

## Candidate Forum Commission Chair

### Additional Questions

#### **Terry Baskin:**

1. The World Cup is coming to Atlanta in 2026. As Chairperson, how will you prepare the county for this economic event?
  - a. As Chairman, I would collaborate with the City of Atlanta officials to ensure that we are in sync with the rest of agencies of Metro Atlanta, Our police and fire personnel should have direct communication with the other jurisdictions to ensure the safety and security of lives, property, and our fellow citizens.
  
2. What is your position on stopping squatters in the community?
  - a. In order to stop squatters, we must start with educating the landowners on various techniques on preventing their properties from being targeted. The first techniques should always be to maintaining a curb appeal approach, also making regular visits and inspection of their properties, along with installing lights with timers to turn on at night. Finally, offer neighbor use of the driveway. Although these are a few helpful hints, it pays dividends in securing the property from squatters.
  
3. What is your vision for the County's development and growth over the next few years?
  - a. As chairman, I will seek to create an economy that leaves no one behind. I'm committed to address disparities, promoting diversity in business ownership, and ensuring that the benefits of economic growth are shared equitably across all corners of Clayton County. I also envision champion mixed-use, mixed-income developments to diversity revenue streams for the county, ultimately reducing the tax burden on residential stakeholders. Finally, to attract a diverse range of retail establishments and restaurants to bolster economic sustainability and enhance the local economy.

4. As Chairperson, how will you avoid high unemployment rates with the rise of automation, loss of service, and low skill jobs?
  - a. Central to my economic strategy is the creation of job opportunities for our residents. My plan includes workforce development/readiness initiatives that align with the needs of emerging industries. By investing in education and vocational training, we will ensure that our workforce is well equipped with the skills demanded by the evolving job market, creating a win-win scenario for both businesses and residents.
  
5. How will you address the lack of funding at Southern Regional Medical Center to keep this hospital in the community?
  - a. I would address the lack of funding for the Southern Regional Medical Center by raising awareness about the importance of the hospital's services, achievements, and its commitment to patient care. It is paramount that we invigorate the values and major benefits of having a hospital in our county. Secondly, help promote a campaign drive to donate to the center to offset the deficit plaguing the hospital with millions of dollars of unpaid medical expenses. Lastly, to advocate the efforts to designate the hospital as a trauma center, which could significantly improve immediate care for trauma patients in the southern crescent area and through Metro Atlanta.
  
6. Clayton County has a major environmental climate issue. How are you going to get the community involved to help with this problem.
  - a. In order to get the community involved in our environmental climate issues, I would seek more federal funding for the clean-up process. I would engineer a conglomerate of community activists, business owners, clergies, property owners to lead a campaign to eliminate toxic waste from our lakes and streams along with pinpointing those who are responsible for the dumping and force them to pay for the clean-up, which is estimated at \$450 million dollars. Finally, to continue monitoring the action of those at fought and keep them in compliance EPA and county regulations.

7. With the increasing frequency of natural disasters and its devastating impact on communities, how will you as chairperson increase the resilience of the county to these types of events.
  - a. As chairman, I would keep with the standard of the current policies set by our emergency response units. Natural disasters are devastating to our communities, by entrusting in further training and updates according to the federal and state guidelines on response is critical in the resiliency of the county's ability to continue a normal way of life.
  
8. What required experiences do you think one should have to be a successful and efficient chair?
  - a. I would think that accountability should be the first and foremost experience requirement. As a respected elected official that handled over \$7 billion dollars of county's revenue with no improprieties speaks volumes as far as accountability. Second, years of experience fortifies a clear understanding of the full operation of the county. Third, integrity, can the public really trust their local government of following their own guidelines and policies?, which makes good ethical practices for the board as a whole. Forth, the next chair has to have the ability to galvanize staff members and others to work towards a common goal(s) for the county to progress. Fifth, to be a good team player and enjoy collaborating with others. Finally, to have the God-given ability to listen and respond to the needs of the public. I believe that I'm the only candidate that has all these top qualities and experiences to be a very successful and efficient chair for Clayton County.

9. What is the difference between a Tax Commissioner and Tax Assessor?
  - a. The difference between the Tax Commissioner and Tax Assessor is that the Tax Commissioner is an elected official and the constitutional officer of the county. While the Tax Assessor is an appointed position by the Board of Commissioners. The Tax Commissioner's responsibilities include, but are not limited to, establishing and overseeing the creation of the digest for submission to the Department of Revenue on an annual basis. The Tax Commissioner also bills, collects, and distributes taxing revenues to the state, county, schools, and local municipalities. Also, the Tax Commissioner is the county's keeper of record of Homesteaded properties and the state agent for issuances of motor vehicle tags. The Tax Assessors assesses property values on improved and unimproved properties, they represent the county in establishing values in a disputed appeal before the Board of Equalization. The Tax Commissioner and Tax Assessor work in concert in preparation of the submission of the digest, but the Tax Commissioner must certify it for approval.
  
10. You have been in Clayton County government for 20 years. What accomplishments have you made that demonstrate your ability to succeed?
  - a. During my years as Tax Commissioner, my accomplishments were as noted; elected as the fifth Tax Commissioner of Clayton County and served in that compacity as the longest tenured Tax Commissioner in the history of Clayton, co-created the Land Bank, created and chaired the Chief Financial Officers Committee, One of the Founding Fathers of Elite Scholars School of Excellence, Serve on the Solid Waste board, currently serve on the Development Authority of Clayton County as the Secretary/Treasurer, the 2024 recipient of the "Administrator of the Year Award" by the Georgia Minority Business Award.