



QUESTIONNAIRE & RESPONSES

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

GENERAL QUESTIONS

- 1. While in office, what will be your top priorities?** I pledge honesty, integrity, and compassion for every conversation I have with constituents, as well as every vote I cast as the next member of the Port Orange City Council.
I shall support school administrators, Volusia County, and Port Orange officials and staff as they meet to review options to avoid another Sugar Mill school fatality while reviewing similar procedures for all schools in Port Orange.
Working with my colleagues, I want to ensure that the new 20-year plan for Port Orange incorporates the current needs of the community as well as being flexible in meeting future physical and economic development of land use, affordable housing, infrastructure, open space, and growth challenges in a timely and sustainable manner.
- 2. What influenced you to run for office?** A 12-year term limit expires this year creating an opportunity for a new person with fresh ideas to step into the role. I believe I am the right person for the position. My educational and professional background has prepared me for this opportunity. I shall apply my previous experience in public office, business acumen, and my strong sense of community to effectively serve as a City Council person in the Port Orange Community.
- 3. Who do you look to for advice and consult when making decisions that will affect the public?** I examine my business conscience. I also reflect on similar situations and the decisions I've made that impact my community. I am not hesitant to reach out to a friend, former business associate, or neighbor and share my thoughts regarding the matter at hand.

GOVERNMENT / BUSINESS REGULATIONS

- 1. What are your thoughts on government's involvement with regulations for businesses?** This is a broad question.
Regulations for businesses must be approached from at least two perspectives.
The first has to be the safety, security, and watchfulness of the consuming public. The next aspect of government involvement must deal with local ordinances that maintain a safe and secure environment.
Imagine a pizza and hot dog business next to a mattress and bed store. Different needs exist to do business and different protocols must be followed to continue in a profitable business.
- 2. Where do you see yourself on taxes and fees? What is your opinion on the current structure?** Inspection fees, usage fees, and the 5.5% corporate income tax rate are a lot to swallow for a new business or an established business. The corporate tax rate decrease of 4.458% to 3.535% appears to be negated after 1/1/2022 and has returned to 5.5%. If this is incorrect, so is the supplier of hard-to-find information.
The consumer tax of 6% must not be forgotten as the purchases/rental of goods and services are impacted by this rate.
Counties can levy local taxes on top of the state amount.
Consumers need to be aware of all of the options that impact their purchasing and their need to buy/ consume.
- 3. Do you believe businesses play a pivotal role in our community?** When people leave their homes there are several places they may find themselves.
Medical/dental and other related appointments, grocery stores, an array of retail businesses, recreational fun places and spaces, and Houses of Worship.
Throughout each person's day, a visit to a floral shop, hardware, or big box retailer may occur. An afternoon movie and an early snack or dinner may dot the day's agenda.
Businesses are the lifeblood of a community.
Knowing where to go to get what you need is/ or ought to be a calming attribute to the choices and preferences of what business to visit and where one lives. Their being close to home and conveniently accessible is critical for future growth and more customers.

FIRST NAME: Barry

LAST NAME: Pitek

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4. **What role do you see for yourself in helping to grow businesses of all sizes in your position?** Fortunately, Port Orange has a newly adopted 20-year plan. It provides direction for land use, transportation, housing, public facilities, schools, open space, and other related elements.
Structurally, this document provides the guardrails for business growth and development.
I intend to use this document as an objective tool to consider all business proposals and new growth opportunities.
5. **What are the most pressing issues in the office you are seeking as it relates to local businesses?** I've attended an array of City of Port Orange Council and Environmental planning meetings.
The presentations have been pointed, succinct, and understandable.
From an audience seat, I feel the most pressing issues are ones that sustain, maintain, and uphold the current blueprint for governing in Port Orange. Local businesses are key to understanding the need to move forward. New apartments, housing plans, storage units, and the like present challenges of space and infrastructure. I believe there is also a place in discussion where needs and wants can be maturely discussed and the betterment and good of the community at large can be acknowledged and accommodated. The decisions reached are not necessarily meant to be a consensus. Rather, it needs to be what is realistic and feasible considering the options presented.
6. **What does growth mean to you as it relates to business?** Growth is the backbone of progress/business moving forward. Growth can come in incremental steps which depend on a variety of economic factors. Steady and manageable growth needs to be planned or ready to be altered as situations warrant.
7. **What have you done to enhance the business community in your area?** The question needs to be kept in perspective. I've lived in Port Orange for seven years.
As a consumer, I've supported a variety of businesses that met my needs. Going forward, when elected to the Port Orange Council, my responses will be different and unique to the role I was elected to serve.
8. **What are your thoughts on tax structures for local businesses?** I believe the tax structure needs to be reduced from the 5.5% current level. There needs to be a better explanation of why 5.5% is the number versus the lower rates of 4.458% and 3.535% that were in place throughout the pandemic.
Start up businesses as well as existing businesses warrant that discussion and conversation.

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?** There are seasons of business that can peak and times when they may lag.
Best practices for steadfastness and stability require a short, medium, and long-range planning process that delivers consistency, predictability, and a quality product at a fair market price.
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?** Climate resiliency requires the acceptance of the fact that things are changing. The City of Port Orange must continue to be on point for whatever weather/climate factors occur. Successive hurricanes or tropical storms must be responded to in as an efficient and timely manner as possible. The City must continue its response reaction in these situations.

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 need to be close to a place of employment is a critical component of workforce housing. The need is represented by several factors. Some employees consider where they live to outshine the proximity to their employment. Others do not have a choice based on their job requirements and skillsets.
The Live Local Act, which I believe was finalized with SB328 has merit in concept. From what I have been able to tell, all 67 Counties in Florida are at varying stages of implementation and understanding. I recently read a blog that described the act as filled with "wrinkles of interpretation."

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

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There appears to be a strong need for a firm administrative interpretation that leaves no County in Florida guessing what to do next.

2. **Workforce housing is only a part of the problem. How can we hire the best employees? How do we attract good applicants?** It is important to look at this question from a global perspective. Where does Florida rank in salaries for teachers versus the rest of the country? In other fields, where does our state show up? Companies such as Amazon seem to have found a niche because of demand and the company culture. All of these factors play pivotal roles in the hiring and retention of good and loyal applicants and employees.

* ** 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?**