

Candidate Forum District 3

Additional Questions

Tashe Allen:

1. If elected, what will you do to ensure that we have additional judges and court staff added in the courthouse to handle the rising number of cases?
 - a. I fully support our judges and other department heads in the court system. Whenever they bring me a request, they can count on my 100% backing. I will work to allocate resources and collaborate with relevant parties to add more judges and court staff to handle the increasing number of cases effectively.
2. How do you plan to reach out to the youth?
 - a. To effectively reach our youth, I understand the importance of truly understanding them. It's crucial for me to be approachable, engage in genuine conversations, listen without judgment, and build trust, rather than talking at them. To achieve this, I would implement several strategies: hosting town halls and forums focused on youth issues, visiting local schools to interact with students and discuss civic engagement, meeting the youth where they are by walking through neighborhoods, going to the parks, and recreational centers, collaborating with local youth groups to support their initiatives, and creating opportunities for youth employment and entrepreneurship through partnerships with local businesses.

3. How do you plan to change the image of Clayton County with highways being trashed with litter and garbage?
 - a. To address the litter problem in our community, it's essential to understand the mindset of those who litter. Often, people litter because there isn't a trash can nearby. Instead of carrying trash with them, they find it easier to leave it behind. The decision to litter is largely influenced by environmental cues – what people see around them.
 - b. To change the image of Clayton County and bring national attention to us, I propose: Banning Commonly Littered Items. Many cities and states around the country have adopted, or at least debated adopting, bans on trash items that take up to 1,000 years to decompose in landfills and often end up dirtying parks, streets, and alleyways. By cutting back on materials that most commonly end up in U.S. landfills, we can work to curb littering behavior. Implementing a ban on commonly littered items will promote environmental responsibility and enhance Clayton County's image as a forward-thinking and environmentally-conscious community. This proactive approach will not only improve the quality of life for our residents but also attract national attention, showcasing Clayton County as a leader in environmental stewardship and community beautification.
4. What type of programs would you like to introduce to help ex-convicts be more productive and find sufficient housing, if they show improvement in citizenship?
 - a. I wouldn't introduce this program myself, but I would like to partner with, bring awareness to, and support organizations that are already providing solutions for the needs of ex-convicts. Ideally, I would like to see programs that offer job training, employment opportunities, housing assistance, mental health and counseling services, as well as mentorship and support groups. By collaborating with these organizations, we can assist ex-convicts in reintegrating into society, becoming productive citizens, and reducing recidivism rates in our community.

5. What actions or policies have you implemented within the last 6 months to improve the quality of life for Clayton County residents?
 - a. As a first-time candidate for District Commissioner, I want to clarify that I currently don't hold the position to implement policies directly. However, I am actively involved in addressing community concerns. Over the last 6 months, I have been working closely with an organization in District 3 to gain a better understanding of our water issues. Just last week, we had a productive meeting with the president of the Clayton County Water Authority to discuss potential solutions and improvements. While I haven't implemented policies yet, I am committed to advocating for the well-being of Clayton County residents and working collaboratively to improve our community's quality of life.
6. Mental illness is a growing problem nationwide, sometimes leading to increased crime etc. What is your take on tackling this crisis?
 - a. Mental illness is indeed a growing concern nationwide, and it can contribute to various social issues, including increased crime rates. One of the key aspects of tackling this crisis is reducing the stigma around mental health, taking medication, and seeing a therapist in our community. I believe in the importance of promoting awareness and education about mental health issues to foster a more understanding and supportive community. By encouraging open conversations and providing access to mental health resources and services, we can help individuals seek timely and appropriate treatment, reducing the negative impacts of untreated mental illness on our community. Additionally, I support collaborating with local organizations and healthcare providers to develop and implement initiatives that address mental health issues effectively and support the overall well-being of Clayton County residents.
7. What have you done as a resident of the community to improve the quality of life for the people of District 3?
 - a. As a resident, I have been actively involved in various initiatives to improve the quality of life for our community members. I have volunteered to drive seniors to the pharmacy and doctor's appointments, ensuring they have access to essential healthcare services. Additionally, I have organized efforts to clean their homes and yards and assisted them in getting their air conditioning fixed during hot summer months. I have also worked with organizations and shelters to support survivors of human trafficking, providing them with resources and assistance to rebuild their lives and reintegrate into society. I have partnered with local organizations and my church to assist individuals experiencing housing insecurity, connecting them with essential services and advocating for affordable housing options.

I have volunteered to mentor young girls, providing guidance and support, especially around issues like teen pregnancy, to empower them with information and resources. Lastly, I have taught financial literacy classes to help community members manage their finances and make informed financial decisions.

8. What is your vision for Clayton County and District 3? How will you implement your vision?
 - a. My vision for Clayton County and District 3 is to create a community that prioritizes safety, fosters opportunities for growth and development, and provides unwavering support to its residents. I envision a District where every citizen feels heard and valued, a place where families can comfortably raise their children and where individuals can look forward to a secure and fulfilling retirement. To implement my vision for Clayton County and District 3, I will focus on enhancing safety by improving roads, street lights, and sidewalks, while also strengthening community policing efforts. I will collaborate with local businesses and educational institutions to create job opportunities and training programs. Additionally, I will establish open channels of communication through regular town hall meetings and digital platforms to ensure residents' voices are heard. To create a family-friendly environment, I will prioritize improving parks, promoting family-friendly events, and investing in quality education and affordable housing. For our youth, I will introduce and support recreational and educational programs that provide constructive activities and opportunities for personal growth. By working together with the community and local government officials, I am confident that we can achieve a safer, more prosperous, and supportive District for all residents.
9. What would you do or implement in accountability and transparency to not allow a theft of taxpayer's money by a company like Roman United to steal \$559,000 from the taxpayers?
 - a. To ensure accountability and transparency and prevent the theft of taxpayer's money, I will implement a rigorous vetting process for all contracts and partnerships with companies like Roman United. This process will involve thorough background checks, financial audits, and performance evaluations to ensure that we are working with reputable and trustworthy organizations. Additionally, I will create a transparent bidding and procurement system that will not allow deals to be made behind closed doors. All contract negotiations and discussions will be open to public scrutiny to ensure full transparency and accountability. I will also establish a mechanism for reporting unethical practices or backdoor deals to encourage employees and residents to speak up. It is of

utmost importance to remind employees of the significance and benefits of the whistleblower policy to maintain the integrity of our operations. If any official is found to be engaging in unethical practices or backdoor deals, they will be promptly investigated, and if necessary, turned over to the law for prosecution. By implementing these measures, I am committed to safeguarding taxpayer's money and ensuring that the residents of Clayton County and District 3 are protected from fraud and corruption.

10. What type of programs and efforts have you established or planned by district 3, and the county as a whole?

a. In District 3 and across the county, I have implemented a variety of programs and initiatives focused on community development and well-being. I personally hosted homeownership workshops to guide residents through the home buying process and ensure they make informed decisions. Additionally, in collaboration with a local church in District 3, I conducted financial empowerment classes to equip individuals with essential skills to manage their finances effectively. I have also been actively advocating to raise awareness and support for maternal mental health, recognizing its crucial role in our community's overall well-being. I am on the board of the Flint River Boys and Girls Club, where I have helped raise scholarship money to support the educational aspirations of our youth. In addition to these efforts, I have started working with a nonprofit organization in District 3 to mentor youth, aiming to provide them with guidance and support as they navigate their educational and personal development journeys. These initiatives reflect my ongoing commitment to foster a thriving and supportive community in District 3 and the county as a whole.

11. What strategies will you employ to enhance community engagement, and ensure the voices of all people are heard?

a. To enhance community involvement, I'd set up regular open meetings to hear citizens' thoughts. I'd also use surveys and outreach to ensure marginalized groups, as well as everyone else, have a say. Alongside this, I'd launch a monthly newsletter to keep citizens updated on local news, initiatives, and opportunities for involvement. We'd collaborate on decisions and utilize online tools, A District 3 website, and the newsletter to keep citizens informed. I'd make sure our leaders understand different cultures and work closely with local groups. Keeping things clear, accessible, and easy to understand for everyone, including those with disabilities and non-English speakers, is crucial. I'd commit to getting back to citizens quickly, aiming to reply to calls and emails within a day. Lastly, I'd check in regularly on our plans and ensure our leaders are listening and

acting on citizen input, ensuring an inclusive and participatory community engagement process.

12. How would you make yourself available to the citizens and residents of your districts?

- a. To make myself accessible to the citizens and residents of District 3, I would establish dedicated office hours where people can drop by to discuss their concerns, share their ideas, or ask questions. Additionally, I would attend community events to interact with residents in a more informal setting, hold regular open forums and town hall meetings, use digital platforms to communicate updates and gather feedback, and be responsive to phone calls and emails, aiming to reply within 24 hours. I believe that by being approachable, attending community events, and actively engaging with the community, I can better understand their needs and priorities and work collaboratively to address them.

13. How familiar are you with the county's strategic initiatives, and do you plan to assist with ensuring the county is achieving those initiatives?

- a. I've attended several planning meetings and am familiar with the Future Focus Clayton Comprehensive Plan. I know that we are in the final stage of the planning phase. I'm committed to not only participating in the planning but also focusing on the implementation of the initiatives. I'll work to ensure the community's needs are heard and addressed effectively. I also plan to keep an eye on the progress, make any needed changes along the way, and monitor the benchmarks to make sure we're hitting our targets.