to see Bear Creek Pike widened, NOW. We need to see broadband furnished to all parts of the county so students can have the content needed to do their studies. The issues of roads and bridges are important, However, the issue of a class 3-4 landfill for county residents will overshadow the commission in the coming months/years. We also need to continue to watch the Duck River, our water source. Will we have enough water for all this growth? Will we
need a reservoir in the future? If you want growth, these are just some of the issues that must be dealt with.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

As a county commissioner, I see the issue of downtown parking a city issue. The City needs to begin construction of a downtown parking garage now. I hear of studies, but it’s a need now. If the city wants to not stifle growth, there must be parking NOW. Yes, the court house and county offices are on the square, but the county has a parking lot behind the tag office. In the next commission, we will work on court house issues, and the possibility of building on the existing parking lot for a safer, more modern court facility. In that plan we will address parking and where we could put a lot.

I would like to see the county sell the buildings it has to the private sector. Move those offices to the most beautiful courthouse building in the state. Reopen all four entrances’ as they were when I was a kid. This will keep the courthouse operational and vibrant. If the buildings the county has are sold. Parking for whatever business appear will be needed. There again, the city controls the downtown parking. Build a garage now.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

Landfills and water for all the growth. The returning of all 5th grade to the elementary schools.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

A successful team is a team whose members listen to each other, and don’t discount a different viewpoint or idea. A successful team is a team who works together to a common goal.

8. If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

By attending meetings and events to hear what members are saying.
Candidate Name: Colby Block (I)

1. Why are you running for this position?

When there is work to be done, I am the first person to stand up and ask, “what can I do to help?”. Maury County is on the brink of major growth, and I want to be part of the solution to making that growth work to the community’s advantage, while still preserving what makes Maury County great!

2. What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?

I am passionate about helping others and giving back to the community. I believe this is evidenced by my work as a local attorney and a domestic violence court advocate. I’ve also recently served as the Vice President on the Board of Directors for Street Theatre Company—a non-profit theatre company in middle Tennessee. I’m also on the Board of Directors for the American Constitution Society. While I’ve never been a politician, I do have political experience. I helped run a canvassing office during the 2006 midterm election and served as the Deputy Communications and Policy Director for a mayoral candidate. Those experiences taught me the importance of reaching out directly to the constituents and hearing their voices, as well as understanding what exactly goes into governing and creating local policies.

3. 85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?

The backbone of our community is our educational system. To me, it is the number one investment we must make. If elected, I will ensure that we are properly funding our schools and teachers, as well as giving educators the tools they need to set up students for future success. We must also acknowledge that not all our students are heading to four-year colleges after graduation. Therefore, schools must also offer students the ability to learn a trade and prepare for direct entry into the workforce.
4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?

The future commission will be responsible for ensuring that Maury County is prepared for the impending growth, and that is one of the main reasons I have chosen to run for local office. We have to be willing to invest in infrastructure in order to prepare. While this might cost more money up front, my goal is to make the best investments to keep costs down over time. By making these investments early, we can capitalize on new businesses and jobs, which help defray costs in the long run. While we cannot ignore the growth that is occurring, it is critical to balance the benefits of change with preservation of Maury County’s history and existing charm.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

While no one wants to see their taxes raised, it is important to ensure that taxes are on par with income rates and the cost of living. There must be a balance so that any tax increase is offset by the requisite increase in wages. Without the latter, it is improper to raise taxes. There are also other viable ways to support growth and development without raising taxes. I am adamant about being fiscally responsible. What this means is that we must consider all viable avenues for funding, such as grants, attracting new business, reallocating existing funds to different projects, and even cutting spending from some existing programs where and when it is necessary to do so. I also believe that there are currently missed opportunities to invest in Maury County that could bring financial growth in the future. If elected, I promise to explore all avenues for funding.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

I believe the strength of our County lies in the strength of our community! I am in full support of organizations—like the Maury County Chamber and Economic Alliance—that promote local businesses and support the sustainable growth of our community. One issue of importance to me, which I believe aligns with the goals of the Chamber, is quality of life here in Maury County. I am thrilled to see the recent addition of an Arts District in Columbia. Things like a vibrant arts community creates new businesses, attracts skilled professionals, and new families to our County.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

A successful team is one that can work together, despite differing beliefs. Strong communication is the number one way to ensure that so many different voices can come together, be heard, be respected, and find a way to work together to have a positive result. I
believe my strong communication skills, my humility, and my ability to work together with diverse individuals make me a strong team member and a good candidate for commissioner.

8. If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

First, I hope to become even more involved with the Chamber than I already am, and that includes continuing to attend local business events, meetings, and to become a full member of the Chamber. I hope to work alongside the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to support and promote its community-focused goals by being an advocate of small and local businesses in Maury County. Again, I believe that the strength of our County lies in the strength of our community.
Candidate Name: Connie B. Green (R)

1. Why are you running for this position? I am running for a County Commissioner for the 4th District.

I grew up in Columbia and graduated from Central High School. I retired and returned to Columbia a few years ago. I want to serve this community that gave me a good start in life.

2. What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?

I worked for a management firm for many years and I was an assistant finance director for a City in Illinois for many years. I have two Masters Degrees including an MBA. I am experienced in budgeting and planning.

3. 85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?

Work with the School Board to understand the needs of the schools. Explore programs available at the local college. Ask local businesses and owners about their needs and educational requirements needed for their companies. We need to grow businesses in the County and encourage good jobs.

4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?

We are experiencing growth now. Our growth needs be planned. Infrastructure requirements are a major part of the planning. Parking is an issue that needs to be addressed. Housing development locations also have to consider school capacities in the area, utility availability, water, sewer and road access. All areas of the County need broadband.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

Each city and town need to come together and consider what the approach to their area needs including their downtown area. What will attract people? Our schools are important but I am not sure at this time that more money is the answer. Traffic is an issue and James Campbell, Spring Hill and Trotwood appear to have issues and some bridges. What happened to widening Bear Creek-I do not have answers. The Maury County Regional Planning Commission may have
other issues and ideas about traffic and roads. I do not know the long-range plans of the Commission.

6. **Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.**

To select a Finance Director and address audit issues.

7. **If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?**

A group of people who listen to one another and make a decision with the best interest of Maury County in mind.
Candidate Name: Patricia Hawkins (I)

1. Why are you running for this position?

I am running for re-election to be the voice for district 4 (vote at Saint Catherine Catholic church)

2. What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?

I have 43+ years as a public-school teacher, counselor, coordinator, and administrator. I served two (2) years as Maury County Commissioner District 4. I am the only experienced candidate in district 4.

3. 85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?

As an experienced educator, with experience as teacher, counselor, coordinator, and administrator. I know the importance of preparing our students, beginning in kindergarten, with skills that will allow them to reach their full potential. This will allow them to become productive citizens; I will work positively with all stake holders (Community, school system, constituents, and etc). I will continue to attend professional governmental workshops to continue developing and applying progressive leadership skills.

4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth?

Our roads must be upgraded, and utilities and broadband realistically and systematically expanded. My concern is how to best make changes without an expensive tax increase on the citizens. We want to avoid the growing pains of counties that are pushing out those with fixed and lower incomes. What plans do you have to address these? With growth comes the need for
more schools, more teachers, principals and support school staff. I want to see the school system promote within the school system and raise teacher’s salaries to keep our best teachers and support staff. I want to see renovation and repairs at all schools in need of renovation and repairs, not just a selected few.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

In addition to addressing all the above issues, it is important to understand that they all are important and should all be dealt with and properly addressed. I am not against raising taxes if necessary. However, I don’t believe in waste and mismanagement.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

All citizens need to be actively involved in issues that impact our community both negatively and positively. I think more unity is necessary and the community need to be better informed about what is going on in our city and county. Columbia is a city that has a wonderful, warm, friendly vibe. We want to maintain our hospitality as we grow.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

Be respectful and treat others the way we want to be treated. A successful team communicates well, focuses on results, everyone contributes their fair share, they offer each other support, team members are diverse and represent every point of view in the county. A successful leader has a leader we can trust and respect, we are organized, and can laugh with each other.

8. If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

I would like to be offered and led to training by the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance that allows the County Commission to meet with and attract new businesses to all areas of Maury County. We need districts south of Spring Hill to have an opportunity for growth and economic development.
Candidate Name: Matthew S. White (R)

1. **Why are you running for this position?**

   I’m running because I love our community, recognize its potential and have the experience to work with other leaders to help Maury County reach that full potential.

2. **What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?**

   I am a financial planner, portfolio manager and small business owner. I’ve been involved in several different non-profits and service organizations across Maury County for almost my entire adult life. I am the chair of Zion Christian Academy Foundation Board, a Rotarian and active in several ministries at Maury Hills Church. As a Marine infantryman, I learned how critical it is for qualified and able individuals to offer themselves for service to their community and country.

3. **85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?**

   While the county commission does not set education policy, it does approve funding for the school system. I would love to see more vocational training in our schools for students who would not be headed to college otherwise. Additionally, in the past, the Commission has not always followed through on commitments made to Columbia State and I will make it a high priority to ensure that the school has every resource the commission can provide to help our students be ready for Maury County’s workforce.

4. **While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?**
We are seeing in communities all around Middle Tennessee the effects of not being prepared for growth, especially as it pertains to transportation and infrastructure. Maury County has dozens of bridges and roadways that are not equipped to handle the growth that is coming our way. Good roads lead to good jobs and we need to be thinking about those roads in terms of the jobs that we want in our county 20, 30 or more years from now. No matter who is elected governor, I have developed deep relationships with each candidate and their staffs. The same is true of our legislative delegation. I will leverage those relationships to make sure Maury County is a high priority for infrastructure funding.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for raising taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

As a rule, I think tax increases on our citizens should be a last resort after setting priorities, trimming unnecessary budget items and spending responsibly. As a small business owner in a thriving downtown, I trust my fellow business owners to grow their businesses without unnecessary involvement from any level of government. They are creative, passionate, smart entrepreneurs who will drive our community’s growth and expand our tax base.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

My business is a proud member of the Alliance and we are grateful for all you do for our community. The best thing any public servant can do for your membership is be accessible, listen to concerns and do all we can to support businesses as they grow and impact our community. Our business leaders in Maury County are some of the most talented and generous anywhere. Our government needs to trust them, allow them to utilize their prodigious talents and provide whatever support they need while keeping undue regulation and burdens off their backs.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

A successful team is a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. While each member brings his or her own unique gifts and talents, when the team is well-led and members invest in each other’s success, they can achieve much more together than on their own.

8. If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

I will be an eager listener, ready to understand the Alliance’s goals as a group and as individuals. We all want our community to grow and thrive and I have great faith in this organization to seek the best path towards those objectives. I will be a loyal partner in achieving them. My door will always be open to you.
County Commission, 5th District

Candidate Name: Daniel Cooper (I)

1. **Why are you running for this position?**

   I am an incumbent independent Commissioner. The voters of the 5th District allowed me the freedom to vote for the best interests of our taxpayers. As an independent, I am not obligated to follow a party agenda. Potholes are not Republican or Democrat – just a problem that needs fixing.

2. **What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?**

   My military service of over 20 years developed a leadership and a decision-making process. The major responsibility of the Commission is to oversee the budget. My decade of employment with a Wall Street firm and my experience as your Commissioner uniquely qualifies me to oversee financial matters and make me the best suited candidate.

3. **85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?**

   Education, both technical and academic, are the cornerstones to a prosperous Maury County. I serve as a substitute teacher and I see an upward advancement of achievement for college preparation. However, vocational education needs a financial boost to prepare our students for top-paying industrial jobs.

4. **While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?**
Growth to Maury County is arriving with explosion! My biggest concern is with the City of Spring Hill continuing “spot zoning.” My plan is to make sure all responsible parties pay the appropriate share for infrastructure obligations. The State of Tennessee, City of Spring Hill, and Maury County should work in harmony on issues affecting all of us.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

Prior to my being elected, the Commission voted for two tax increases. These tax rates should be sufficient for the coming years to cover our new schools, roads, and other necessary expectation of services. In my opinion, parking in downtown Columbia is in need of updating. The City of Columbia owns the roads and parking downtown. Since the State’s revenues go to the City of Columbia they should pay for new parking.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

My first priority would be a fully operational fire department. We depend on voluntary firefighters. The time is upon us to staff a full time, fully equipped, fire fighting force. My next priority would be to welcoming our military veterans with employment and professional training. Our veterans know the meaning of accomplishing jobs -- they just need an opportunity.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

My Army leadership taught me how to manage and build a successful team by defining a mission which leads to long-term solutions. As the leader, I will step forward and take responsibility for all tasks. People should be properly trained and motivated to have a successful team.

8. If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

The Maury County Chamber and Economic Alliance have their own goals and accomplishments. My role will be to allow them to achieve their goals for the betterment of Maury County.
Candidate Name: Brian McKelvy (R)

1. Why are you running for this position?

I am running for County Commission to make a difference, not only for District 5 but for all of Maury County. I believe with the Commission system, the district commissioners need to be a team. The stronger the team the more things get done and the better the representation of the citizens of the district.

2. What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?

I have multifaceted career experiences having started in banking and finance before switching to the healthcare field. I have served on several boards including the Zion Christian Academy Board of Directors and as Chairman of The Polk Tomb Relocation Committee for the President James K. Polk Memorial Association. My career and public experience has been geared toward service to the public. I look forward to continuing to serve the people of Maury County by representing them in the county commission.

3. 85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?

One of the duties of the County Commission is to make sure the schools are properly funded. The new Private Act will be a valuable tool that will allow a team of leaders to be able to look at the books of both Maury County Public Schools and Maury County Government. This new system will allow for more transparency and timely access of information which will improve the School Board and County Commission’s decisions making abilities.

4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing
this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?

The County Commission needs to reestablish the strategic plan that they voted down a few months ago. With growth that is projected to happen, the County Commission needs to have a strategic plan, and the plan needs to be reevaluated every quarter. Also the county should look at increasing impact fees to increase revenue for schools, roads, etc. The county and the cities, Columbia, Spring Hill, and Mt. Pleasant, need to work together for the betterment of Maury County.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

I am not a supporter of increasing taxes, however, I do support the idea of increasing impact fees on new development to help offset cost for roads, schools, etc. Also, the county needs to partner with the cities of Maury County- Columbia, Spring Hill, and Mt. Pleasant, to address issues that face our downtowns and to keep our downtowns vibrant. Enacting a county strategic plan would help with planning and solving downtown issues.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

The County has some big issues to tackle— one being the landfill. There have been some ideas talked about how to solve this problem. Whatever the solution may be (composting, incinerator) it needs to be handled quickly and not be kicked down the road. I would make sure, if elected, that the County Commission continues to support the IDB (Industrial Development Board) and the recent acquisition of the new Innovation Park purchased from GM. This new acquisition will attract corporate jobs to Maury County.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

As mentioned in question 1, having two commissioners per district, the elected commissioners need to work together to properly represent the district.

8. If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

As a representative of District 5, I want to work with the Maury Alliance to meet the needs of, not only District 5, but all of Maury County. As an advocate of Maury County, I want to help attract, promote, expand and engage business in our county.
Candidate Name: Scott Sumners (R)

1. Why are you running for this position?

I’m running for re-election because I feel there is much more to do. I want my kids and future generations to work and live in the community that they grew up in.

2. What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?

My first 2 years on the commission I was Chairman of the Administration Committee and the last 2 years I have been Chairman of the Budget Committee as well as the Vice Chair of the Full Commission.

3. 85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?

Over the last 4 years the County Commission has invested about $132 million dollars in school capital projects. The commission has also increased the school's annual operating budget to fit the needs of a growing school system. The challenge that the commission has faced is being able to afford all of the requests that come our way. 20 - 30 years of crumbling infrastructure and neglected maintenance can't be solved in 4 years but we have put a considerable amount of effort and energy into fixing those issues and will continue to.

4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?

The County Commission had a strategic plan drafted in 2016 and most of these issues were a part of that plan. Within the last two months, the commission voted, by a narrow margin, to not
fund the facilitator and organizer of the plan. This was a huge mistake and needs to be considered once again. Planning is the key to success. The county will always be behind if we always have to react instead of being prepared.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

Raising property taxes should always be the last resort to raising revenue. With the amount of growth that the county is seeing it would be nice if that growth paid for itself. As it currently stands the growth doesn’t pay for itself. I believe we need Impact Fees going solely toward our education debt. This would limit the exposure of that debt from those that have been living here for some time while allowing the growth to pay for itself.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

Two other top priorities for me are implementing the new financial management plan and solving our solid waste issues. After several subpar financial audits the commission voted to change how the county government and the schools budget departments operate. Both departments will fall under the umbrella of the county government and will be run by one director. This will allow for more transparency and efficiency. As most are aware the county will close the demolition landfill at the Chickasaw Trace Park. We must find a long term, 50+ year, solution for our solid waste. We must think outside the box to help solve this problem for the coming generations. We have briefly looked at a composting facility as well as a gasification facility and will continue to do so.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

Successful teams set goals, communicate and are supportive of each other. The commission as a whole should be considered a team as well as each district commissioners should be a team. Working together can only increase the odds of a successful term.

8. If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

I believe that I have been a good partner to the Alliance in supporting its goals. I will continue to do so as long as it’s suitable to my principles and beliefs.
Candidate Name: Gerald W. Adkison (I)

1. Why are you running for this position?

I am running so that I can make a difference in the lives of my family and my community.

2. What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?

For the past 6 terms and a total of 24 years, I have served District 6 as their county commissioner. For six years of this, I served as the chairman of the safety committee and now serve as the vice chairman. I have also served on the building committee and the agricultural committee. I also know the importance of the budget and the impact it will have on the county residents if each department within the county government doesn’t stay within their budget.

3. 85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness of college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?

Currently, the county commission, me included, is making efforts in seeing that every Maury county student has a personal computer ensuring they are knowledgeable in regards to computer technology. This will better assist them when they advance into the workforce or further their education in college or a technology school. Several have already received their personal computer. Another obstacle facing our school system is the overcrowding of schools. I have been a part of the approval of two new schools in the past year both opening in the school year 2019-2020. I do understand that financial support is needed in order to improve our school system.

I will continue to work towards gaining approval for grant money that will enable our county to maintain and repair the schools that are in need of repairs. I will continue to monitor and work closely with the school board and the school system to ensure their budget is being used to
benefit the students and would also hope that the school system will hold their teachers accountable for preparing the students to advance into the workforce or college/vocational schools.

4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address this?

Our infrastructure is unable to keep up with the rapid growth in our county. There are new subdivisions being built all over the county to accommodate the growth but the federal and state dollars are not as readily available as is the new homes. With General Motors and other manufacturing facilities in the Spring Hill area the infrastructure concerns are great. We have received approval for the widening of Beechcroft Road and rerouting utilities to accommodate these new facilities. This work has already begun. I have made suggestions and will continue to work towards a resolution to this problem. I would like to see the contractors for the new subdivisions be accountable for a portion of the dollars needed to fund the roads and utilities. I am aware that with a resolution to this problem, it will encourage new growth into our county through businesses and manufacturing facilities therefore increasing the amount a tax dollars paid into our county.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

I am not in favor of raising taxes for the citizens of Maury County. I believe that with the commissioners continuously monitoring each department’s budget and keeping abreast of any unnecessary spending, we can prevent increases in property taxes. I would continue to instill the importance of keeping within their department budget and in the event this is not being done, address the issue with that particular department.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

I do have other priorities in our county. It is my opinion along with many others that our county is in need of a new justice center. Maury County Court House is currently overcrowded. The courtrooms are not as secure as they should be and there is a major lack of parking for the citizens that frequent the court house. In order for this update to be made, we depend on State and Federal funding and I would request this not be something that is ignored. I am also in favor of adding additional Resource Officers in the school system assuring our student are safe and secure.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?
I would encourage a commission that works closely together to achieve the goals set out and mentioned in this questionnaire. In order for our county to resolve the issues with education, infrastructure and growth we have to work together in a positive way to better our community.

8. **If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber and Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?**

   My plan is to partner with Maury County Chamber and Economic Alliance and continue to back funding. It is important for our county to maintain a good working relationship in order to tackle many of the obstacles that face our county. With your assistance, we will achieve some important goals that will eventually bring revenue into Maury County.
Candidate Name: Jordon Shaw (I)

1. **Why are you running for this position?**

   Growing up in Maury County, I want to give back to the County that I love so much. Having over 15 of years of Government experience, mostly in the IT Field, I feel I can bring an innovation approach to deal with the growth we are experiencing. Our County is changing and we need to properly manage that change.

2. **What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?**

   I have over 15 years of government experience. I have a great deal of experience looking at complex problems and providing solutions. In my first year as an IT Director for a municipal government agency, I was able to reduce our overall budget 4.3%, at the same time increasing the level of operations by adding over $100,000 in program enhancements. I have experience working on a Parks and Recreation Commission and working on a community comprehensive plan.

   In additional to my years of experience in government, I also hold a doctorate degree in business administration, a master degree in computer information systems and a bachelor degree in organizational management.

3. **85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?**

   When you look at the differences between our school system and top-rated school systems in the state, the biggest difference is funding. Making sure a student is prepared for employment or college/vocational education, starts in our school system. In Maury County, we don’t have unlimited resources. We can’t fund everything that comes up; however, we can be smarter with the way we spend what we do have. We need to look at every line item in our budget and determine the value it’s bringing to our County, more importantly, the value it’s bringing to preparing our kids for employment or college/vocational education. Once we have a better
understanding of where we can cut programs that don’t bring the right amount of value, then we can focus on putting in innovative solutions to get us more value for the same cost. With my background in technology, and the 12 years I spent as a college student earning my doctorate degree, I know what that takes to get the job done and would love the opportunity to work on it. Additionally, I have been a college professor for many years and know what students need when they get to the college level.

4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?

The first thing we have to put in place is a strategic plan. The Commission has had a strategic plan in the past; however, they recently voted not to refresh that plan. With a County that is growing as fast as Maury County, we cannot simply create a plan and let it sit. We must create the plan and review it yearly, maybe even quarterly basis. Having a plan in place and actually working that plan will allow us to be proactive to properly handle the growth. If we do not continue to update our strategic plan, we will find ourselves like other surrounding communities, trying to keep up with the growth and staying in a reactive mode.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

I do not support raising our taxes. I feel that we can work smarter and not harder. If we put innovative solutions in place, they will end up saving us money in the long run and allow us to use the money we already have to expand our school system, building out our infrastructure, and grow our downtown areas. I feel it’s time that we step up as a community and put solutions in place that will carry us into the future and not simply push the problem out so it becomes someone else’s problem.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

With my background in technology and seeing how technology can help communities function better, I have a clear goal of pushing innovation in our community. There are solutions we can put in place that cost less, but allow us to be more efficient. For example, you shouldn’t have to go to different departments in the County and give them your same information. If the various departments were using the same system, they could share the data and would provide a better customer service experience for our citizens, at the same time allow the County to only have to pay for one system and not multiples. It’s time that we take a look at every one of our departments in the County, understand their business processes, and determine how we can improve those processes with solutions that are more cost effective and more efficient for our tax payers.
7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

For me, this is simple. Our team needs to work together to accomplish our goals. That doesn’t limit us to just working together within the County Commission. That should be working together with all the other agencies within our County. There is no reason we shouldn’t meet with the municipal government agencies or the Board of Education, on a regular basis, to make sure we’re all working for the same goal and all working for our constituents.

8. If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

It’s really about understanding the needs of the members/investors. The Chamber & Economic Alliance brings a lot of value to our County and brings a lot of value in helping the Commission to understand the changes happening in our county. It’s important that we meet on a regular basis to understand the needs of the members/investors for they can be addressed.
Candidate Name: Sue Stephenson (R)

1. Why are you running for this position?

I am running for re-election because I have been very effective in supporting necessary changes as well as the introduction of many improvements for residents of Maury County and District 6. The Commission has made significant progress this term, but there is much more that needs to be done. Secondly, there is a great deal of growth and development taking place in Districts 6 and throughout the county. Guidance and direction are needed to assure smart growth and planning of zoning classifications and balancing that growth with needed infrastructure and safety improvements, while always protecting home and property values.

2. What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?

I have the unique background of serving on the chief legislative body of both municipal and county governments. I have had 8 valuable years of experience and learning, and I have wisely spent that time working hard on many issues and challenges that have or will impact the lives of Maury Countians. I am known to be a true workhorse and multitasker, but I also carefully balance that work ethic with adequate time for other personal responsibilities and most importantly, prioritizing quality time with my family and friends. For many years, I participated in public events, dedicated volunteer hours to many organizations, and served on many boards and committees. That volunteerism, networking and socialization time was very important, but I typically spend most of my time now reading, researching, consulting with county staff and department heads, meeting with others who have knowledge and expertise, and discussing information with state agencies and state legislators.

3. 85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?

Our resources in regard to preparedness for education and college/vocational training are multifaceted. Columbia/Maury County has integrated partnerships including the American Job Center in Columbia/Maury County (South Central Tennessee Workforce Alliance), the Workforce Innovation & Operation Alliance (WIOA), the Economic & Workforce Development (EWD), and
the Northfield Workforce Development & Training Center. The stabilizing foundation that supports and underlies this partnership matrix for education, training, employment and workforce development include Maury County Public Schools, the Maury County School Board & Administration, Columbia State Community College and the State of Tennessee. They are all on the front line. Request #1 to Impact Obstacles: Maury County Government (County Commission) needs to be better informed about the role of all entities and agencies involved, and how they all work together. The Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance and the Industrial Development Board focus on job creation and the recruitment of business, manufacturing and industrial prospects into Maury County. And, the County Commission appropriates funding to the public school system as well as the entire countywide system of services.

But it all begins with elementary education in the Maury County Public School System and with the decisions made by the School Board. The article entitled, “Maury Schools Want Improved Test Scores” published in the Daily Herald on December 9, 2017 was very concerning. Mastery of fundamental core curriculum in the primary grades (K-4) is critical. The introduction of technology and technological skill development can follow beginning in grade 4-5. And, this bit of advice comes from a former educator. Request #2 to Impact Obstacles: The School Board needs to become unified and eliminate divisions within the Board and with the Director of Schools. Also, the Maury County Commission and School Board need to get together to discuss issues and differences, really listen to each other, and resolve underlying turmoil and conflicts. We must be able to trust and respect each other and work together effectively for the students and families of Maury County.

4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?

The key is smart growth and development through both the municipal Planning Commissions and the Maury County Regional Planning Commission. The power of Planning Commissions with little oversight is very concerning. They are political appointees made by the Mayor. Local governments need to petition state legislators for help to improve this situation. The County Commission has to approve any rezoning requests, amendments to the Zoning Resolution, or amendments to the Subdivision Regulations. The County Commission should also approve preliminary plats and final site plans as well.

Currently, zoning classifications are a “free for all” with no rhyme or reason, allowing commercial and industrial on top of residential and agriculture, with no respect or concern for long-time home and property owners. Zoning and planning staffs should be giving suggestions and recommendations to planning commissioners and planning commissioners should be making sure that builders and developers share the burden of infrastructure costs and safety upgrades (road widening, turn and storage lanes, traffic studies, traffic signals) so that it does not fall on the backs of city and county taxpayers. We have hundreds and hundreds of miles of old, narrow country roads that were never built or designed for today’s vehicles and traffic volume, especially the parade created by development; a continuous trail of concrete mixers,
dump trucks, flatbed lumber haulers, etc.... Our county roads are nowhere near today’s required standards.

We spent hundreds of thousands of taxpayer’s dollars and a lot of time gathering feedback from the public, from citizens in order to develop a Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan was supposed to be a guidance document for us to all follow with development following established character areas with designated zoning classifications allowed and others not allowed. Sadly, the City of Columbia adopted the Comprehensive Plan, but every week we see in the classifieds public notice after public notice to amend the Comprehensive Plan to accommodate a developer’s rezoning request. So, a “Suburban Corridor” area may become a “Commercial Corridor” area and a “Rural” area may become an “Industrial” area. Maury County never even adopted the Comprehensive Plan. Since the Comprehensive Plan does not have the power of enforcement documents such as a Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Resolution or Subdivision Regulations, it is totally ignored and abused. William County has a Comprehensive Plan and they follow it closely. They never do any rezoning unless they have found an error that needs to be corrected. Zoning restrictions are enforced.

Broadband and other utilities definitely need to be expanded into rural areas but that will have to be addressed by state legislators. But, it will be important for local government officials to maintain open lines of communication and ongoing advocacy with state legislators, and requesting they prioritize and support these improvements and expansion into rural areas.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

Our biggest traffic jams involve the 2 gateway corridors coming into Maury County. They are Highway 31 (SR 6) and Bear Creek Pike (SR99), and they are both state routes, totally governed and regulated by TDOT. When I was on the Columbia City Council, I was able to get the Council’s approval to do 2 Traffic Studies on Highway 31. Part One of the study began at the Columbia city limits at Fire Hall #5 (on Hwy. 31) down to Industrial Park Road. Part Two of the study began at Industrial Park Road and went down to Bear Creek Pike. These studies included both short-term and long-term recommendations for better traffic flow and many other traffic control improvements, including a totally new design of the intersection at Hwy. 31 and Bear Creek Pike. The Council should revisit these studies and their recommendations. Discussions with TDOT have also been fruitful, and work on the interchange at I-65 and Bear Creek Pike has been approved. Any changes or improvements will involve lengthy discussions with TDOT and grant funding that may be made available. TDOT covers the entire state, so state projects statewide are vying for grant dollars and state route improvements. Again, this will entail local government officials working with the Governor, TDOT and TDEC Commissioners as well as our state legislators.

I absolutely agree with a vibrant downtown. This will entail a good working relationship with Columbia city officials. I would like to see some big enhancements in our downtown, but I will elaborate on those under question #6.
Lastly, it is important for your members to know exactly what this current County Commission has appropriated for Maury County Public School. During this term, to date, the County Commission has given MCPS $134 million dollars, which is unprecedented. No other County Commission in history has come close to appropriating this amount of funding in any single 4-year term of office. These dollars funded a new Central High School ($48,000,000.), repairs & renovations for existing school facilities ($16,000,000), land purchase, facility designs, and site work for both a new elementary school and a new middle school ($5,000,000.), a new elementary school and a new middle school ($65,000,000.). Problem #1: Maury County school facilities have been neglected for many, many years. The current County Commission was presented with an initial list of $50,000,000. in repair requests that are needed at existing schools. We have already given them $16,000,000. last year and we have offered them another $14,000,000. for repairs in the 2018-2019 capital projects budget. This would be $30,000,000. for repairs all together. We also offered $2,000,000. for design plans for a new McDowall school and to cover both renovations and additions needed at Spring Hill High School.

We are currently building the new elementary school and the new middle school, at a combined cost of $65,000,000. During this time, while we are building 2 new schools for MCPS, the School Board asked for another $40,000,000. to build a new McDowall school and to fund renovations/additions at Spring Hill High School. The Commission said no. Yes, the Commission turned down a request for another $40,000,000. while we are in the process of building 2 new schools for $65,000,000. Some School Board members said that the County Commission has not sufficiently supported the needs of Maury County school students! Problem #2: The School Board wants it all, wants it all now, and wants it all at the same time. They want new 21st Century schools, millions in repair and renovation monies, new technology (computers, software etc....), new administrators, new specialty staff and teachers... And now, in addition to capital projects and requests, the School Board asked for another $115,000,000. for their general budget! The County has many, many department and services to fund, including the County Highway Department, Solid Waste/Landfills, County Court system, and the Sheriff’s Dept to name a few. The Maury County Commission has not neglected the MCPS system. We have been very generous and some overt sign of appreciation on the record is long overdue.

6. **Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.**

In regard to a vibrant downtown, I would like to share a vision. I would love to see a new Maury County Library & Archive on property on W. 6th overlooking the Duck River. I would like to see a Maury County Complex & Justice Center building on the rear parking lot to include County Offices and the Court System. Land across Woodland could be purchased for a new parking lot/garage that would connect with the County building with an above-ground walkway. I would like to see a parking garage between City Hall and the City Police Department with an above-ground walkway connecting the 2 buildings. I would like to see the Maury County Courthouse renovated to house the Mayor’s Office, the County Commission Chambers, etc.... The old buildings/property currently housing the County offices could be sold to pay toward the new building, and new retail shops, restaurants, stores, etc. could develop on that northeast corner. It’s exciting to dream although realistically, improvements to this extent may be a long way off or never seriously considered because they would be cost prohibitive. But, some may be possible, with determined visionaries and responsible fiscal management.
7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

I picture a “successful team” as being a strong, savvy, visionary Mayor who works closely with and has a good working relationship with the County Commission. Also, a “successful team” includes a County Commission whose members respect one another, who never gossip or talk down publicly about another commissioner, and who can “agree to disagree” amicably and still work well together for the mutual good of the County. I picture a “successful team” as being the County Mayor, County Commissioners, Department Heads and County Staff all respecting one another, who stay “in touch” and communicate well with each other, and who all work well together for the betterment of Maury County citizens. I picture a “successful team” as being a County Mayor and County Commission members who respect the City Mayor and City Council, who keep lines of communication open with each other, and who work well together with the City Mayor and City Council and vice versa. I picture a “successful team” as being both city and county elected officials working well with and “staying in touch” with Maury Alliance, the Industrial Development Boards, Columbia State Community College, the downtown merchants, vendors, shop owners, and they in turn, stay involved with their municipal and county government officials.

8. If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

Well, my response in #7 is a good beginning to creating a long-lasting and effective partnership. However, I think it would be beneficial if the County Commission had more contact and more frequent communication with members of both the Chamber and Economic Alliance. I don’t think the County Commission, Alliance and Chamber members interact as much as they should. I don’t think that one knows very much about what the other is doing. I think an opportunity to have frequent discussions, including Q&A would be helpful, like a quarterly summit.
County Commission, 7th District

Candidate Name: Wayne Patterson (I)

1. **Why are you running for this position?**

   I retired this year and feel that being elected as a county commissioner is an opportunity to serve the people of the 7th district.

2. **What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?**

   My work experience in dealing with the public; working through issues/problems; working with diversity; and working as a team have all prepared me for this position.

3. **85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?**

   Our school system needs to have as its top priority the assurance that our students are given the quality of education that educates and equips our students for a bright future of their choosing after high school. As a county commission we need to provide the resources that are economically sound for providing our students with a quality education that does prepare them for their future. A quality education is the one of most important selling points for growth. Children are our greatest future assets and making wise investments now provides a brighter future for all.

4. **While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?**

   Maury County is a great place to live that will continue to attract growth if we understand that with growth comes problems/concerns/issues that will need the attention of the county
commission. We must be visionaries. We must have an action plan that not only encompasses what we want Maury County to look like a year from now but also 5 years from now and 10 years from now. With vision comes "projected budgets" for the growth and finding creating ways to fund the future is pivotal. Raising taxes should not always be the solution.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

Schools, roads, and downtown parking are all important budget issues that as a county commission we need to seek funding for and taxes is seen by many as the means to help resolve these issues. If taxes are seen as a solution, I feel the wheel tax is the fairest tax that would have my vote for approval.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

At this time the issues mentioned in previous questions would be the top priorities for the commission to work on.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

Successful team: Working together we can achieve more. Our goal should be to make Maury County an economically appealing place for people to choose as their future place to live as well as to continue to enhance the lives of the current residence of Maury County.

8. If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

Listening to the voice of the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance is important. They have their pulse of what industries, etc. are interested in investing in Maury County.
Candidate Name: **Linda L. Whiteside (I)**

1. **Why are you running for this position?**
   
   To represent not only the citizens of the 7th District but all citizens who need help and trying to help keep taxes low while providing quality services.

2. **What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for the position?**
   
   I have been on the County commission for almost 13 years.

3. **85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County grown as education and workforce. Of those, the too concerns preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?**
   
   I do not agree. I think our children are prepared for employment and college. We need to offer better paying jobs so they will want to remain in Maury county. Schools are offering more hands on skills that will help them to become better employees.

4. **While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?**
   
   Growth should pay for itself, but this is not happening. The state has not let counties use impact fees to help with the growth. Maybe that will be changed. We need to elect representatives who are willing to take up such matters with the state. We need to welcome growth but at the same time not burden people that already live here with higher taxes to pay for it. We need smart growth.

5. **Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated a**
vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

I do not support higher taxes. All of these issues are important. We have been more than generous with the schools, but we have to figure out how to make growth pay for itself.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

<No Response>

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

A team that works together for the betterment of Maury Co.

8. If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

I think we have had a good relationship with Maury Alliance and hope it continues. I believe we have been supportive in their endeavors.
County Commission, 8th District

Candidate Name: Brendan Babcock (R)

1. Why are you running for this position?

My wife Sharon and I have four children. I’m running to be one of the Commissioners in District 8 because I love Maury County and want to be more involved in the community and influence the nature of the County’s growth. In order to continue Maury County’s positive growth we need transparency in our local government and wise financial restraint. Better, more efficient government requires this. As a Commissioner I will provide this.

2. What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?

I believe my background will help me effectively and wisely serve this county. From my professional and chemical engineering background, I understand the factors that will draw industry into this county while at the same time my agricultural background guides me in growing and supporting the agricultural backbone of this county.

As a member of the Tennessee Cattlemen’s Association and an Advanced Master Beef Producer, I’ve learned and experienced firsthand some of the issues that face the members of our Agricultural community. I know the importance of attracting businesses into the county that directly benefit our Agricultural industry.

As a Board member of Agathos Classical School, I have worked with the Board to improve the effectiveness of the learning environment and to streamline our budget through construction projects and the growth of the school. Using our resources wisely is the foundation of stewardship, this applies to the county budget as well.

As a Commissioner my background in industry, agriculture, budgeting, and education will be helpful in creating the kind of growth our County needs.

3. 85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness
for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?

There are multiple factors, yet focusing on helping students better see how their school work is linked to their future employment possibilities is critical. This is best done by expanding the effort to link schools with businesses and other organizations so students are inspired to utilize their opportunities. This improves our workforce and helps diminish the factors that lead to drug abuse that are affecting the workforce in our County.

There is also a need to bring parents into their children’s education and future careers. The better students have high levels of parental involvement. Around 80% do not.

4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?

I believe Maury County will thrive during this growth as much of the improvement in infrastructure is desirable with or without the growth. I would encourage local government and private companies to partner up in improving and extending our broadband coverage and look into providing incentives for investing in the expansion of broadband into our more rural areas. This improvement is necessary in attracting businesses to our community. This will also enable current residents to start or expand their businesses.

Road improvement is necessary, particularly around exit 46. The off ramp coming off I-65 South is dangerous at times. Widening Bear Creek Pike and improving its access to I-65 will address both a safety and a growth concern.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

These issues are paramount to the growth of Maury County, yet I believe we can grow revenue without raising tax rates. The property values in Maury County have gone up substantially and will provide greater revenue for our schools. I would look into reducing the school construction costs. I would also look into encouraging the use of grants and private funding to help students attend some of the private schools that are in the area. These private schools are looking to increase their enrollment and can expand their enrollment at a substantially lower cost per student. This could help delay the need for additional schools until more funding is available and a greater financial base is established.

Regarding our roads, the IMPROVE Act has already been passed and should cover the most pressing needs (e.g. 29 bridges in the county are listed for being repaired).

Downtown parking is more of a city issue rather than a county issue, but again, I would look to private investors for this kind of funding.
I simply believe we can allocate our budgeted resources more wisely. Growth in our County should generally be funded by the growth itself. Certainly, investments can be made, yet if the growth isn’t paying for itself, that is a good indication it really isn’t the kind of growth we want.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

The hurt to individuals and waste of God-given talents due to addiction is an area that needs more attention. Many are doing good work in this area, but it is a growing problem that is devastating to our families and communities. In the Sheriff’s Debate it was stated that 90% of our County’s crimes include a drug/alcohol element. This is a difficult issue, but preventing the problem saves lives and strengthens our community. A small investment here can have great rewards.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

A successful team is an effective team that respects and utilizes each member’s abilities. Maury County is a special place. A successful team will plan for sustained growth that attracts more industry and families into our County while preserving our culture and agricultural heritage.

8. If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

I would communicate to businesses how they can benefit by becoming members. And, how this will also benefit the economy, community, and our education system.
Candidate Name: Terry W. Potts (I)

1. **Why are you running for this position?**

   I have spent all my working life serving Maury County. I spent 30 years as a volunteer with Maury County Fire Department, 3 years as their Chief. I was employed by the Columbia Fire Department for 28 years and held the rank of Captain, Served 3 terms as an elected Constable and 12 years as a Magistrate of the General Sessions Court. Most recently I am one of the two 8th District County Commissioners. I love Maury County and its Citizens and strive to make this a better place for all.

2. **What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?**

   I currently serve as the 8th District Commissioner, I sit on the Safety Committee, Civil Service Board and the Solid Waste Board.

3. **85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?**

   By supporting Educational Opportunities in our Local Schools with Managed Funding for Programs such as Megatronics also supporting Columbia State Community College.

4. **While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?**

   I am concerned about our rapid Growth which is great but we must be prepared for it, we must strategically plan for our future and our infrastructure needs.

5. **Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated**
vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

Education is to be our number one priority and must be adequately funded we must address our Traffic and parking issues. I feel a new Criminal Justice Center built somewhere in the downtown area would alleviate some of the Parking issues downtown. I would like to see Maury County partner with the City of Columbia to build a multi-story Parking Garage downtown.

We must work closely with our State Representatives to address the traffic concerns, especially Highway 31 and Bear Creek Pike and the Interchange at Bear Creek and I-65.

As far as tax increases I think I have already proven I will only raise them when it has been proven there is no other alternative.

6. **Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.**

   Education, Public Safety, Jobs and Infrastructure are my top priorities.

7. **If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?**

   A successful team works together and with outside Partners to accomplish goals with Vision, Leadership and with Strategic planning.

8. **If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?**

   I have always and will continue to support the Maury County Chamber and Economic alliance to make Maury County a great place to live, work and raise families.
Candidate Name: **Debbie Turner (I)**

1. **Why are you running for this position?**

   I am running for the 8th District Commissioner seat to be a voice for the taxpayer and advocate for my constituents in county government. The term advocate covers a lot of ground in fighting for what I believe is in the best interest of the people. Is it right, is it fair, is it ethical, and is it justified are a few of the questions I always ask myself when taking a position on issues. It’s never been about me, it's all about the people I serve.

2. **What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?**

   First and foremost, I have no personal agendas, and I serve no special interest groups. That is the same today as it was eight years ago when I took the 8th District Commissioner’s oath of office. I feel my experience on the commission and county government operations are of utmost importance as we embark on a journey of growth like we have never seen in our lifetime. When I was elected in 2010, unemployment rates began soaring as much as 14-17 percent. I've lived those hard times on your behalf in regard to county business, and made those hard votes and decisions. With our unemployment rate now sitting at 2.8%, and with the different set of issues and decisions coming our way in a completely opposite economical situation, I feel I bring valuable experience to the table as we make major decisions that will have a tremendous impact on the future generations of Maury County. I have served on the Health & Environment, Safety, Building, and Administration Committees on the County Commission. I am currently Vice Chair of Building and Administration. Most of all, I have a clear understanding of how our complex county budget works. I am a former board member of The Family Center, and an active member of the Culleoka Lions Club. I had a 41 year career with BellSouth/AT&T where I was a Service Technician, Quality Consultant, and Material Service Coordinator where I ordered and managed millions of dollars of service material and equipment for 4 major work centers always following strict budget restraints.

3. **85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?**
I will continue to support the initiatives currently in place that positively impacts preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education such as Mechatronics, Project Lead the Way, Stem, and the FFA (Future Farmers of America) which are specialty programs being offered in many of our public schools. I will also continue to support the efforts of Maury Alliance, the South Central TN Workforce Alliance, Columbia State, as well as all civic organizations such as The Boys and Girls Club of Maury County who get students prepared for college and the workplace.

4. **While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?**

I have grave concerns over our infrastructure with roads b/c of the many challenges we are being faced with. Road improvements are happening daily in Maury County whether it be road repairs, tar and chip, pavement, bridge repairs/replacements, safety and grounds maintenance--our lists keep rapidly growing! Sooner or later we are going to have to hire more people, purchase new equipment, all the while the cost of doing business is sky rocketing. I truly feel there will come a time when we are going to have to look at other options in funding highway operations. As for broadband, I feel this is an issue totally out of our hands, other than making the pleas to the major carriers such as AT&T, Columbia Power & Water, Spectrum, Google Fiber, etc. It will always come down to an expense/revenue issue. I have no concerns when it comes to our utilities. We have the best of the best serving Maury County, whether it be Columbia Power or Duck River Electric. I have the utmost confidence in their management of services in keeping up with growth and meeting customer demands.

5. **Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?**

I am proud for the Maury Alliance members who could support higher taxes for education, roads, and downtown parking, but I’ve got to take everyone into consideration, especially representing a rural district. I have to listen to the people I represent and what they feel are the most advantageous to them, and others throughout the county. Yes, absolutely all is very important and there is need, but before I will consider voting for a tax increase for anything, many things have to happen with a tax increase being the last resort. The school system has received over 132 million dollars the past four years. The current and future county commissions cannot possibly fund what needs to be done that was ignored for years, and expect it to all be done now. There are other pressing and costly issues facing us in addition to roads and schools, and that is solid waste/landfill issues, but our revenue numbers are increasing, roof tops, property taxes, new developments, and making sure we have a planning commission who is willing to put the burden of development on the developers in cases when it should be instead of putting the burden on the current taxpayers will all help our plight We have a top notch Budget/Finance Director and staff who continually keep us up to date on the current state of our financial affairs. While the county incursrs debt, we also have debt that will be paid off
allowing for more borrowing power. They will be the first to let us know when a tax increase is needed; it will be the county commission to decide. We will cross the bridge of raising taxes when we get to it, one issue at a time.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

I don’t have any other particular priorities I believe are important to the membership that have not already been expressed, but I do have some wants and wishes when it comes to everybody and that is more recreational opportunities. Perhaps partnerships with TWRA on unused land for horse, biking, and hiking trails. Tornado warning signals or community tornado shelters at our parks, or other places in the county. Who knows, they possibly could be named after a person or organization like the shelters in the park. More recreational opportunities in general that celebrate our most untapped resource, The Duck River. Your membership is large and powerful. You have the resources for all sorts of possibilities.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

I would define a successful team as one who communicates effectively with others recognizing and respecting each other’s views and opinions. It’s hard when it’s a very diverse group as the county commission, but having that diversity and recognizing what each of us have to bring to the table is important to when it comes to teamwork. Trust is key, and focusing on our problems and issues with the goal and end results in mind are crucial. Good and smart leadership is definitely needed. You want those special qualities, expertise, and experience utilized. Finally, a word we don’t often hear that is to me the epitome of a successful team is consensus. You’ve got to reach a consensus in anything you do as a team, especially when it comes to voting. You may not like it, but you will live with it and support it for the sake of moving on in a positive manner.

8. If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

I am a very proud supporter of our relationship with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance. We couldn’t maintain nor sustain our status as a successful growing county without them. I will continue to support the 250 thousand dollar county appropriation, and will always support the future endeavors of our Industrial Development Board. You all serve a valuable and important role in our county, and you exist for a reason. I commend your efforts, and I thank you.
1. **Why are you running for this position?**

   I am very much interested in Maury County making common sense decisions as our area continues to grow. The growth is coming whether we like it or not and we must respond with progressive thinking so that our children will not be left with the burden of correcting our mistakes.

2. **What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?**

   I was Principal of Spring Hill High School for ten years, three years as Asst. Principal and taught Agriculture for 27 years. During those 40 years, I was able to experience up close how rapid growth affects a community. The thirteen years that I was an administrator I saw lots of celebrations and heartaches in the community related to the economy ups and downs.

   The end of the Saturn era at GM was extremely sad when many of the families who came to Maury County in the 80’s, had to leave to continue their careers with GM in other states. Later on, I was present at the celebration for the start of production of the Chevy Traverse; only to see it cease ten short months later which coincided with the start of the Great Recession. Fortunately, we later saw GM rebound and announce the plans for production of the GMC Arcadia and the Cadillac XT5.

   All the time that I was working in Spring Hill, most of my afternoons and weekends were spent helping with, and later managing the work of my family’s farm in the south end of the county. So I can honestly say that I am very familiar and knowledgeable with our county between the Williamson and Giles borders.

3. **85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?**
I agree with your membership survey concerning education and the workforce.

In my opinion, our greatest single obstacle in getting where we need to be in education is the inequality of curriculum offerings among our high schools. While the current school administration and the previous administration have both attempted to address this matter, the issue will never get to the long term sustainability level without enough student enrollments at each high school site.

If and when we get to the level that all high schools offer equality in curriculum offerings, the commission must assist the school board in providing the resources to employ and KEEP the competent teachers needed for the expanded and enhanced curriculum offerings.

I fully understand that those decisions rest on the school board’s shoulders, but it all depends on the commission and BOE working in harmony to provide the necessary resources to address this issue.

4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?

The infrastructure issue must be dealt with. First of all we must maximize our efforts to secure grant funding from the federal and state government for roads, utilities etc.. We have to work in harmony with our state representatives so that we can get all available funds for our county in building and maintaining roads.

I have friends living in remote areas of our county who depend on their cell phones for internet access. Efforts need to be made to give our utility companies and districts the means to improve and extend their services in a way that generates revenue for needed upgrades and expansions.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

For me to support any kind of a tax increase, I will have to see sure solutions presented, and applied to only the very important needs of our county. I am in favor of supporting infrastructure needs as our county continues to grow and I will give serious consideration to supporting those needs, especially educational facilities.

The property owners of our county bear most of the burden for our funding base. Our past commissions have been very conscientious of that fact and we must continue to do so.
Downtown parking: I do not see the county being obligated to spend tax revenue on downtown parking beyond the needs of county employee parking and citizens needing to park to take care of business with the county. Downtown parking beyond these needs should be a responsibility of the City of Columbia.

6. **Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.**

I do not have any specific priorities in my efforts to be a Maury County Commissioner other than making the right decisions for our generations to come.

Except for my college years and working a year in East Tennessee right after my graduation, I have spent of my life working and living in this area. Maury County has been good to and for family. I simply want to offer my input based on my experiences of living and working here. I believe I have the base of knowledge to make sound and common sense decisions.

7. **If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?**

A successful team works together for the common good. Each individual of the commission must leave behind their personal priorities and egos in order to address the needs of the general citizenry.

8. **If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?**

We all need to work together for the common good of Maury County. The Alliance membership must recognize that there are three major municipalities in Maury County that each has their own issues and priorities. And if these individual municipalities are going to buy into some common goals, the Maury County government along with Maury Alliance must lead the way in securing the municipalities energy in supporting common goals. In order to do that, they must have trust and faith in our efforts to reach out. So far my observance is that we are not together.

As a commissioner, I will have only one vote. But I assure you that I will be a voice of common sense and reason, and that I will not be afraid to reach out to the other municipalities, agencies and the state in what is best for Maury County’s future.
Candidate Name: Kevin Markham (R)

1. Why are you running for this position?

All my adult life, I have been involved in giving back to the communities that I have lived in. From Easter Egg Hunts; to Church Youth Group Activities; coaching softball, baseball, basketball and football; organizing and administrating at Columbia National Little League, Maury County Youth Football and Columbia Academy Elementary Football, I have been involved with the youth. My children are adults now and I found myself wanting to give back to Maury County. Being a part of the Maury County Commission is one way in which I can accomplish this goal.

2. What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?

As stated in the answer to question one, I have been involved in several community-oriented boards and organizations. My wife, Nancy, and I were small business owners (Amber Electric & Plumbing Supply). I have always tried to stay aware of local government and what is going on in our community. Also, I am currently serving as Commissioner of the 9th District.

3. 85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?

I have always believed that not everyone has to have a college education. Skilled trades are extremely valuable. My experience with the electrical and plumbing trades has only solidified these beliefs. That does not mean that one should stop learning after high school. I believe we should encourage continual adult learning.

4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?
Growth comes from new residents and new jobs. Companies looking for a home in Maury County are looking at our infrastructure. The expansion of Bear Creek Pike is vital to us having better access to I-65. I also believe that a new road from east of the courthouse to Tom Hitch Parkway could radically stimulate east Columbia. Maury County is going to grow. Williamson County and Rutherford County are full. Wilson County and Sumner Counties are extremely vibrant as well. Now Maury County is booming. I believe one of our biggest infrastructure issues is our landfill situation. I believe we must start NOW to resolve this. It is not going to get any easier or cheaper.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

Taxes – I am a fiscal conservative and I do not support the irresponsible spending of our citizen’s tax money. It says a lot that our community is supportive of the investments need for growth. However, I’m committed to making sure we are using the tax payer’s money effectively and responsibly and that any fiscal waste or padded budget request are snuffed out. With additional residents and businesses, we will naturally have more tax revenue (sales tax and property tax).

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

The anchors of my campaign are: Employment, Education and Environment. I believe that we are all created in God’s image and therefore, we naturally want to succeed and take care of our own. With good jobs for our citizens, we can accomplish that. A well-educated citizenry is the key to attracting great employers and the employers having a great workforce.

The problem with the landfill is Garbage, Garbage and more Garbage. We have got to get away from the “old way” of just burying it. We have got to repurpose our garbage. Maybe we can burn it. Maybe we can process it into a fuel source. This is, in my opinion, one of our biggest county issues.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

If elected, I would like to see a commission that works well together and respects the opinions of others. We will never all agree on everything. Working towards a common goal and achieving it would be a success.

8. If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

If elected as the 9th district Commissioner, I would work with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to attract business investment in Maury County. We, however, do not need to take our existing citizens and businesses for granted. They are the foundation of Maury County.
1. Why are you running for this position?

I’m Jerry Thornton and I’m running for Maury County commissioner district 9. I want to be the voice for District 9 residents and all of Maury County. To serve this county with the best interest for the growing needs.

2. What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?

I’m 48 years old and have lived here my whole life. I am not a politician, but a Christian. Married to wife Cheryl for 25 years in October. I have two kids, a son Drew and a daughter Baylee. We attend Main Street Church of Christ in Mt. Pleasant.

3. 85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?

<NO RESPONSE>

4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?

<NO RESPONSE>

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?
6. **Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.**

   One of my priorities would be: Clean up Maury. I see numerous residents all around the City and County that have Trash and junk all over the yard. We have codes in place for these people. Let’s keep this County clean and beautiful. Other counties don’t allow it so why should we?

7. **If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?**

   If elected I would define a successful team as a group of caring people to serve the people of Maury County for its greatest needs. Coming to decisions that will benefit the growing needs and development of Maury County.

8. **If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?**

   <NO RESPONSE>
Candidate Name: Allen Leon Ogilvie (I)

1. Why are you running for this position?

I have lived in Columbia my entire life and have seen the needs of our community. I feel time has come for me to step up to the plate to serve the People of our Community with a Determination to make a difference.

2. What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?

I am a former plant laborer, radio station manager, and graduate of Leadership Maury. I presently serve as a Board Member of the Maury County Senior Citizens, a member of the steering committee for the Peoples Table. In addition, I am a recent graduate of the citizens academy for both the Columbia Police Department and the Maury County Sheriff’s Department.

3. 85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?

I feel a part of my role, if elected, would be to help implement programs and activities that would track the deficiencies of persons who are not college bound and incorporate trade and technology skills training to help them find decent paying jobs in the workforce.

4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?
I think growth is good; however, it can be of detriment if the infrastructure is not in place to meet the supply and demand that comes along with growth. We must come up with budgets that will not always be at the expense of taxpayers.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for raising taxes for educational facilities, roads, and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

I feel we should exhaust all available resources and raise taxes accordingly. We must ascertain there is no waste or mis-management of funds. Should the need occur, salary adjustments should be implemented for department heads and elected officials. In other words, everything is on the table if we want to make our county successful.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

My priorities are the concerns for all Maury County citizens desiring for more unity and a willingness to work together.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

I believe everyone’s role is an important contribution. We must accept the differences of opinions yet remain cordial and professional.

8. If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

I plan to partner by keeping an open mind, listening to needs, concerns, and opinions. I intend to attend meetings for potential or prospect investors willing to locate to Maury County.
1. **Why are you running for this position?**

   I’m running for County Commissioner for the 10th District because of my experience with Planning, Zoning, Building, Landfill Management and various other areas that I have experience with. Maury County is in a growth period that needs forward thinking, smart growth and planning for the future.

2. **What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?**

   As a former Veteran, Firefighter, Building Official, Director of Planning and Zoning, and current Landfill Manager, I have many backgrounds in the future growth of the County and how they can be achieved.

3. **85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?**

   I am a firm believer that a skilled workforce encourages industry and development to locate or relocate from other areas. Education is the key to that growth and a balance of both college and vocational education is the answer. Public and Private partnership with leading industries across the Middle Tennessee area could be a great answer for the future development of a skilled workforce in Maury County.

4. **While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?**

   One of the first things that Maury County needs for the impeding growth and infrastructure is a Strategic and Comprehensive Growth Plan that involves all entities of county government,
municipal government, private, and public partnership. Prioritizing this is my first objective. As a past member of the Nashville area MPO Technical Coordinating Committee I have worked on transportation planning for the County as the Director of Building and Zoning. The Metro Planning Organization (MPO) and the Greater Nashville Regional Council (GNRC) are great resources that are available for Maury County and need to be taken full advantage of.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

   Good schools attract people, people attract business and industry, industry and business provide income for people causing the need for road and infrastructure improvements. This can be a good problem to have because it shows Maury County is growing. The growth needs a plan that everyone can agree on and it needs to be implemented. I would support increasing taxes for Smart Growth in Maury County, this includes Schools, and Infrastructure.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

   The three Municipal Governments and Maury County Government need to work as a unified team and achieve goals that are best for Maury County. My position as a 10th district Commissioner will be as a liaison between Mt. Pleasant City Government and the County Commission, and what can be done to help each other and the residents of the 10th district.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

   A successful team is a group that is thinking and planning for the future of Maury County. We as commission members need to be on the planning and organizational side of that team.

8. If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

   If accepted, I plan to attend Leadership Maury this fall and using my personal knowledge and leadership skills from Maury Alliance, I intend to help industry and Smart Growth throughout the County and specifically in the 10th district.
Candidate Name:  Thomas G. Wolaver (I)

1. **Why are you running for this position?**

   I have been fortunate to serve the 10th district as a commissioner for the last 12 years and am convinced that my experience will enable me to continue to work for the people of my district and all of Maury County.

2. **What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?**

   I was employed as a public school teacher, coach, and administrator at Mt. Pleasant High School for 40 years. I have lived in Mt. Pleasant for each of those years. I believe these two things help give me an insight into what people in the 10th district want from county government.

3. **85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?**

   As was mentioned in the preceding question I was an administrator at MPHS for 23 years, 9 as Asst. Principal and 14 as Principal. My time in school administration gives me valuable experience in funding our schools and knowing where we can make the best use of taxpayer dollars to provide our children a quality education.

4. **While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?**

   Knowing that our county is experiencing rapid growth, it is extremely important that we are careful to place some of the burdens of this growth on the people who are moving into our county and the real estate developers and construction
companies who are benefitting financially from it. It is unfair for our county residents to bear all of this. We must come up with other ways of funding the schools and infrastructure needed for this growth.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

I think all Maury Country residents want quality schools for our children to attend. Our county commission must hold the school system accountable for every taxpayer dollar we spend. We must also ensure that our taxing public can see positive results on the standardized tests our county students take each year so they can be sure their money is being effectively used. I will not support raising taxes for education until I see positive results from our schools. I will not support raising taxes for new schools or infrastructure growth until I see more financial help from the people benefitting from this growth.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

I think if we take care of the issues in question 5 we will be in good shape.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

A successful term on the Maury County Commission would be one where every taxpayer dollar is used to benefit all Maury County Citizens. While I know that may not be possible 100% of the time it is the job of all 22 of our county commissioners to strive for it.

8. If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

During my 3 terms as a county commissioner I have supported almost all if not all the requests of Maury Alliance. I will continue to do so as long as I can see positive results from our tax dollars committed to the alliance. I am glad to say that up to this point in time I have been able to see its contribution to our county and its citizens.
County Commission, 11th District

Candidate Name:  Dawn Bennett

1. **Why are you running for this position?**

   I am running for Maury County Commissioner for District 11 to be the voice of the people. I am asking you to help empower the people with knowledge of issues going on in our district, such as school and community growth. To take these issues to the commission meetings and take knowledge back to the people of district 11 about a solution. We can leave our community better than we found it.

2. **What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?**

   I have worked for a local neighboring community who has already seen the growth Maury County is now seeing. I recognized how that community reached out to state and federal government for resources. I now serve as an advocate for victims in our local court system. Knowing the ins and outs of state and local governments gives me an understanding of how our government works and as an advocate I know how to speak for the people.

3. **85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?**

   Working and supporting organizations in our community that are already in place and help them develop our children and young people. To work with local colleges and other organizations to expound on existing programs for vocational and job preparedness.

4. **While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?**

   A strong leadership starts with a firm foundation. In Maury County that foundation is our county commissioners. A good leader sees an issue and addresses it before it becomes a problem. Our commissioner should as proactive as possible not always reactive.

5. **Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?**
With the growth that is happening and going to continue to happen in our county schools, roads, and parking are always going to be at the forefront of need and importance. As a leader it is our responsibility to look at all available avenues that will be minimal impact financially on the citizens of our county to make Maury County a desirable and accessible place to live and raise a family.

6. **Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.**
   As a commissioner I would like to continue to see small locally owned businesses thrive in our community. I would like to continue the work the current commissioners have started and expound if necessary.

7. **If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?**
   A successful team is a team that will come together for the common good of the people even when they do not all agree.

8. **If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?**
   To support local businesses and expound on tourism to Murray County by advertising and social media popularity.
Candidate Name: Gwynne Evans (I)

1. Why are you running for this position?

As a life-long resident of Maury County, I want to help shape the growth of our county, especially in the area of education. I have been an educator in the Maury County School system for 17 years; therefore, I understand the needs of students, teachers, and business leaders.

Having witnessed the explosive growth we have experienced in Spring Hill, I feel I can help alleviate some of the growing pains as this growth moves south through the county. The commission is developing a master road plan that will insure less congestion in the new growth areas, and we are working with developers to insure their developments are designed to allow for the growth to the area.

2. What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?

I served as an alderman for the City of Spring Hill for 10 years. During that time I served as Vice-mayor for two mayors, was on the planning commission for 8 years and served an additional 4-year term after leaving office. I am completing my second term as 11th District Commissioner and served on the Maury County Planning commission both terms. I am currently serving on both the Budget and Building Committees and have been on these committee for the last 2 years. As an educator, I understand that school is much more than simple academics. Schools lay the foundation for students to grow into productive, happy citizens of the community. My educational experiences include a BS in Agricultural Education from the University of Tennessee at Martin, an MS in Plant and Soil Science from University of TN at Knoxville and a Ed.S. in Curriculum and Instruction from MTSU. I am a board member for the Rippavilla Plantation and FFA Advisor for Spring Hill High School. My wife and I also recently became small business owners with our purchase of Carter's Creek Station Antiques.

3. 85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?
Schools are the bedrock of any community. They are what shapes our youth into the future citizens of the community, and, moreover, of the world. It is important that a school system provides the resources for teachers to do their job of preparing students for the world that lies ahead. That includes not only the essentials such as buses, adequate school buildings, and such, but it also means keeping skilled teachers, providing cutting-edge technology, and offering courses that truly "ready" students to go to work for our local industries and businesses.

4. **While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?**

Our roads are the life line of our community. If people and goods cannot efficiently and quickly move throughout our community, progress will grind to a halt like is seen on the commute to work in Nashville and other large cities. We must adopt a major thoroughfare and stick with that plan to prevent slow downs in traffic and maintain a flow of commerce. The planning committee is currently working on such a plan. Once competed, it must be adopted and utilized by all stakeholders, all cities, the county and the developers.

5. **Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?**

Raising taxes should only be done as a last resort, not a first choice. We have seen a remarkable increase in the value of our penny rate for the county. We are fortunate to have department heads that do a great job of utilizing the funds they are given. I feel we can do a better job of explaining to the citizens of Maury County the importance of shopping and spending their money in the county. A lot of people do not understand that shopping local not only helps the vendors they visit, but their tax dollars also stay local and those tax dollars fund the roads, schools and infrastructure we so desperately need. I will support increases if we do a better job of spreading the word on the importance of shopping local.

6. **Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.**

We must start now recycling and reusing our resources. With the loss of our Chickasaw class 3/4 landfill, the citizens of Maury County must immediately absorb the $1.5 million dollar annual cost of shipping trees, leaves, wood and construction waste to an available landfill. This $1.5 million will steadily increase as the county grows. Instead of spending over a million dollars per year to ship leaves and yard waste we should be using that money to design and build a local recycling facility that will save taxpayers millions annually. We should have started this program 10 years ago. When the class 1/2 garbage landfill that we are currently shipping to becomes full, we will be faced with astronomical costs to dispose of this waste. However, if we continue the work we have started, we can avoid these unnecessary expenditures in the near future.
7. **If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?**

To be successful all members must realize that you are all not going to agree on everything every time. That can be a hard fact to accept for some people, and instead of listening and learning from others, they block out any ideas different from their own and the team becomes less effective. Successful teams learn from other members and accept that there will be differences of option. These differences must not become barriers between individuals.

8. **If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?**

We must continue to search for new opportunities and business for the county to continue to grow, and I feel we do an excellent job at this task. I feel where we must work together more is encouraging people to shop local and support those business that already are members of the community. We expend a lot of time and energy courting new opportunities for the county, but we must do a better job of promoting those businesses that are currently supporting the county.
Candidate Name: David Mischke (R)

1. **Why are you running for this position?**

I’m running for this position because I’m concerned about the growth from Spring Hill leaking into Columbia and road infrastructure not being done to accommodate the traffic. Also, I am distressed that I hear emergency sirens every day from car accidents. My family and I have lived on the North side of Columbia since 1996 and I care about my community and Maury County.

2. **What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?**

I served my country in the United States Marine Corps. I work as a United States Postal Carrier. I’m not a politician. I am however, a taxpayer, who cares about how money is spent in our county.

3. **85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?**

According to the Nation’s Report Card, Tennessee overall, performed significantly lower than the national average. I feel change needs to begin at the elementary level. Maury County needs to raise our expectations on education. I believe incentives in the workplace produce goals. Having goals and accomplishing those goals with a reward produce results. Maury County unemployment rate is 3.5%.

4. **While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?**
I believe the government of City of Columbia and Spring Hill, and Maury County need work together and get input from the citizens on their vision for Maury County and its development. If the people want to continue to grow, then the following services will need to expand also.

- Public Schools
- Traffic Flow
- Road Construction
- Fire/Police/Hospital

I believe if we bring businesses to our county, they will relieve development expenses and we will not need to raise property taxes to accommodate the increasing progress and growth.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

We need to be fiscally responsible with taxpayer’s money. I want to bring more businesses in our area, not just sub-divisions.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

- Safety of our Schools
- Land fill options
- Keep taxes low
- Invite more businesses to our county
- Shopping in Maury County (Downtown/Mall/Food)
- Northside of Columbia/Spring Hill growth

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

Working together with the city of Spring Hill and city of Columbia to make our community better. We cannot continue to develop without being on the same page.

8. If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

I feel the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance is an asset to our community. I would like to work together with our businesses in Maury County to continue to flourish and promote commerce.
County Trustee

Candidate Name: **Randy McNeese (I)**

1. **Why are you running for this position?**

   I feel the time is right for someone that is not associated with the Trustee’s office to bring a new perspective with new ideas on how to better serve the public. It’s been 28 years. I would never say anything negative about the other two candidates but just simply want an opportunity to continue serving this county but in a different capacity than what I’ve served in the past several years. This would be the first time in 28 years for someone on the outside to lead this office. I feel very confident to be the leader of this office. I appreciate greatly the work of our present Trustee and wish he and his family the very best in the future.

2. **What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?**

   My life of service has been as a teacher, coach, and school administrator. Out of 29 years I served 11 years as an assistant principal, 6 ½ years as a principal, and the remainder as a teacher/ coach. As a leader of an office it was always a goal of having great customer service while serving the students and parents. I’ve been very fortunate to have obtained degrees from Columbia State, Middle Tennessee State, and Trevecca University. I hope anyone that has crossed paths with me during my years of service would say that I always treated them with dignity, honor, and respect. Striving always to follow the Golden Rule – Treat others the way I want to be Treated.

3. **85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?**

   Education will always be near and dear to my heart. This being through college and or vocational programs. In some cases employers may even prefer on the job training. Regardless, education is important. Maury County is embarking on a new path with the revised version of the 1981 Financial Act to provide the proper oversight of taxpayer money. Education is the largest portion
of the county budget. I would be honored to serve with other elected officials to try and ensure proper use of school funds as well as other county funds.

4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?

Maury County has always been a great place to live and raise a family. It’s very interesting to see these statistics. Obviously, all county offices would have to grow as more people move here but there is always the important need of being good stewards of taxpayer money. I would strive for this office to have top notch customer service. One area I would look at is having an opportunity to pay county taxes in other places of the county such as Mt. Pleasant and Spring Hill. This would help to free up parking for those people in downtown Columbia that have come there to shop.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

I support the idea of being open, honest, and transparent on everything that is done with taxpayer money. No one likes the idea of paying taxes but it is necessary in order to have and maintain the services of Maury County.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

I’m not sure but from what I’ve seen since campaigning is that you all do a great job recruiting new businesses to Maury County along with making them feel good about being here.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

A successful team is a place where a leader surrounds him or herself with great people. This team works together as a unit to provide the very best service possible. All members of this team are equally important with the leader showing great appreciation for those that make up the team. The leader does not micro manage. Team members are allowed to do their job.

8. If elected, how do plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

I’m not sure exactly how this partnership works but I certainly appreciate the work of this group. If this involves paying yearly dues I would certainly want to be a part if this is something that is common among the other county offices.
Candidate Name: Janice Pruitt (I)

1. **Why are you running for this position?**

   To continue to serve Maury County as I have for the past 28 years. I love my job and the residents of Maury County and want to continue to make this the most successful Office in Maury County.

2. **What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?**

   I have 28 years’ experience working in the Trustee’s Office. I started as Deputy Clerk, then Office Manager and I am currently Chief Deputy. I have the experience to run and operate the office in an efficient matter.

3. **85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?**

   N/A to my position.

4. **While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?**

   I will continue to expand the progress of the Trustee’s Office to keep up with the growth of Maury County. I will continue with our educational programs provided to this office thru the state and other outlets.

5. **Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher**
taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

N/A to my position

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

I am a team player with enthusiasm and dedication to my office. I think the businesses in Maury County are very important to the growth of Maury County and a vital part of our community. I will always work with all diligently to meet the needs of the businesses of Maury County and to address the concerns in a professional and efficient matter.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

At this point in my 28 years of service, I feel the Trustee’s office has a great team of dedicated loyal employees.

8. If elected, how do plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

Again I will work hard to address all concerns and needs in a professional and efficient manner. I look forward to working alongside with Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the progress of Maury County.
Candidate Name: Andy Wilhoite (I)

1. Why are you running for this position?

This position allows me to use my budget and communications skills. As a Businessman, I know that collecting and protecting our investments are crucial. Paying all bills on time, keeping our bond rating is key. I look forward to working both with the newly formed Maury County Financial Management Board and Commissioners with a fair, unbiased outlook. The job of running an office, Business, communicating, collecting, paying on accounts and investing, I’ve done all my life and I enjoy it. Bottom line, I’m born and raised in Columbia. My dad, Col. CC Wilhoite, Headmaster at CMA 42 years, my brother Marion, sportswriter with The Daily Herald, 54 years. My Granddaddy, Joe Anderson, Maury County Circuit Court Clerk in the 1920’s. My Uncle, Joe Anderson, Anderson Brothers and Fosters in Downtown Columbia. My Heritage and heart felt connection to Maury County runs deep. I would be honored to serve and serve well.

2. What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?

As a former Maury County Commissioner serving my entire term on the County Budget Committee. Building a business, Grassbusters Mowing & Deb’s Uniforms, from zero to 350 accounts, 30 employees managing over a million dollars in collections and pay outs. Keeping over a 800 Credit Score during the 25 years of business ownership which I am very proud of.

As a local Realtor, I’ve helped over 200 families better their lives with the selling or buying of their homes. Listing, advertising, pricing their homes, negotiating the purchase, finding the financing. Working to find the correct “right purchase price” during their transactions. Leaving my clients in a better position than when we started is huge to me.

City of Columbia Firefighter over 20 years. City of Columbia Planning Department as Senior Planner, 6 years. City of Columbia Wastewater Operator, 6 years. My over 32 years of experience with the city of Columbia has granted me experience with people, budget, co-workers and versatile skills. The ability to never give up through challenging times. Served 3 years on Columbia Planning Commission. I’ve got a grasp on our growth patterns for which we must be ready and pro-active. Graduated CSCC with Associates Degree-Business Minor. I’ve coached and sponsored Youth Basketball teams, this I will continue. Our Youth is our today and tomorrow.
3. 85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?

The growth is here and more coming. I believe in transparency and being prepared for future. If elected, I will spend time accessing the current office. Keep what’s working, study implementing any changes. I know staffing at Tax Times is crucial. Teaching tax payers how the income/out flow works, why. Meeting with city leaders, financial leaders, commissioners, other department heads to keep abreast of changing times. Interacting with my co-workers in the Trustee office to give them my utmost support in their jobs as we work towards an office our Citizens want to visit. Even at Tax Time.

4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?

We will be ready. The Trustee Office isn’t about change. It’s about doing our job and doing it well. I feel better communication and teaching our taxpayers as they come in with questions is crucial. If I see we need more staffing, I will work with commission for help. If a satellite office is in need, we will study the logistics. If a Saturday morning during heavy Tax Season is needed, we will work towards that. First step is to Elect Andy Wilhoite, a Man with Vision.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

This is a personal decision, one I faced when serving as County Commissioner. Schools, our children, are Tops to me. I will work with the School Board and School Superintendent to listen on their needs. I will study both County and School Budgets along with needs before I vote.

I love our Downtown! It’s look, growth, stores, and people. I imagine my Granddaddy and Uncles walking the same sidewalks to their jobs. I’m so proud as I tell people to come Downtown, see our shops and eat with us. Traffic is a huge issue. One which the City and County must work together on. The Trustee office does not have any views on raising taxes to meet our needs. We are there to collect, invest idle funds, and pay our bills. This we will do.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

Maury County Chamber and Economic Alliance is a vital force to Maury County, one personally I’m very proud of. I’ve seen the behind the doors hours put in by our outstanding director and staff. I’ve seen our lean times where they never gave up recruiting. Better times well earned. I wish to thank you for this opportunity.
7. **If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?**

   A successful team is one that communicates and cares. Not afraid to express their ideas, concerns to make us a better team. We work as a team, a proud team which is helpful and respectful. To serve our citizens, which will reflect to everyone who walks in our doors.

8. **If elected, how do plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?**

   I will encourage, participate, and promote Maury County also Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance. The Chamber many times is our first impression to investors and jobs. I’m very proud of the great job they do. I like to thank our chamber for this opportunity to communicate with our citizens and voters.
1. **Why are you running for this position?**

I have always enjoyed helping people, and I was drawn to the practice of law as the best way for me to be able to do this. Since I began practicing law in 2010, I worked in the Juvenile Court under Judge “Buzz” Lovell. Many attorneys warned me against practicing law in Juvenile Court because the cases last forever and are emotionally draining. However, this did not dissuade me. They were correct. The cases can last a long time and the situations can break your heart. At the same time, it was very rewarding to make a difference in the life of a child and that child’s family.

It is for the love of people and children that I first sought the appointment to this position when Judge Lovell announced his retirement. After an in-depth application and interview process, amongst five candidates, the County Commission voted to appoint me to replace Judge Lovell. I was honored by their vote of confidence in January, and I would be honored by your vote of confidence in August.

2. **What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?**

This position is a General Sessions Judgeship, which primarily handles Juvenile Matters. In 2014 there were approximately 3,500 cases in the Juvenile Court. 37% were Child Support Cases, 33% were Delinquent, Unruly, or Truancy cases (Juveniles being charged with what would be crimes if they were 18 or older, or status offenses that are not allowed just because they are under 18 [IE: possession of tobacco]), 15% were Dependency & Neglect or Termination of Parental Rights cases (where a parent has an allegation against them for an action or inaction against the wellbeing of the child), 6% were Custody, and 6% were Traffic offenses. Since becoming a licensed attorney in 2010, I have handled cases covering the full gambit of issues that are heard in this court.
As a General Sessions Judgeship, this position also includes the responsibility of handling 1) Civil lawsuits under $25,000 in damages, 2) Criminal offenses, both Misdemeanor and Felony, 3) Orders of Protection, and 4) Traffic Offenses. Again, I have handled lawsuits for plaintiffs and defendants in Civil Court, handled criminal cases from First Degree Murder on down, both filed and defended Orders of Protection, and defended Traffic Offenses.

I am the only candidate with the full experience to handle the all responsibilities of the position and my track record over the past 5 months shows this. I have unequivocally received positive feedback from those in and around the Juvenile Court system including: Law Enforcement, Teachers, School Administrators, County Commissioners, Workers with the Department of Children’s Services, Healthcare and Mental Health Providers, Lawyers, and other Judges. My experience has allowed me to be successful in this position immediately, and make a positive impact with the youth and families involved with Court. I highly encourage you to speak with anyone that you know in and around Juvenile Court and ask them how things have been going since my appointment.

3. **85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?**

As General Sessions/Juvenile Court Judge I am committed to reducing truancy. Since my appointment to this position I have seen cases come before the court where children have accrued between 10 to 50+ days of unexcused absences for the 2017-2018 school year. I worked with the school system to enact tougher consequences including fines, potential fines, and the criminal prosecution of parents for Educational Neglect.

Before a truancy case comes before the Court, it first goes to “District Truancy Board” with the School Board. Attendance to the Truancy Board was about 50% for students from Central High School for example. After enacting the tougher consequences for truancy, the attendance to the Board meetings increased to 100%. The word got out and absenteeism decreased.

Additionally, I have structured the outcomes of many Delinquent and Unruly cases to incorporate educational progress. This encourages juveniles to graduate High School or get their GED, if they are close to either of those achievements; or pass their current grade. In instances, where older youths are at risk of not graduating or getting their GED due to how far they are behind in school, we have worked with and encouraged those youth to enroll in the Tennessee Volunteer Challenge Academy in Nashville which affords them the ability to catch up on credits at an accelerated rate, gives them structure while at the residential campus, and provides continued mentorship after the completion of the semester of school.

4. **While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?**
As the population increases, so will the number of cases that come before the Court. It is my goal to be proactive and not reactive to the growth and the additional strain that it puts upon the Court. We have already amended the weekly and daily schedule of Court to be more efficient and allow more cases to be handled on any given day. Right now, the Court is limited and not able to hold court on most Wednesdays because the space is needed for Judge Sands’ Wednesday, Public Defender docket. At the time that more space is available (be it when the County Commission room is renovated, or some other location is secured) I am glad to have Court 5 days a week, as the population increase demands it.

Additionally, we need to be looking at the structure of the Juvenile Court staff and the model of its management and operation as the population increases. There are already proven structures for successful operation of the Juvenile and General Sessions Courts in larger Counties that we can cherry pick the best ideas from and incorporate into what works best for our community.

God blessed us with two ears and one mouth, and I want to, primarily, listen and then to discuss any ideas that people have to address the obstacles that we face with our growth. By no means do I have all the answers for what will be best regarding population growth and how it affects the Court, but I want to hear varying people’s opinions and be a team player in addressing potential solutions.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

Generally speaking, I want Government to be as efficient and cost effective as possible. I want our taxes to be as low as possible to help keep money in the pockets of individuals and businesses here in the county, thus allowing them to spend the money they have accordingly. Hopefully, this will result in more revenue from sales tax and more jobs created.

Currently, the Juvenile Court has the lowest court costs among General Sessions, Chancery, Civil, and Criminal Courts. Increases could be made to these costs to offset the additional needs of this Court.

In local government, the Judicial branch does not have the authority to impose or regulate the taxing of the citizens of Maury County. That is left to the legislative and executive branches. As such, this question is more relevant for the County Mayor and Commissioner candidates.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

Through the office of Judge, I want to open the communication and cooperation amongst civic, church, governmental, private sector, non-profit, and other organizations to work together for the betterment of the youth and families of our great county. We have already seen the benefits that this can accomplish on a smaller scale since my appointment in February. However, as I stated after my swearing in ceremony, it does take a village to raise a child, and I want to use
the influence of this position to help bolster our village’s ability and desire to help the children of our county.

7. **If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?**

The General Session Court Part 1, is already a successful team. I am blessed to be able to be a part of that team and work with a wonderful staff at the courthouse that includes a dedicated Youth Services Officer, outstanding Probation Officers, excellent Clerks, impeccable Attorneys, a DCS staff that works tirelessly and Service Providers that are second to none. In my opinion, this team is able to achieve success beyond the sum of its parts. With that being said, we cannot rest on our laurels, and we must continue to strive onwards and upwards, higher and higher for the betterment of our County’s most precious resource, its children.

8. **If elected, how do plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?**

My parents met while both were full time members of the Army National Guard, and as such I learned many military sayings growing up. Two of my favorite phrases are “Boots on the Ground” and “Improvise, Adapt, and Overcome.”

Throughout the selection process by the County Commission and the time I have already spent on the bench, I have welcomed ideas on court improvement from those with “Boots on the Ground,” working with children and their families on a daily basis in schools, on the streets, in churches, or other community organizations. I will bring that same openness to my relationship with the Maury Alliance and its membership.

As our community grows, I will work with the citizens and leaders of our community, such as the membership of the Maury Alliance, to face any challenges head on. When faced with unexpected challenges in the military you “Improvise, adapt, and overcome.” I will continue to operate with a willingness to be flexible and to think outside the box to improve and maintain our courts. I have seen this same willingness to adapt and succeed from the Alliance and its membership and want to work as a cohesive unit to be able to #GrowMaury and make it the best county it can be now and for our children in the years to come.
1. Why are you running for this position?

I am running for the position of General Sessions/Juvenile Court Judge because I believe that I can make a positive impact on the youth of our County. I believe that the General Sessions/Juvenile Court Judge position is an extremely important role because he or she has the most direct impact on the family unit. I believe that with my over 21 years of experience in our community, I have identified our problem areas as it relates to court management and disposition of case filings.

2. What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?

I have over 21 years of experience in the legal field, most significantly in family law, including establishment of paternity, enforcement of child support, implementation of parenting plan(s), divorce litigation, orders of protection, conservatorship and guardianship filings and probate litigation. My experience was earned while serving as an Assistant District Attorney General for Maury, Lawrence, Wayne and Giles counties and as current Clerk and Master/Probate Judge for Maury County. In addition to my experience with domestic matters, I had experience in General Sessions, both civil and criminal as well as Circuit civil and criminal matters during my employment with Moore and Peden, P.C. as a private attorney. With my vast experience over the past 21 years has prepared me to seek the open position as General Sessions/Juvenile Judge and will allow me to use that experience for the benefit of our fellow residents of Maury County and in greater relevance for all litigants that are in our court system.

3. 85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?

I don’t know that the Juvenile/General Sessions Judge would be able to have a major impact on a daily basis regarding these very important issues, however, I would be willing to work with our local officials, especially the school board and local educational institutions that offer or could offer court related programs to assist employment and preparedness for college or vocational education.
4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?

I do have a few concerns as it relates to our ability to thrive amidst the record growth. My concerns include providing services, such as the ability to provide safe and accommodating public facilities. The ability to provide a safe and secure environment for litigants is a concern that currently exists and will continue to be an issue for our community. I would support legislation that would maintain and improve our public facilities, including schools and judicial buildings.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

I would support legislation that raises taxes for education, roads and downtown parking, especially if it were related to the support and implementation of a new judicial facility to adequately address the current and future needs of our community.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

I do not have any priorities that I believe are most important to membership of the Maury Alliance. I would defer to the current administration to make that determination.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

If elected, I think that a successful team would include a quick and efficient docket, including less recidivism in General Sessions and Juvenile Court.

8. If elected, how do plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

If elected, I would be available to assist the Maury County Chamber and Economic Alliance within the Rules of Professional Conduct and Cannons of Judicial Conduct.
Candidate Name: Jessica Sloan-Elam (I)

1. Why are you running for this position?

I am dedicated to the whole welfare of the children. I have spent 14 years working within the juvenile justice system as a social worker, as an investigator, as a service provider, and as an attorney. I have seen children not being served in the current system. I want to improve that and make certain children’s and family’s needs are met, provided with the opportunities to create the best outcomes, and treated fairly under the law.

2. What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?

I am active in the First Presbyterian Church, attending regularly and volunteering in many of their service activities. I am a Maury County native. I learned from my grandfather, Jim Sloan, that people don’t respond to what you know, until they know that you care.

- University of Memphis: December 2003
- Bachelor of Arts and Sciences: Criminology and Criminal Justice
- Nashville School of Law: December 2012
- Doctor of Jurisprudence

*Member of the Child Protective Investigative Team (CPIT) in the 21st Judicial District 2004-2011
*Intern with the TN Department of Children Services Legal Department of Davidson County
Since graduation, I have focused primarily on continuing my legal education in juvenile law. My practice is dedicated to juvenile cases supporting the children and families of Maury County. In addition to my juvenile law experience, I also practice in circuit, Chancery and General Sessions courts in Southern Middle Tennessee.

3. 85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?

I would work to reduce the time our children are in court. My goals are to make sure families, children, DCS, and the school system are held accountable and that the current systems are streamlined and improved. We have to meet our children’s basic needs so that when they are in school, they are ready and able to learn. This includes addressing their underlying needs and finding solutions for any mental health, substance abuse, and limited resources within their homes through the tools available to the juvenile court system.

4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?

As a judge, I would work to use the court resources more efficiently which would allow greater flexibility in our county budget. As a judge, I would provide information and input to our county commissioners regarding our caseload so that they could best allocate our resources. This would include creating a plan to address the dockets with the other general sessions judges and the court staff so that we can continue to provide resources and services no matter the amount of growth within our county.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads, and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

N/A Due to the judicial code of conduct, I cannot offer an opinion in this area.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.
I believe that working within the juvenile justice system to create stronger families will create a stronger community. As our county grows, we will need to increase our services to meet the demands of our citizens. In addition to increasing services, I believe that we will need to increase the awareness that many of these services are available in our county.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

A successful team uses the strengths of its members to find solutions to the problems at hand. As a judge, I would empower all the staff, clerks, attorneys, children’s advocates and DCS workers to provide the best services to our children and families and treat everyone equally and fairly under the law.

8. If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

To the extent of my abilities as a judge, I would be supportive of the Alliance agenda and work with them as needed to provide information about our court system.
Sheriff

Candidate Name: Sam Barnes (I)

1. Why are you running for this position?

My desire to be Sheriff stems from my passion to serve all of the citizens of this County and help lead the Sheriff’s department into an era of reduced crime that will positively impact every community. It is fueled by a heart to serve others and make Maury County safer. I am firmly committed to our constitution, our state, and all the laws that govern our people. I am committed to safer schools, homes, businesses, and streets. What is being done currently is not enough. The Sheriff must be committed to all facets of the Sheriff’s office not just the ones that are easy and comfortable. It’s time for change and it’s time for new leadership.

2. What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?

I have lived and worked in Maury County and Middle Tennessee my entire adult life. I began my law enforcement career with the Sheriff’s department after graduating high school. I have 22 years of law enforcement and leadership experience and a passionate determination to keep our community safe. My law enforcement career and many life experiences have prepared me for the duties and responsibilities that accompany the Sheriff’s office.

- 1989 – Columbia Explorer
- 1995- 1999 Maury County Sheriff’s Office Corrections
- 1999-2005 Columbia PD, SWAT, Honor Guard+
- 2005-2015 Patrol Sergeant, SWAT, Investigator Federal Homeland Security/ICE, Fugitive Apprehension, Honor Guard Commander, Founded first FTO Program at Sheriff’s Office
- 2015-Present Patrol Shift Commander – Williamson Co. Sheriff’s Department

In 2015, I left the Maury County Sheriff’s Dept. with the desire to run for Maury County Sheriff in 2018, accepting a position at Williamson County Sheriff’s office where I have been promoted through the ranks and once again become a shift commander supervisor in the patrol division. This role has allowed me the opportunity to gain the knowledge and expertise needed to lead a
successful department as well as opened my eyes to 21st century law enforcement both from a technical and operational perspective.

3. **85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?**

As one of the identified growth obstacles, education and particularly safety in the education setting are significantly important to the Sheriff’s Department. Being charged with the responsibility to protect and serve every student in every school is an incredible responsibility. Students and faculty in our schools represent the best and brightest future that Maury County has. It must be protected as a vital resource to insure our county’s safety and viability. I know what the safety issues in our schools are and I know how to make our schools safer. When I am the Sheriff of Maury County, here is what I plan to do. I’ll present to our county commission and school board a funding plan to increase the SRO officer presence in our schools. I’ll propose a plan that is driven by student enrollment and campus size and make certain that we have the officer resources we need in every school, all the time, especially in our larger campuses. Next, I’ll make sure these SRO officers are highly trained, equipped and provided the resources they need to keep the students and faculty safe. I’ll make sure that they are willing and capable of responding appropriately when and if a school crisis occurs. Their first response will always be to engage and they will protect our kids. I’ll strengthen the role of SRO’s and work with faculties and school leadership to examine every schools safety plan and physical building safety initiatives. We will look at all school entrances and access points and we will institute strong entry point guidelines, lock down capabilities and develop robust emergency response plans. I will aggressively pursue a plan to rid the schools of both gang related activity and the presence of drugs and illegal substances. We will integrate K9 patrols in our larger high school campuses and we will seek out and prosecute those who bring drugs into our schools. Everything that we can do to keep our schools safe will be on the table and every resource and each available avenue at the Sheriff’s department will be used to accomplish this mission. Our children are the future and they will be protected on my watch.

4. **While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?**

My theme of the entire election has been simple. I want to make Maury Safer. It’s been part of every message, speech, sticker, sign and video. If we don’t work to make Maury County a safer place to live, build and operate businesses, our county will not thrive regardless of the infrastructure elements that are developed. The growth we do have will be thwarted and we will never reach our greatest potential. I want safer schools for our children. I want drugs eliminated from our streets and all of the crime that is associated with it. I want us not to be one of the top counties in the state for domestic violence. I want more officers on patrol and more K9 units engaging criminals at every turn. I want safer roadways that produce less traffic fatalities. I want safer courtrooms and I want businesses to thrive without the worry of business related crime like theft and shoplifting. I want a jail that is safe and secure for the inmates and
the officers. A jail that provides opportunities for recovery, rehabilitation and restoration through meaningful and effective programs. The needs are many. The task is mighty. I am ready to take it on.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

I support the proactive development and implementation of revenue enhancing initiatives that can add value to the infrastructure elements that are needed to grow and support a vibrant community. If raising taxes is fundamental to that growth, then we must present a tax initiative that is clear, concise, relevant and justifiable. If provided the knowledge and appropriate justification, as well as the goals, objectives and “fruit” that a tax increase can yield, I believe the citizenry of Maury County can accept an increase. But as a county government, we must be operating at a highly efficient level, where waste and inefficiency has been addressed and eliminated in every office, division and department. I believe transparency is vitally important to this effort and without it any increase in taxes will be met with resistance.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

I believe my views on the top law enforcement issues facing our county have been well documented, communicated and presented in previous answers and communications. School safety, drugs and drug related crime, business crime, roadway fatalities, domestic violence, sex related crimes and crime against children. All of these have a tremendous impact on the viability of our county and the welfare of our people. It all matters to me. I have great faith in our people. I believe in our communities. I want people to know that when you tuck your children in bed and turn off the lights of your home, that feel safe and protected and know that tomorrow is going to be a good day for your family. I want you to know that the men and women of the Maury County Sheriff’s department are on the job and we are watching out for every one of you. We are committed to a mission to protect and to serve all of you and we will do that no matter what it takes.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

A successful team effectively completes the mission it is given with resources it has available. It seeks innovation and efficiency. It learns from mistakes and views failure as an opportunity for improvement. It is made up of talented and committed individuals who are not afraid to share differing opinions and perspectives, in fact on a great team, differences are welcomed, but when the order is given, the team is committed and works together united and working together toward a common objective. It demonstrates commitment and integrity even when the road is hard and the pathway to success is uncertain and filled with setbacks. It constantly and passionately pursues excellence and demands it from every member of the team regardless of the role they play on the team. Finally, the team is a clear reflection of the leader, the captain, the commander, the person at the front of the line. True leaders lead from the front and set the tone for the team. Good leadership yields good followership.
8. If elected, how do plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

The Sheriff serves all the people regardless of status or socio economic background. The office doesn’t recognize position or status, ethnicity or background, political affiliation or whether your home is rural or in the city. The Sheriff’s office serves. I will be a partner for the all of the county, and I will provide a safer Maury county for everyone to thrive in. This should help everyone reach their goals and their businesses greatest potential. My goal of striving for a safer Maury County should be in perfect alignment with the goals of the Alliance members and investors. My life in law enforcement has brought me to this point. It has prepared me for this very moment. It has not always been easy. The hard road usually isn’t. Sometimes being truthful about existing circumstances is hard and makes you unpopular. You get accused of creating false narratives with a gloom and doom perspective. I believe exactly the opposite. I have great hopes for Maury County and I am proud to call it my home. It’s your home too.

I have learned a great deal from my experiences. I’m a better law enforcement officer, man, husband, father and friend as a result of my collective law enforcement career. I wouldn’t change a thing because it has shaped who I am today. I look forward to a future of continued service to Maury County.
Candidate Name: Bucky Rowland (I)

1. Why are you running for this position?

I truly love our community and the people in it, no matter what their background. My goal is to provide the most safe, and enjoyable environment to raise your family and mine. I put others before myself in every aspect of my life, personal and professional. I have strong spiritual beliefs and believe with all my being this is exactly my purpose in life.

2. What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?

Being raised on a farm by a single parent, a strong work ethic was instilled in me at an early age, hard work is all I’ve ever known. At the age of 21 I started an excavation business, and in the coming years built a successful business that consisted of several pieces of heavy equipment, bull dozer, backhoe, track loader, dump truck and other misc. equipment. This was done by sweat equity, and responsible business practices. This was not fulfilling enough for me so I later started another career and found my calling serving in Law Enforcement. I began my career at Maury County Sheriff Department in 2004 serving in the jail as a Correctional Officer, SRO, Patrol Deputy, Narcotics Deputy- K-9 Handler, and currently serving the past four years as Sheriff. During this time I’ve received countless hours of continued training and experience.

3. 85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?

With the programs that my team and I have put in place over the past four years, we have and will continue to equip the men and women with the resources they need to have a brighter future if they choose. We experienced much success with our job readiness, basic computer programing, and education programs, with over 80 people receiving their high school equivalency (GED) and another 30 plus that have passed some portion of the hi-set test. We’ve placed over 130 people into different jobs that didn’t have employment prior to being incarcerated at the Maury County Jail. Not all have been successful but the majority continue to
be a success. Also we’ve implemented pay scale initiatives for our employees with criminal justice degrees and encourage continued education outside the department.

4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?

With all the positives that come with growth there are many negatives, such as crime. However 3 of the 4 years I’ve served as Sheriff have been the lowest Type A crimes reported in the past 17 years and 2017 was the 5th lowest crime rate during that time. We will continue our proactive approach and grow our department as we continue to meet the needs of Maury County. I’m proud of our thinking outside the box approach at combating trends and crimes in our county. Also we’ll continue building on the great relationships with our sister law enforcement agencies as we share information, technologies, and other resources.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

I know resources cost money (first responders), but also believe in being conservative and fiscally responsible. I will always fight for the NEEDS of our department to serve the citizens of our county. Any of the WANTS our department may have I’ll pursue from the hard work done through investigative seizures from drug dealers and other related crime. We’ve also been able to create hundreds of thousands of dollars of revenue for the county through our programs, inmate co-pays, inmate commissary and restructuring contracts with outside vendors. These funds are placed into the county’s general fund each month to help meet the county’s needs.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

My plan is to continue to keep our community’s, schools, places of worship, and business’s as safe as possible. This translates into a higher quality way of living and life for ALL our citizens!

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

I don’t claim to have all the answers that may arise in every unit at my department, but what I do have is the ability to recognize the gifts and talents of the people around me. We all have a part and voice in the process, my part is to put people where they will shine for Maury County. Every decision or promotion I’ve made as Sheriff has been for greater good of this county. I’ve set an expectation of how I want our department to operate, and my team execute every day. Our goal is to leave every person and every situation better than we found it!

8. If elected, how do you plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?
I will continue to keep my door open for any concerns or efforts to provide a safer, and vibrant community. My job is to keep this community safe, and crime free as possible. This will allow you our business community to do what you do best and that’s make our community thrive! You’ve always had and will continue to have my full support! Now I humbly ask for your support in my re-election as we all lead Maury!
County Clerk

Candidate Name: **Joey Allen (I)**

1. **Why are you running for this position?**

   My name is Joey Allen and I am you Maury County Clerk. It has been an honor to serve the citizens of Maury County over the last four years. I have enjoyed working together with the County Commission and others to implement much needed improvements in our office and will continue to find opportunities to better serve you in the future. The overwhelming support and positive feedback we have received from many of you because of these changes tells me that we are moving in the right direction. I hope you will allow me the opportunity to continue serving you and would appreciate your vote.

2. **What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?**

   I believe the positive changes that have been implemented in the Maury County Clerk’s office during my first term speaks to my ability to lead this office into the future. My 30+ years of experience working in supervision, managing budgets, and serving the public certainly helped. I am a member of Maury Alliance, Master Mason, Shriner, Fraternal Order of Police, Elks Lodge, Sons of American Legion, Fruit of the Vine, Maury County Historical Society and Better Business Bureau.

3. **85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?**

   N/A

4. **While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?**
Many of the improvements we have made over the last four years were implemented to allow the Maury County Clerk’s office to serve a higher volume of citizens. This includes extended office hours (7 a.m. to 5 p.m.) and tag renewal kiosk in Mount Pleasant City Hall and Spring Hill City Hall. We will have a third kiosk machine in the clerk’s office in the near future. As we help residents become more aware of the kiosk in Mt. Pleasant and Spring Hill as well as online and mail-in services, we believe this will help alleviate wait times and parking issues at the Maury County Clerk’s office. We know that there is more we can do to make our office more efficient and plan to tackle as much as we can over the next four years.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

I feel the taxpayers need to talk to their commissioners and voice their opinions about their feelings on raising taxes or other concerns they may have.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

My priority is to make sure we are doing everything we can do at the Maury County Clerk’s office to better serve the residents of Maury County. I hope you see the efforts that have been made to improve our office over the last four years and feel assured that I will continue these efforts in the future.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

We spend a lot of time together in this office. I want my team to enjoy their work, contribute their fair share, and communicate well with each other, offer support to one another when needed, and work together to set goals for the future.

8. If elected, how do plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

The Alliance does an amazing job planning events and keeping Maury County informed about upcoming events.
1. Why are you running for this position?

   I have worked in the Maury County Clerk Office for 12 years. I love the Maury County residents that I have interacted with. I love the team that I worked with, and I love the job. Maury County is experiencing incredible growth at this time. I feel as though I am uniquely qualified to make the County Clerk’s office a more efficient and customer friendly office through this challenging time for our county.

2. What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?

   This is a great question and one that I put a lot of energy and thought into while making my decision to run. I am not a politician. I am, however, able to do EVERY transaction in the office. Conservatively, I would say that I have processed over 150,000 transactions in the 12 years I have worked there. That makes me uniquely qualified for this position. I have never witnessed a County Clerk in my 12 years there process a single transaction for the people.

3. 85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?

   I would rather look at these as opportunities than obstacles. Building a successful, prepared, and educated team will be my highest priority. Having a team that can efficiently and expertly perform their job is the only way to serve the people.

4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?

   The concern for Maury County is to make sure to put the right leadership in place during this period of growth. With the right people in place, we will be able to thrive. I plan to work with the commission to try an open a satellite office. This will eliminate lines in our main facility and help with parking.
5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

The Maury County Clerk office is a unique entity, as we are revenue generating for necessary services. For every new resident that moves in, our office will bring in revenue through tags, boat registrations, hunting, fishing, and marriage licenses. New businesses will need licensure and more notaries will be necessary. I am not a supporter of raising taxes if our financial needs can be met through having responsible leaders.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

My highest priority is twofold. Establish an office environment that promotes teamwork and enthusiasm. That translates to the ultimate priority, which is an efficient and pleasurable experience for Maury County residents. The Maury Alliance membership should know that I am going to have an open door policy. I want everyone to be able to come in and express their ideas and desires. I am going to be a hands on County Clerk.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

That is the easiest question of all. I have worked side-by-side with the current team in this office for 12 years. They are also experienced and dedicated. All they need is the right leader to make that office in Maury County great again.

8. If elected, how do plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

As I answered earlier, I am going to have an open door policy. My door is open for EVERYONE. I will be open to any and all ideas that will make things more efficient, friendly, and economical, so that the hard earned dollars of the people can go further. It will be my honor to serve Maury County!
Register of Deeds

Candidate Name: John Fleming (I)

1. Why are you running for this position?

My hope is to continue the good work my staff and I have done over the last 4 years. My goal, on a daily basis, is to try to set the standard for service to the public.

2. What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?

I started working in Maury County in 1975 for the assessor’s office, doing field work, appraisals and mapping. With the arrival of the Saturn Corporation, I went to work for a local title and escrow company doing title research until 2003, at which time I was appointed by the county commission due to the passing of our previous Registrar, Wayne White.

3. 85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?

N/A

4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?

N/A

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

Assuming we have been good stewards of available monies, yes.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

I think any efforts that will assist in continually improving the relationships between the county and cities will greatly benefit everyone.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?
For our office, I believe team success is defined by fulfilling our statutory obligations and providing the level of public service I think we are all entitled to.

8. **If elected, how do plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?**

   Our office will continue to be available to help to anybody that needs our assistance.
1. **Why are you running for this position?**

   I have decided to run again for the District 1 School Board position. It has been an honor to serve my constituents for the last four years, but I feel that there is still much work to be done. I hope to continue to contribute to improving the education system in our county.

2. **What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?**

   Having served as a School Board Member for the last four years, including the last year as Chairman, I believe I have the experience to continue the work that has begun. The bar has to be raised for education in our community. We must make every student better prepared for a more competitive and rapidly changing world.

3. **85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education.**

   Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected? For the last four years, the School Board has sought to invest in workforce preparation. Schools are showing innovation to address that need. For example, Columbia Central High School has established the Collegiate Academy for college-bound students. Each of our schools has expanded their vocational opportunities including partnerships with Columbia State Community College. However, I think the preparedness begins much earlier than high school. I want to see our teachers have the resources they need to prepare students from pre-K through 12th grade. That preparation includes access to technology as well as other resources.
4. **While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern.**

Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these? Maury County has to balance growth with maintenance. For far too long, our county has operated on a fix on failure mentality. Recently, our board has done an assessment of our buildings to take a proactive look at maintenance. To address growth, the School Board has approved two new schools and an expansion for schools in Spring Hill. The School Board and the County must remember to address growth and maintenance simultaneously. We really have no choice.

5. **Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for raising taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?**

As a school board member, we do not have authority to increase taxes. From my experience, the needs of the schools continue to rise, and revenue has to rise. If not, we will fall behind. I advocate spending money wisely and not wasting the resources of this county.

6. **Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain. I believe it is important to develop standards for what is acceptable.**

Maury County Public Schools tried to take a step in this direction with regards to the Seven Keys. However, I think we need to be work collectively with the community to determine what are our standards. For example, the state sets class size requirements. Are 20 kids in a kindergarten too many? Are 6 kids in a high school history class too few? Should we offer a sport if we don’t have the facilities to support that sport? There are many other examples. I think Maury County Public Schools tries to do a lot, and we don’t always try to do it well. In my opinion, just doing it isn’t good enough. I want us to excel.

7. **If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?**

To have a successful team, there must be excellent communication and a sense of shared responsibility. Someone often has to lead the team, and I prefer a servant leader than a delegator who refuses to own his or her leadership role.

8. **If elected, how do plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?**

For our schools to thrive, I think it takes the assistance of all. I would like to see a partnership that focuses on parental involvement.
School Board District 5

Candidate Name: **Sherlita Denton**

1. **Why are you running for this position?**

   My daughter returned to Springhill for some family time and a few of her former classmates came to visit. As they reminisced about high school and plans for the upcoming class reunion, they began to discuss concerns about current conditions at their Alma Mater, Spring Hill High. Some of the concerns included overcrowding, classroom resources, inadequate facilities, and facilities management. After listening attentively, I paused with great concern, and I opted to review the school board's strategic plan to determine if and how these concerns were being addressed and to determine who served as the District 5 representative. After some research at the Maury County School Board and Election Commission site, I discovered that the current board member representing District 5 was not listed on the ballot as a candidate for re-election. Questioning myself, I thought: Am I willing to represent District 5? Am I willing to reach out to District 5 to develop a greater understanding of the people’s concerns and needs? Am I willing to advocate for community members of District 5? With over 27 years in education and leadership—I said to myself, Of course!

   As a passionate parent, grandparent, Maury County citizen, lifelong Tennessean, and committed educator, I desire to see our students excel in education and our community thrive from an educated workforce.

   As an educator, I have taught grades 5-8, trained at-risk youth ages 16-24, as well as mentored students and led student services initiatives in higher education.

2. **What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?**

   My commitment to education has been life-long—as a student, educator, adult learner, parent, and committed citizen of this community.
My experience in K-12 and higher education; working with at-risk youth, the court system and alternative sentencing programs; student testing and assessment; disability and job placement services; managing budgets for student services/affairs department will allow me to:

- Collaborate successfully with the school board members, parents, staff, business, and the community
- Focus on what is best for the student
- Focus on and provide a clear vision for district-wide policies
- Assist in adopting a fiscally sound budget
- Advocate at the local, state, and national level for public education

**Education**
- B.A. in Criminal Justice and Sociology, University of Memphis (formerly Memphis State), Memphis, TN
- Endorsement in Education, LeMoyne Owen College, Memphis, TN
- M.Ed. in Education Leadership, Tennessee State University, Nashville, TN

**Career**
- Probation and Parole, Pre-trial services, and Alternative Sentencing
- Taught grades 5-8 in a rural TN school district
- Taught GED, life-skills, job skills, and technical skills for at-risk, inner-city youth ages 16-24
- Leadership in student services/student affairs in higher education technical college

3. 85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?

With our county ranking 87th in the nation for growth, we must plan ahead and plan collaboratively. Our students need to be college ready and better prepared for the workforce. In doing so, we must: 1. close the gap in technology and student achievement; 2. build and/or expand schools with the capacity to accommodate our community based on our economic growth; and 3. bring more parents, teachers, school administrators, and community partners to the table during the planning process.

Whether our students choose a path of higher education to secure professional careers or a path of technical training to enter the skilled workforce, a solid K12 foundation is essential.

As a member of the school board, my role would be most impactful by cultivating a pipeline between education and the workforce. That process would best be implemented by planning and setting measurable goals; adopting broad policies that strategically align with accomplishing those goals; ensure adequate resources are available; ensuring those resources are managed effectively; and monitor, assess and determine effectiveness of those goals.

4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what
concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?

I am confident that we will thrive amidst this growth.

My plan, as a school board member and citizen of this community is to work tirelessly with all stakeholders to focus on planning ahead at a rate more rapid than anticipated growth; always being proactive rather than reactive so that we do not find our community struggling to meet the demands of growth; and developing a strong educational system within Maury County.

Strong educational systems, are good for the economy on the local, state, and national level. It improves the lives of citizens in the community, which affords them the opportunity to obtain better paying jobs to support their family and provide economic security. As working people can afford to buy goods and services, and support local businesses, our local economy will thrive. Whereby, resulting in revenue to supplement state and federal funding for infrastructure.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

I do support raising taxes for these issues—you have to pay if you want a return on your investment. I personally have experienced a tax increase, and I understand and appreciate the impact the tax increase has on the growth and sustainability of Maury County. However, first before additional tax increases, we must assess to the current allocation of tax dollars. We must determine how much tax is collected and the gap between what is needed to address education, downtown development, and traffic. Moreover, I do believe we need options to protect vulnerable citizens with limited financial resources, such as, but not limited to, senior citizens with a fixed income. In cases where increased taxation may cause distress, we need alternatives such as Homestead or other ways to secure the future for the elderly community members.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

Student Success is a top priority—student success will attract businesses to Maury County to ensure a skilled workforce.

Other top priorities include:

- Equitable resource allocation
- Maintenance and facilities upkeep strategies
- Stronger partnerships with school sponsors, local business, and the Maury County Chamber of Commerce
- Foster and nurture relationships with families and community support systems
- Embrace an organizational culture that supports and values our teachers and school administrators
7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?  
A successful team must keep the priorities of Maury County at the forefront and work with a variety of stakeholders. As a success team we must:

- Anticipate future growth and demands
- Challenge the status quo
- Clearly communicate the vision and goals
- Set broad policies to accomplish those goals
- Allocate resources to meet those goals
- Set an expectation that those policies must be followed
- Petition evidence that those policies are followed
- Monitor and measure outcomes throughout the process
- Hold all stakeholders accountable for their role

8. If elected, how do plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

It’s simple. My role as a School Board member representing District 5 is to ensure students in Maury County are college ready and prepared for the workforce. This will help align a skilled workforce with the needs of current and future businesses in Maury County.
Candidate Name: Richard Fox

1. **Why are you running for this position?**

   I had not considered running for a position on the school board until recently, when I heard that there would be no name on the ballot for the District 5 seat. At that point, no one else had even applied to qualify as a write-in candidate. I thought about how much I owed to my own public school education, and about my granddaughters' future in the public education system, and I decided this could be my chance to help them, and all their classmates, get a great head start toward a productive and meaningful life.

2. **What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?**

   My career in engineering and technology spans over thirty years. I've witnessed rapid acceleration of innovation, and experienced the turmoil of hastily implemented change. I am counting on the lessons I have learned in change management to help me make successful contributions to the school board.

3. **85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?**

   Preparing our students for the future will mean focusing more on teaching creativity, problem-solving skills, and flexibility. The jobs that do not demand those skills, jobs that are routine and repetitive, are being eliminated by automation. I will advocate for education programs that develop the skills that I see are in high demand in this new work environment.

4. **While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?**

   The challenge of growing population and commerce brings with it the benefit of a growing tax base and tax revenues. The struggles we face in dealing with the demands on our infrastructure are a
clear indication that this kind of organic revenue growth is not the sole solution to our needs. I would like to study the ratios of population to school system needs and how they drive investment and expense requirements to understand the true cost of growth.

Putting the school system's finances back on a sustainable path will require realistic budgets, comprehensive forecasts, and a remedial plan to address the backlog of needed repairs and expansion, while maintaining reasonable spending increases. Methodical business planning practices, like those I have employed in the private sector, are needed to achieve these results.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

I wouldn’t underestimate the resistance to raising taxes from some constituencies, on general principle. Even those who agree that education is important will push for more efficiency and waste-cutting to deal with funding deficiencies. I feel strongly enough that our education system needs to grow and modernize, and I will advocate for any necessary tax increases to support those needs not met by budget trimming alone.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

Catching up on maintenance, keeping up with growth, and modernizing education are priorities that are fairly well understood among current school board members, Maury County leaders, and the community. They are such challenging issues, and so vitally important, that I do not believe we can afford to be distracted by other matters in the near future.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

I wouldn’t say that harmony and unity are necessary for a successful team. A team with strongly held opposing positions can be a very successful team, if their differences can be forged into consensus decisions that lead to viable, well-rounded plans.

8. If elected, how do plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

I believe the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance can be a valuable partner in tackling the challenges that the Maury County Public Schools system faces. Clearly, many Maury County businesses see the growth in population and the economy as an opportunity that must be planned for proactively to gain the most benefit from it. I would like to discuss forecasts and expectations with MCCEA members, to enhance the data Maury County relies on, to get the most accurate projections available.
Candidate Name: **Scott E. Cepicky**

1. **Why are you running for this position?**

   To serve the people of Maury County and Tennessee, keeping both the best place to work live and raise a family. I will represent our Christian values and beliefs in Nashville. I want to make our educational system the best in the country and the most efficient for our teachers and students. I want to create a dual path educational system focusing on college ready and vocational training. I would like to create surpluses in the budget allowing the legislature the ability to target more growth dollars towards economic hot areas in the state like Middle Tennessee. I want to make sure that Maury County is represented at the table and our needs are addressed. Lastly, I want to protect our agricultural heritage in Maury County. Agriculture is very important to the success of our county.

2. **What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?**

   I have been a banker for 14 years, served on the county commission 2010-2014, boys and girls club board of directors, county commission chairman 2010-2012, owner of clover valley cattle company since 1995, member of Kiwanis since 2010. NAACP scholarship selection committee chairman 2010-2014.

3. **85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?**

   We need to simplify education at the state level giving more autonomy to our local school boards. In doing so more decision-making power would be given to the teachers and principals on how to educate their individual classrooms. Lastly, we need to create a vocational training path in high school for junior and seniors. A dual path to educational and career success. To many jobs go unfilled in the vocational trades and we need to do better at the state level providing resources for those career paths.
4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?

As Maury County grows its demands for infrastructure growth will be immense. The state has a budget surplus of 2 billion dollars. We could allocate a portion of that surplus to TDOT for the purpose of establishing hot spots of growth that will require more funds to keep pace with the growth in certain areas, Middle Tennessee would be one of those. Two projects that need attention is making bear creek four lanes to the interstate and looking into water supply for the region. I will work with TDOT and our local city’s to secure the funds we need to keep Maury County growing.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

At the state level some of the infrastructure issues have already been addressed with the gas tax. We need broadband to be expanded to all of Tennessee and we have the funds to help facilitate this expansion. We do not need to raise taxes to help with education or downtown revitalizations. We have a two billion dollar surplus and some of those funds can be diverted into educational programs such as vocational training and the Tennessee Promise. The surplus the state has may enable the legislature to lower the personal property tax on business which will allow them to expand and hire more employees. If we work with the federal government together we can receive grants to revitalize downtowns and keep the smaller community’s flourishing in Maury county and Tennessee. Small town charm is what makes Maury County so special.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

We live in a special time in Tennessee and we are going to be leaders in the country. I look forward to using my skills of negotiating and building teams to accomplish great things for Maury County and Tennessee. The relationships I have with current leadership will be important in prioritizing the needs of the county and expressing those ideas to the state legislature.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

The most important thing about a team is it does not matter who gets credit if the goal is accomplished. Sometimes it is easier to stand in the shadows and get things accomplished. You need to recognize the people around you and their talents for the task at hand and put those team members in the best situation for success.

8. If elected, how do plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

I have had a good relationship since my days on the county commission with Maury Alliance and the IDB. I believe working together towards accomplishing the goals of the Alliance and Maury county
are key to success of all stakeholders. If we all work together putting any differences aside then the future is limitless for our city’s. I will always be available to meet and speak with the leadership whenever they need to discuss an issue. I look forward to being your advocate and voice in Nashville and for that matter Tennessee.
1. **Why are you running for this position?**

I am running to bring the same voice of reason and accomplishment to the General Assembly, that I have brought to the Maury County Commission over the past 4 years. We have accomplished wonderful things on the local level. I want to make sure that Maury County continues to grow and thrive on the state and national level.

2. **What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. board, vocational, organizations, life)?**

My time on the Maury County Commission has given me the opportunity to see the needs we have in our region, and how a strong voice at the state level can help address these needs. As chairman over the past 2 years, I have learned the skills needed to bring differing groups together to accomplish needed tasks and goals. During my time on staff at Trinity Lutheran Church, and through my work on various community boards, I have learned that people are not simply numbers on a spreadsheet. Lives are impacted by every decision legislators make at the local and state level.

3. **85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?**

I would continue to push for greater vocational programs and opportunities at the high school level. Being able to connect private industry with the educational system has produced great benefits in Maury County, and can expanded to the state level. In addition, providing more control of educational decisions to the local school districts can help address the other various needs that exist within workforce development.

4. **While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?**
Maury County sends a tremendous amount of money to the state in the form of various taxes and fees. We need to make sure we are always in the discussion when it comes to the allocation of these funds. We have to be able to have a good working relationship with all the state agencies responsible for infrastructure, as well as the legislators in our region. Being able to reach out and make these connections will increase our ability to draw from these state level resources.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

As a State Representative, I would be opposed to raising such taxes. I would take a lead role in advocating on behalf of Maury County to return as much money as possible back to the county to address these needs. The issue of taxation is best left up to the local governing bodies, and they are the ones who would have to make this decision. Local governments would have to decide how best to allocate funds to meet these needs without raising taxes.

6. Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.

My two primary areas of focus will be education and infrastructure. These are needs that we have seen on the county level, and I will bring a focus on behalf of Maury County to the state level. I believe in local decision making, smaller government and less government intrusion. These are the additional priorities that I will work towards on behalf of Maury County.

7. If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?

A successful is one that accomplishes goals. A team is made up of various voices and agendas, but it takes skill and leadership to bring these together to get things done. It is easy to let division set in and destroy the functioning of the team. However, when everyone recognizes the importance of working towards a common goal, the team is successful.

8. If elected, how do plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?

I have enjoyed working with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance during my time on the Maury County Commission. I have always felt like I could ask, suggest, or have them research anything without hesitation. I have also been privileged to help answer their questions and support them in any way I could. I look forward to continuing this open door relationship with the MCC&EA at the state level.
Candidate Name: **AJ Holmes (D)**

1. **Why are you running for this position?**

   I am running for State House to give the citizens of Maury County a hardworking Legislator who will fiercely represent hardworking Tennesseans. I’m running to ensure a bright future for our children and grandchildren, access to affordable healthcare to all Tennesseans, 21st century infrastructure to move our communities, and therefore commerce. We need young and energetic leaders with fresh ideas. I will bring that to Nashville.

2. **What experience/qualifications do you have that make you the most suited candidate for this position (i.e. Board, vocational, organizations, life)?**

   I come from a family of small business owners and operators that believe strongly in working hard to get ahead. My parents, Dannie and Tanker Holmes, owned Nolen’s BBQ for 20 +/- years, and my mother operates Dannie Holmes Catering today. They inspired me to open my own business while still in school, and AJ Holmes Photography was founded in 2008. In 2012, as a senior at Columbia Academy, I was awarded one of the NFIB Young Entrepreneurship Foundation awards for my pursuits in being a small business leader and innovator. I have assumed leadership roles not only through my business, but also during my time at Middle Tennessee State University. This is my first political campaign, and I firmly believe that the strongest qualifier for this office is having love and care for Tennessee and Tennesseans, both of which I do every day. We need fresh perspectives in Nashville, and that's what I'll bring to the table.

3. **85% of our members indicated the largest obstacles to Maury County growth as education and workforce. Of those, the top concerns were preparedness for employment and preparedness for college/vocational education. Knowing this, how would you impact these obstacles in your role if elected?**

   One thing I would work to implement from day one would be an intensive vocational and technical training program in our public high schools. Essentially treating our vo/tech programs like Dual Enrollment courses currently offered, if a student successfully completed this high school program, in theory, one could graduate with certification in a skilled trade. Our young adults could move immediately into the workforce, filling job vacancies that are currently
pressing. I will work tirelessly to give our students more options and pathways for success. I believe vocational and technical school options need to be presented, not just college pathways. I would also like to work to compile a list of apprenticeship and technical training opportunities in our communities, providing even more ways for students to receive training in or out of the classroom.

4. While much of the funding for infrastructure comes from federal and state dollars, a third of our members list infrastructure (broadband, roads, utilities) as a top concern. Maury County was the 5th fastest growing county in the state and 87th fastest growing in the nation. Knowing this, what concerns do you have about our ability to thrive amidst this growth? What plans do you have to address these?

One of our biggest issues in growth will be in our rural communities. I am a strong supporter of quickly and efficiently expanding broadband access to all rural Maury precincts. I believe we must constantly remember that our farmers and agricultural communities are one of the pillars in Maury County, and providing services for them to thrive is a necessary step in our growth. Expanding broadband will not only allow more conveniences to residents in these communities, but will allow commerce and educational opportunities to flourish as well. We need to iron out a long-term solution for our solid waste problem, and I don’t believe this is through deferring a problem to a later date. We are currently spending an egregious amount transporting solid waste to Marshall County, and this will continue if the county fails to iron out a formal solution. In keeping our communities beautiful and healthy for generations to come, I am a supporter of green initiatives in waste management and recycling.

As far as roads and bridges are concerned, Maury County is in a tough spot. Van Boshers has cited 29 bridges in critical condition, meaning these cannot be repaired, rather, they must be totally replaced. We have many others that are in need of great levels of repair, too. Our county has a serious infrastructure issue, and we know that in order to thrive, the bones that move our commerce must be strong. Our growth abilities will be curbed by limited infrastructure if we fail to act in a serious way. We need to not only work to fix or replace many bridges in the county, but also work towards expanding lanes on key highways, providing more dedicated turn lanes in the county, and beautifying existing boulevards.

5. Regarding livability and taxes, 99% of our members rated the school system as important or extremely important. 82% rated traffic as important to extremely important. 81% rated vibrant downtowns as important to extremely important. Our members expressed support for higher taxes for educational facilities, roads and downtown parking. Do you support raising taxes for these issues? If not, how do we address these issues?

I believe our county commission has a tough road ahead in deciding local tax rates. Our schools, roads, and parking issues will all be coming to a head very soon, and we have to be able to act now to plan ahead, not react to a host of ballooning problems in the future. A generous portion of our road and school projects could be funded through waste elimination as well as through funding from the state. I believe in the power of grant writing and research, and there is an enormous amount of money on the table. I think we can all agree that raising taxes should be the last ditch effort in funding our county
Facilities and growth, but a modest tax increase for roads or education is an increase that would present a return for Maury County, and therefore the residents as well. Strong schools, trusted and well developed infrastructure, excellent public parks and facilities, and access to outstanding and affordable healthcare are just a few things that prospective businesses and residents look to before moving to a community. Maury County is on the right track in all of these ways, but our growth rates mean we need to equally increase our rate of decision making and action in all of these areas. I believe having a cooperative representative in the State House is imperative to continued positive growth in our county, and I will gladly and enthusiastically work with out county leadership to advance the opportunities and outcomes for our county facilities and programs, and therefore the opportunities and outcomes for all of our citizens as well.

6. **Do you have other priorities that you believe are important to our membership? If so, please explain.**

All Tennesseans, not just members of this economic alliance, need legislators who are Bipartisan trailblazers. Nashville has become painfully polarized over the last several years, and there are no signs pointing to this stopping on its own. We need Representatives dedicated to being bipartisan legislators, supporting a good idea regardless of party. If you’re a Republican with a great idea, I’m voting for it. If you’re a Democrat with a bad idea, you won’t get my support, and vice versa. Maury County deserves representation that accurately represents the wishes of our residents. Maury County wants a legislator that places progress ahead of strict party lines. I will do that. Another major priority for my campaign (and most TN citizens) is expanding Medicaid. Expanding Medicaid will help keep rural hospitals open, lower private insurance premiums, insure 300,000 additional Tennesseans, help to insure our veterans, and more. All of this will be done without a tax increase (Haslam’s Insure TN plan is one such method).

7. **If elected, how would you define/describe a successful team?**

I would define a successful team, in this case, as one that works up and down the levels of government in an efficient and seamless fashion. If elected, my team member would not only be my fellow representatives in Nashville as well as the state senators and the Governor’s office, but those in local government as well. County commissioners, our County mayor, the Maury County Trustee, our clerk, etc., are all folks I would work with regularly to guarantee that Maury County is on the right track.

I describe a successful team as one that works together, one that does not quibble in polarized political bickering and gridlock, and one that puts Tennesseans and their values ahead of strict party lines.

8. **If elected, how do plan to partner with the Maury County Chamber & Economic Alliance to further the goals of our members/investors?**

If elected, I would immediately seek an audience with the chamber to fully understand what concerns and goals this organization has for the county. The advancement of Maury County as a hub for families to thrive and grow, an economy to blossom and more fully flourish, and a community focused on the goal of collective betterment is my mission. I should think that the chamber and I would be working together to advance Many goals and opportunities not only for
the business owners and innovators in our Communities, but for all of the residents of Maury County.