



QUESTIONNAIRE & RESPONSES

FIRST NAME: LAST NAME:
SEEKING TO BE ELECTED TO:

GENERAL QUESTIONS

- 1. While in office, what will be your top priorities?** If elected, my top two priorities would be ensuring our public safety and directing all available financial resources to addressing our infrastructure backlog. Some of my other priorities would include restoring trust and confidence in county government, sensible growth management with an emphasis on growing the business sector, being good stewards over our natural resources, economic diversification and jobs creation and fiscally responsible government.
- 2. What influenced you to run for office?** I'm a longtime businessman and have served our community as a servant leader and worked to improve our county in a variety of roles for 40+ years. I viewed the decision to seek election to the position of County Chair as an extension, or continuation of my community service. I also saw it as an opportunity to help make Volusia County an even better place for current and future residents as well as a place where our children and grandchildren will want to stay and plant their own roots and start their own families and careers and businesses instead of moving away after completing their education.
- 3. Who do you look to for advice and consult when making decisions that will affect the public?** Volusia County is blessed with a vast pool of very knowledgeable, wise and experienced people who I would consult with on an ad hoc basis as part of my decision-making process. Additionally I've spent the last 13½ months on a listening and learning tour of Volusia County, talking to residents from all different backgrounds and walks of life about their concerns and fears as well as their hopes and dreams and vision for the future of Volusia County. If elected, I will continue the process of going out into the community and seeking feedback from residents to ensure that I stay tuned in to the issues that are important to them and important for our county government to address.

GOVERNMENT / BUSINESS REGULATIONS

- 1. What are your thoughts on government's involvement with regulations for businesses?** I believe that government often over-reaches when it comes to business regulations. Certainly reasonable government regulations are needed for the protection of the community and the consumer. But in general, my philosophy is that beyond what's needed to protect health, safety and welfare, the less government intervention in business, the better.
- 2. Where do you see yourself on taxes and fees? What is your opinion on the current structure?** There's no doubt that everyone would desire lower taxes and fees. But you also have to understand that businesses bear a greater responsibility of the tax burden, and that's how it should be and the price you pay in exchange for the incredible opportunities associated with owning a business. I don't want to see taxes and fees increased for the business community. I think they're at an acceptable level where they are now.
- 3. Do you believe businesses play a pivotal role in our community?** Without a doubt, businesses – particularly small businesses – have an enormous role in the economic health and vitality of our community. A thriving and diverse business sector provides job opportunities for our residents and the educated workforce that our institutions of higher learning are producing and also helps to lessen the residential tax burden. This cannot be overstated. The strength of our community – of any community – is directly proportional to the strength of its business sector.
- 4. What role do you see for yourself in helping to grow businesses of all sizes in your position?** In my view, one of the biggest responsibilities of local government is to help provide the foundation for a vibrant and robust economy. This is vitally important to addressing one of our biggest needs – the creation of more and better-paying jobs. To do this, you must capitalize on the area's assets in a way that will encourage existing businesses to grow and new businesses to want to locate here. The recently-announced partnership between Boeing and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University is a prime example. Through collaboration between the county and cities, the education system and business recruitment agencies, hopefully there will be many more Boeings on the horizon for Volusia County.

FIRST NAME:

LAST NAME:

SEEKING TO BE ELECTED TO:

5. **What are the most pressing issues in the office you are seeking as it relates to local businesses?** I would say that the most pressing issue is ensuring a sufficient and well-educated and well-trained workforce to fill the needs of local businesses. While this isn't necessarily in the purview of county government or the county chair, they certainly can play a positive role through leadership, collaboration and advocacy.
6. **What does growth mean to you as it relates to business?** To me, growth means diversifying the types of businesses and the types of jobs that come to Volusia County. Growth means looking at the various sectors of our business community and identifying gaps and prospects for new opportunities. For instance, are there opportunities for new recreational-based businesses here? Sports businesses? Cultural businesses? The growth will come from understanding what people want that we don't currently have. It will come from the spark ignited by new business ventures in Volusia County such as Boeing and B. Braun. And it will come from making sure we have a skilled workforce and an environment that helps businesses succeed.
7. **What have you done to enhance the business community in your area?** Referencing my personal experiences, I've been fortunate enough to take over a business here in 1997 with about 20 employees and grow it into a thriving business now employing 140. I feel a huge debt of gratitude to Volusia County for providing a supportive atmosphere where this growth and expansion was possible, and I've spent a lot of time in the community trying to ensure that other businesses have similar support and success operating in Volusia County. My efforts have included serving as past chairman and a past member of the board of directors of the Daytona Regional Chamber of Commerce, where providing support for small businesses was a primary focus of our efforts. I also currently serve on the Board of the CEO Business Alliance as well as TeamVolusia's Executive Committee. Additionally, I serve on the Daytona State College Board of Trustees, where we have expanded hands-on, vocational/trades course offerings in career trades such as building, welding technology, electrical apprentice, HVAC and automotive service technology. And we've been able to do all of this while not raising tuition rates for 14 consecutive years, meaning a steady, skilled workforce is getting practical, affordable skills training that make them immediately employable and available to fill the job needs in our local businesses. These experiences have been extremely meaningful and rewarding to me and a way for me to pay it forward to a local economy that has helped support and grow my business.
8. **What are your thoughts on tax structures for local businesses?** Again, I have no doubt that most everyone would prefer lower taxes. But while we certainly don't need to raise taxes, I don't think the current tax structure or tax level have deterred growth in our local business community. If the local tax structure gets to the point where it's an impediment to local businesses growing and new businesses moving here, then we would need to take another look. But thus far, that hasn't been my experience.

RESILIENCY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

1. **Given our geographical area, what do you believe are some best practices for resiliency, and how do you believe our businesses can play a role?** To me, resiliency in the business community is best achieved through diversity so that the local economy and job market aren't reliant on any single industry. As important as it is, the hospitality industry can't be Volusia County's sole economic driver. Resilience comes with a diversity of business opportunities and a more diverse economy.
2. **Climate resiliency is becoming a heated topic of discussion as it relates to our community given the natural events that occurred over the past two years. If elected, how do you see your office assisting to alleviate and reduce some of the detrimental effects of such occurrences?** Obviously, government is powerless to stop or prevent natural weather occurrences. But the way in which government prepares its response plans and prepares the community before, during and after a storm will have the biggest impact on reducing detrimental impacts. If elected, I would ensure that our preparedness plans and response teams are well-trained and well-equipped and that emergency management effectively coordinates with our cities and provides clear, consistent, time-sensitive communications and safety messages to the community on things like damage potentials, risk factors, evacuation routes and shelter facilities, when needed. We also must ensure that advance planning measures are undertaken before storm season to mitigate impacts – things like clearing obstructions from power lines and cleaning drainage ditches and other stormwater management assets so that water can go where it needs to during a storm. As County Chair, I also would work with the rest of the County Council to ensure policies are in place to ensure that construction codes are adhered to so that people are safe in their homes provided it's OK to remain there in an emergency. And of course, the County Chair has an important role in interacting with state and federal officials during times of emergency to ensure that the county gets all of the help and support needed.

*Note: Candidates were given a maximum of 250 words per question.
Responses have been copied and pasted directly from Google Forms.*

FIRST NAME:

LAST NAME:

SEEKING TO BE ELECTED TO:

WORKFORCE HOUSING / LIVE LOCAL ACT / EMPLOYMENT

- 1. There have been conversations about workforce housing in our area, and the need to keep those that are working in the community, living within the community. Where do you see the need? And what are your thoughts on the Live Local Act?** The concept of workforce housing has been around for a very long time. Decades ago, some employers actually provided housing to their employees. Imagine if several employers today banded together to provide housing as part of their compensation package? How might that be done? What might that look like? That's but one idea, but it's illustrative of my belief that there's enough ingenuity, creativity and funding mechanisms in the private sector to help address the problem without imposing a government solution on the backs of the taxpayers. In reality, the real solution is to create good-paying jobs so that employees will be able to afford better living accommodations. As it relates to the Live Local Act, while it was certainly well-intended, I believe it has fallen short of its expectations. There's a move afoot to make some adjustments to the Act, and I look forward to seeing what the new version will look like.
- 2. Workforce housing is only a part of the problem. How can we hire the best employees? How do we attract good applicants?** You have to do a few things and do them well. First, you have to have a safe community and exceptional public safety assets. Regardless of the economic opportunities, no one's coming here if it isn't safe. We also have to have a first-class educational system. Without it, families and good employment prospects won't want to move here either. You also have to sell potential applicants on Volusia County and what we have to offer in terms of quality of life, natural resources, the beach, rivers, boating, fishing, the speedway, museums, parks and trails, golf, etc. to sell top applicants on the value of everything that's so special here and the many benefits of planting roots in Volusia County. And we need to be more competitive in the compensation and benefits packages being offered if we expect to attract top applicants. Top talent is in high demand, and that creates a very competitive labor market. Simply put, you can't expect the best and brightest to work for just an average wage. The best people must be compensated commensurate to their skill and experience level if we're going to be successful at attracting them to Volusia County.

*** For State Candidates Only ***

PROPERTY INSURANCE (STATE CANDIDATES ONLY)

- 1. Name ways that you believe your office can assist with the cost of property insurance.**
- 2. Do you believe current measures taken to lower insurance, such as, reducing frivolous lawsuits, will have a positive impact? If not, how so and how can it be fixed at the local level?**