

Kalamazoo County Commission

Kalamazoo County Commission District 1

Description:

Kalamazoo City precincts 1, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 27

Kalamazoo Township precincts 10, 11

The Board of Commissioners is the legislative policy-making branch of Kalamazoo County Government. The Board is responsible to the citizens for development and administration of policies and the annual budget. The Board has 11 members who are elected from districts according to population.

Term: 2 years

Candidates (choose 1):

Ronald Olson

Party: Rep

Biographical Info:

Age: 65

Occupation / Current Position: Retired paperworker

Education: HS Grad Vicksburg HS Class of 1970.

Experience & Qualifications: Volunteer work for the Republican Party of Kalamazoo County and the Eastside Neighborhood Association with the Building Blocks program.

Campaign Website: http://www.facebook.com/Olson4KalCo/?modal=admin_todo_tour

Campaign Email: floatsfast@aol.com

Campaign Facebook Page: <http://www.facebook.com/Olson4KalCo>

Campaign Phone: (269) 200-6129

Questions:

Q: How will your talents, experience and skills enable you to succeed in your work as a Commissioner to improve the quality of life for residents of Kalamazoo County?

A: As a life-long resident of Kalamazoo, I know the history of this community and what issues are important to the citizens of our district. In my career at Graphic Packaging, I learned the value of hard work and commitment can bring that to the commission. I will represent the perspective of the working-class taxpayer, but will represent all the citizens of this district and the county.

Q: What are the two most critical issues facing your District in the next ten years? What actions will you take as a member of the Commission to address them in the next two years?

A: Lowering crime in the District and trying to fix the flooding problems.

Q: What policies and programs will you promote to enhance citizen engagement in the well-being of our communities and the democratic process?

A: Affordable housing is quickly becoming a major issue in the Kalamazoo inner city and throughout the county. I have a plan to help control the flooding we've seen all around the County. I tend to look at things from a different angle.

Q: How will your political philosophy or platform guide your actions on the Commission?

A: Although running as a Republican I have to represent everyone not only in my district but everyone in Kalamazoo County.

Stephanie Moore

Party: Dem

Biographical Info:

Age: 46

Occupation / Current Position: Elected, serving second term on the Kalamazoo County Commission. Served as Vice Chair and now Chair.

Education: Associate Degree from Kalamazoo Valley Community College

Experience & Qualifications: (Re)Elected to serve four terms on the Kalamazoo City Commission 2007-2014. Seasoned community organizer, experienced policy maker,

Campaign Email: Stephny4@yahoo.com

Campaign Facebook Page: <http://Facebook.com/Commissioner Stephanie Mooore>

Campaign Phone: (269) 547-9002

Questions:

Q: How will your talents, experience and skills enable you to succeed in your work as a Commissioner to improve the quality of life for residents of Kalamazoo County?

A: My 11 years of political experience has prepared me to continue success in serving the constituents of district one and all of Kalamazoo county. My experience includes drafting and approving local city policies and ordinances, and reviewing and approving annual city and county budgets. I continue to promote strong community relationships for improvement of health, safety and quality of life for all citizens. I continue to support and encourage the creation of economic development strategies through the county and region. I continue to serve as a key representative for district 1 by identifying gaps and recommending equitable strategies.

Q: What are the two most critical issues facing your District in the next ten years? What actions will you take as a member of the Commission to address them in the next two years?

A: Reduction of Poverty and opportunities which result in Shared Prosperity are priorities for district 1. Working with the Equity task force I am committed to evaluating current county policy with a equity lens specifically related to personnel practices and health and human services polices. I plan to propose equitable polices to address hiring and promoting practices which support diversity and inclusion and I plan to recommend policies which create sustainable programs and initiates which county departments implement daily.

Q: What policies and programs will you promote to enhance citizen engagement in the well-being of our communities and the democratic process?

A: Human Resource policies and those related to Health and Human services, the heartbeat of Kalamazoo country.

Q: How will your political philosophy or platform guide your actions on the Commission?

A: I plan to continue to work in a bipartisan manner to engage all commissioners to best serve all of Kalamazoo county.

Kalamazoo County Commission District 2

Description:

Kalamazoo City precincts 3, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 23, 24

Kalamazoo Township precinct 1

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Term: 2 years

Candidates (choose 1):

Paul Haag

Party: Dem

Biographical Info:

Age: 48

Occupation / Current Position: Union Representative SEIU Healthcare Michigan

Education: M.A. Sustainable Development School for International Training Graduate Institute, Brattleboro, VT. 2013

Experience & Qualifications: US Marine Corps 1987 - 1991. US Peace Corps 1999 - 2001. B.S. Political Science Indiana State University 1995. M.A. Sustainable Development SIT Graduate Institute 2013. More than 20 years experience super bing and managing in a wide range of industries including pharmaceuticals, agricultural, meat processing and organized labor.

Campaign Email: Paul.haag@seiuhealthcaremi.org

Campaign Facebook Page: <http://Community for Paul Haag>

Campaign Phone: (269) 548-9939

Questions:

Q: How will your talents, experience and skills enable you to succeed in your work as a Commissioner to improve the quality of life for residents of Kalamazoo County?

A: Strong team building and collaborative skills coupled with my sincerity and commitment to representing all, especially the most marginalized members of our community, will translate into meaningful accomplishments.

Q: What are the two most critical issues facing your District in the next ten years? What actions will you take as a member of the Commission to address them in the next two years?

A: I will spend all of my available time focused on learning about the evolving needs of my community and plan accordingly.

Q: What policies and programs will you promote to enhance citizen engagement in the well-being of our communities and the democratic process?

A: County ID. End Gerrymandering. End school to prison pipeline. Refocus on the physical environment. Commit to strong public schools.

Q: How will your political philosophy or platform guide your actions on the Commission?

A: My political philosophy is based on equity and justice for all, regardless of race, color, country of origin, religion, ability, orientation, etc. I will serve all with a desire of being inclusive.

Kalamazoo County Commission District 3

Description: Kalamazoo City precincts 2, 4, 12, 19, 22, 25, 26

The Board of Commissioners is the legislative policy-making branch of Kalamazoo County Government. The Board is responsible to the citizens for development and administration of policies and the annual budget. The Board has 11 members who are elected from districts according to population.

Term: 2 years

Candidates (choose 1):

Charley Coss

Party: Rep

Biographical Info:

NO RESPONSE FROM CANDIDATE

Tracy Hall

Party: Dem

Biographical Info:

Age: 46

Occupation / Current Position: Instructor, KVCC, Political Science & Sociology. Instructor, WMU, Gender & Women's Studies

Education: Master of Arts, Political Science, WMU. Bachelor of Arts, Political Science, WMU

Experience & Qualifications: I am currently serving my first term on the Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners. I've been teaching political science courses for 15 years and have a strong intellectual understanding of how local governments work. I also serve on a variety of other boards and committees. As a teacher and an activist I have a proven track record of communicating well with individuals from all walks of life.

Campaign Website: <http://hallforkzoo.com>

Campaign Email: tracy.hall19@gmail.com

Campaign Facebook Page: http://www.facebook.com/tracyhall4kzoo/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel

Campaign Phone: (269) 720-7747

Questions:

Q: How will your talents, experience and skills enable you to succeed in your work as a Commissioner to improve the quality of life for residents of Kalamazoo County?

A: One of the main reasons I ran for public office was to help improve the quality of life for all residents. My professional experience as a college educator provides important guidance and knowledge that directly aids my understanding and my commitment to improve the quality of life for all residents. I bring to the county commission a strong intellectual understanding of the many social problems people face on a daily basis. I also have personal experience, like growing up in poverty or in a family that has been deeply impacted by addiction, that allows me to better understand the many issues people are facing on a more personal level.

Q: What are the two most critical issues facing your District in the next ten years? What actions will you take as a member of the Commission to address them in the next two years?

A: The two most critical issues facing our County, not just in my district, are homelessness and poverty. We have many great organizations and programs throughout the county that directly work on these issues, but the number of individuals that are impacted by them is far too high. The Commission can help address these issues by directing the County to serve as the convener to bring the different local units of government and

organizations together to remove the siloes that may exist, and to work together to create action plans that will address and reduce the number of individuals that are impacted by these two critical issues.

Q: What policies and programs will you promote to enhance citizen engagement in the well-being of our communities and the democratic process?

A: Enhancing citizen engagement is crucial. For far too long many have felt unheard, their vote doesn't matter, or have felt an overall skepticism toward all levels of government. Things are changing though. People are more engaged than ever. It's not uncommon for us to hear from many citizens during "citizen time." I would love to see even more during our meetings. I believe strongly that we need to update and improve many aspects of the democratic process. We should be making it easier for people to vote not harder, allow for "no reason" absentee voting, and early voting. I also strongly support the "voters not politicians" ballot initiative.

Q: How will your political philosophy or platform guide your actions on the Commission?

A: My philosophy has been guiding my actions on the Commission and will continue to do so if I am fortunate to get re-elected. I am working to make Kalamazoo an even better place to live, work, and go to school. While I strongly stand for progressive values, I believe in working across partisan lines, listening to all citizens, and engaging citizens as well. I have had the privilege of working on important issues like the County ID and the Senior Millage. I will continue to work hard on issues that directly impact residents of Kalamazoo County.

Kalamazoo County Commission District 4

Description:

Kalamazoo City precincts 5, 6, 10

Kalamazoo Township precincts 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 12

City of Parchment

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Term: 2 years

Candidates (choose 1):

Shequita Lewis

Party: Dem

Biographical Info:

Age: 32

Occupation / Current Position: Business Owner

Education: Kalamazoo Public Schools. KVCC

Experience & Qualifications: Kalamazoo County Community Action Tripartite Advisory Board. Kalamazoo County Health Equity Social Justice Task Force. Washington Writers Academy PTO.

Campaign Facebook Page: <http://www.facebook.com/Shequita-Lewis-for-Kalamazoo-County-Commissioner-4th-District-253148625421816/>

Questions:

Q: How will your talents, experience and skills enable you to succeed in your work as a Commissioner to improve the quality of life for residents of Kalamazoo County?

A: Being born and raised in Kalamazoo and I have a nice size family, and i also know a lot of people. That has allowed me to be able to connect with different people on different levels and walks of life, and everyone has their own experiences in life. Not only have i had the privilege to learn from my own life experiences, but my life journey has allowed me to learn from other people's life experiences and understanding not just my needs but the needs of others. I Plan to use that information and other data to make decisions that will best suit the residents of Kalamazoo to help make the necessary improvements to the quality of life for ALL.

Q: What are the two most critical issues facing your District in the next ten years? What actions will you take as a member of the Commission to address them in the next two years?

A: Two most critical issues in my District is "Resources" and "housing" and both on so many levels. As a member of the Commission I plan to address these issues by not only helping the decision making to ensure the resources are going where its needed, but making sure it can be accessible to the residents and they actually know that the resources are there. As far as housing goes i want enforce, change, and/or create policy to ensure there is adequate and affordable housing, for renters and home owners alike.

Q: What policies and programs will you promote to enhance citizen engagement in the well-being of our communities and the democratic process?

A: I try to be supportive and promote anything that is positive going on in any community. Especially when the residents are involved as a community and engaged, and the kids in the community can positively benefit from it. I'm all for it. I also plan to be a part of planing a few events in the future to stay connected with the community and make sure that needs are being met, and if not, What are the needs? What are we going to do collectively as unit? Its not always about policy but making sure that everyone is doing their part to build and be a better community as a whole, and meet the needs of the people.

Q: How will your political philosophy or platform guide your actions on the Commission?

A: What's right is what's right and what's wrong is what's wrong. I'm on the side of right. With that being said my actions on the Commission will be guided by what is right and what is most important for the Community. That's it that's all.

Michael A. Seals

Party: Dem

NO RESPONSE FROM CANDIDATE

Kalamazoo County Commission District 5

Description: Alamo Township

Kalamazoo Township precincts 3, 6, 9

Oshtemo Township precincts 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 10

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Term: 2 years

Candidates (choose 1):

Chad Dillon

Party: Rep

NO RESPONSE FROM CANDIDATE

Julie M. Rogers

Party: Dem

Biographical Info:

Age: 42

Occupation / Current Position: Physical Therapist at Borgess Health and current Kalamazoo County Commissioner, 5th District.

Education: Master's in Physical Therapy from Marquette University. Graduate of Mattawan High and Kalamazoo Math & Science Center. Attended many Michigan Association of Counties and National County Conferences.

Experience & Qualifications: 4 term National Association of Counties Health Policy Committee member. Liaison: Kalamazoo County Brownfield Authority, County Economic Development Corp, Workforce Development Board, County Public Arts Commission, County Appointments Committee. Borgess Diversity Council, Chapel Hill United Methodist Church Faith in Action Team. Past: Girls on the Run Coach, West MI Cancer Center board member.

Campaign Website: <http://juliemrogers.com>

Campaign Email: julie@juliemrogers.com

Campaign Facebook Page: <http://www.facebook.com/vote4rogers>

Campaign Phone: (269) 349-3352

Questions:

Q: How will your talents, experience and skills enable you to succeed in your work as a Commissioner to improve the quality of life for residents of Kalamazoo County?

A: I've served 3 terms on the Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners and many County advisory boards. I'm the only Commissioner with a health care background, practicing as a full time physical therapist. A significant part of the county budget is spent on our community health department. Also, I've served 4 terms on the National Association of Counties Health Steering Committee, crafting America's public health policy. I've advocated for Federal workforce development training grants including skilled trades apprenticeship programs. Over 1,500 jobs have been created while I've served on the Kalamazoo County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority.

Q: What are the two most critical issues facing your District in the next ten years? What actions will you take as a member of the Commission to address them in the next two years?

A: JOBS for Kalamazoo are my top priority. I've been working to retain employers and attract new ones. My service on Workforce Development Board and Kalamazoo County Brownfield Authority and Economic Development demonstrates my commitment to job growth. Protecting ESSENTIAL COUNTY SERVICES (public health, road patrol/public safety, infrastructure, veterans services and parks) is critical to Kalamazoo's health and wellbeing. With shrinking Federal dollars for these mandated services, I'll advocate for public-private partnerships, work for sound budget policies and support cost-effective services to stretch our resources as far as possible.

Q: What policies and programs will you promote to enhance citizen engagement in the well-being of our communities and the democratic process?

A: For 6 years, I've held quarterly community coffees to interact with residents. I also publish newsletters, maintain a Commissioner Facebook page and website, and make my personal phone and email publicly available for input. In 2017, my budget amendment put the annual County budget online (a first) for citizens' input. I co-authored a grant awarded to Kalamazoo County & City of Kalamazoo by the MacArthur Foundation aimed at reducing the number of young adults in our jail. I plan to work with law enforcement, judges, prosecutor and community groups to develop goals and benchmarks toward improving this critical area. Our youth are our future!

Q: How will your political philosophy or platform guide your actions on the Commission?

A: Collaboration and compromise are critical to building consensus. While we may not all agree on policy, respecting differences and moving Kalamazoo County forward to solve difficult issues is key. I have introduced several resolutions and policies that have passed either unanimously or with bipartisan support. This year I was one of 23 County leaders chosen nationwide for County Leadership Institute training in Washington, DC. I will share lessons learned with my colleagues while trying to solve key issues. Collaboration with other local governments is also important to the success of our region. I seek local input prior to decision making.

Kalamazoo County Commission District 6

Description: Townships of Cooper, Richland, Ross

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Term: 2 years

Candidates (choose 1):

Ron Kendall

Party: Rep

Biographical Info:

Age: 32

Occupation / Current Position: Legislative Director; Michigan House of Representatives

Education: B.A. Public Policy; Western Michigan University

Experience & Qualifications: First term County Commissioner. Six years in the Michigan Legislature

Campaign Facebook Page: <http://www.facebook.com/ronkendallforcountycommission>

Campaign Phone: (269) 760-0322

Questions:

Q: How will your talents, experience and skills enable you to succeed in your work as a Commissioner to improve the quality of life for residents of Kalamazoo County?

A: I will continue to advocate for the voters of the out county areas. I will work with my colleagues to pursue the best available options for my citizens.

Q: What are the two most critical issues facing your District in the next ten years? What actions will you take as a member of the Commission to address them in the next two years?

A: Continuing to address the long term debt obligations of the county. Fostering a stronger relationship with all municipalities to continue to draw in investment in jobs and housing throughout the county.

Q: What policies and programs will you promote to enhance citizen engagement in the well-being of our communities and the democratic process?

A: I support people attending our meetings and reaching out directly to their commissioner to advocate their position. I will also encourage people to participate in the Citizen Budget Survey located on the county's website at www.kalcounty.com

Q: How will your political philosophy or platform guide your actions on the Commission?

A: I will continue to advocate for fiscal responsibility and living within our means. Being prudent with the resources we have best positions the county now and for years to come.

Kalamazoo County Commission District 7

Description: Townships of Charleston, Climax, Comstock, Wakeshma
City of Galesburg

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Term: 2 years

Candidates (choose 1):

Roger Tuinier

Party: Rep

NO RESPONSE FROM CANDIDATE

Kalamazoo County Commission District 8

Description: Townships of Brady, Pavilion, Prairie Ronde, Schoolcraft
City of Portage precinct 2

The Board of Commissioners is the legislative policy-making branch of Kalamazoo County Government. The Board is responsible to the citizens for development and administration of policies and the annual budget. The Board has 11 members who are elected from districts according to population.

Term: 2 years

Candidates (choose 1):

John Gisler

Party: Rep

Biographical Info:

Age: 74

Occupation / Current Position: County Commissioner - South County

Education: AB Wabash College - Zoology/Chemistry; MBA Syracuse University - Finance

Experience & Qualifications: Kalamazoo County Commissioner 2011-2012 and 2015-2018. Extensive business experience in the pharmaceutical industry, including 14 years as a manager with responsibility for multi-million-dollar budgets.

Campaign Email: jgisler5@comcast.net

Campaign Phone: (269) 323-0259

Questions:

Q: How will your talents, experience and skills enable you to succeed in your work as a Commissioner to improve the quality of life for residents of Kalamazoo County?

A: My years as a manager with budget responsibility, coupled with my MBA in Finance, will enable me to help keep Kalamazoo one of the most fiscally sound counties in Michigan.

Q: What are the two most critical issues facing your District in the next ten years? What actions will you take as a member of the Commission to address them in the next two years?

A: We must learn to prioritize our annual budget. We cannot continue to provide all services to all people all the time. Some services may have to be reduced or even eliminated. Taxes should not be increased.

Q: What policies and programs will you promote to enhance citizen engagement in the well-being of our communities and the democratic process?

A: I will scrutinize every expenditure of taxpayer dollars. I will seek to limit government intrusion into our daily lives and encourage policies that promote personal responsibility and individual liberty.

Q: How will your political philosophy or platform guide your actions on the Commission?

A: I will continue to promote fiscal responsibility and encourage priority-based budgeting. Kalamazoo County is one of the most financially sound of Michigan's 83 counties. We must keep it that way!

Kraig Robert Lee

Party: Rep

Biographical Info:

Age: 47

Occupation / Current Position: Business Manager/ Financial Secretary for the Electrical Workers Local Union

Education: Schoolcraft High School. National Joint Electrical Training Alliance. George Meany College

Experience & Qualifications: I am currently serving as secretary for the Kalamazoo County Building Authority.

Campaign Email: kraigrlee@gmail.com

Campaign Facebook Page: <http://www.facebook.com/kleegreatfor8>

Campaign Phone: (269) 254-4505

Questions:

Q: How will your talents, experience and skills enable you to succeed in your work as a Commissioner to improve the quality of life for residents of Kalamazoo County?

A: My experience as a business manager for a local labor union has afforded me an unique perspective of the benefits of working together to achieve common goals. Through several contract negotiations, I have always been able to articulate my viewpoints successfully. I am confident that I can take these skills to the county level to find working solutions.

Q: What are the two most critical issues facing your District in the next ten years? What actions will you take as a member of the Commission to address them in the next two years?

A: As the number of older adults increasing become a larger portion of the county's population, we need to strengthen programs that will ensure their opportunities to retiree with dignity and stay in their homes longer. I support the upcoming small millage on the August ballot to raise more than \$2 million. This millage will help support older adults and their families. Partisan extremists have not served the residents of our county at all. An unwillingness to compromise has failed to move our county forward. There are many great things that can be accomplished by working together and keeping the benefits of all residents as the end goal.

Q: What policies and programs will you promote to enhance citizen engagement in the well-being of our communities and the democratic process?

A: I believe we need to restore transparency and trust to our county government. The more we engage residents and include them in strategic planning the more ownership they feel. There are many social media platforms that could be better utilized to deliver our message. Couple that with face to face meetings such as monthly coffee hours. The more community involvement, the better off we all are.

Q: How will your political philosophy or platform guide your actions on the Commission?

A: I have been a life long resident of the south county, and there have been many small-town values instilled in me. One of those many values has been not only to help your neighbor, but also to listen and understand their point of view. If given the opportunity I will take these values to the county level and work with all members of our community to improve the quality of life throughout Kalamazoo County.

Cody Dekker

Party: Dem

Biographical Info:

Age: 33

Occupation / Current Position: I currently Deliver Flowers and work in the Greenhouse at VanderSalm's Flowershop and Garden Center.

Education: I was educated in K-12 at Vicksburg Public Schools. I attended Columbia College Chicago with a concentration in Film. I have recently been accepted to WMU and plan on continuing my education.

Experience & Qualifications: I have been fighting to improve the quality of life for others and standing up for those undervalued and unheard my entire life. I have worked since 16, jobs from busboy to political organizer, from childcare worker to delivery driver. I have worked hard to ensure that the promise of this country for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness is fulfilled to all of the people in this nation.

Campaign Email: codydekker@gmail.com

Campaign Facebook Page: <http://www.facebook.com/Cody-Dekker-for-Kalamazoo-County-Commission-349262298596517/>

Campaign Phone: (269) 779-3665

Questions:

Q: How will your talents, experience and skills enable you to succeed in your work as a Commissioner to improve the quality of life for residents of Kalamazoo County?

A: In my 33 years I have risen through adversity, loss, and struggle. Through these experiences I have developed and built up skills including, perseverance and resilience, compassion and empathy, courage and strength, and problem solving. I am a naturally social leader who builds close personal relationships with individuals of every diverse background. I am a bridge builder. I have been fighting for fairness and equality in Kalamazoo County my entire life. All of these things will make me an effective County Commissioner who will work with all commissioners to end partisan grid lock and improve quality of life in District 8 And the county

Q: What are the two most critical issues facing your District in the next ten years? What actions will you take as a member of the Commission to address them in the next two years?

A: Above all I will listen and concur with my constituents about the issues that are most critical to them. I think the upcoming Senior Millage vote is an incredibly important action. We live in a society with no excuse for the current treatment of some of our most vulnerable citizens and I will work to fix that. I also think that we are at a critical tipping point regarding the health of our planet. Without it nothing matters. I will work to foster more sustainable, green, economically healthy agriculture. This will improve the health and well being of residents, the environment and the economy, in District 8 and Kalamazoo County.

Q: What policies and programs will you promote to enhance citizen engagement in the well-being of our communities and the democratic process?

A: I support and will fight for crucial reform to the democratic process to create more authentic engagement, including no reason absentee voting, making election day a holiday, voting on multiple days, fixing gerrymandering, holding frequent meetings and town halls with constituents, and public finance reform. Another vital policy I support and will fight for is the senior millage. There is no acceptable amount of delay, or lack of care and services for some of our most vulnerable residents. I believe that these policies are also consistent with the will and values of the residents of District 8. .

Q: How will your political philosophy or platform guide your actions on the Commission?

A: My political and personal life philosophy is that decent, kind people will create decent, kind policies, laws and budgets. I will bring compassion, compromise, and relationship building to the work of the Commission. I have a philosophy of open and transparent government so I will always connect with and be honest and straight forward with the people of district 8 and Kalamazoo County. I believe that we are only as well as the least well off of us and I will always fight and advocate for policies that improve and protect the quality of life of our residents. I know that we can always make progress and will consistently strive to do that.

Kalamazoo County Commission District 9

Description: Texas Township

Oshtemo Township precincts 4, 5, 7, 8

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Term: 2 years

Candidates (choose 1):

Brian Kovacik

Party: **Rep**

NO RESPONSE FROM CANDIDATE

Dale Shugars

Party: Rep

Biographical Info:

Age: 65

Occupation / Current Position: Dale Shugars, CPA, CAE, Management and Consulting Services

Education: BBA- Western Michigan University, 1975, Majors in Accountancy and Political Science. Graduate of Portage Northern High School, 1971

Experience & Qualifications: County Commissioner, 4 years. State Senator, 8 years. State Representative, 4 years. Portage City Council Member, Mayor Pro Tem, 7 years. Former Small Business Owner. Treasurer and Secretary of the Michigan Fitness Foundation. Member of MICPA- PAC, Kalamazoo Area Runners. Former Board Member of Urban Alliance, MRC, Boys Scouts. Two-time Recipient of MSAE Key Award for Leadership.

Campaign Email: dalelshugars@gmail.com

Campaign Phone: (269) 207-5275

Questions:

Q: How will your talents, experience and skills enable you to succeed in your work as a Commissioner to improve the quality of life for residents of Kalamazoo County?

A: With nearly twenty-three years experience serving the Kalamazoo Area (as a Portage City Council Member, MI State Representative, MI State Senator, County Commissioner) I have gained valuable experience and understanding of the laws, politics and dynamics of the townships, cities, villages and the County governments. This experience is extremely important as we work to improve governmental services while increasing their efficiencies. Having the knowledge and a trusted relationship with all levels of government is important as the region continues to grow.

Q: What are the two most critical issues facing your District in the next ten years? What actions will you take as a member of the Commission to address them in the next two years?

A: 1. There is a growing demand for a County Park on the west side of the County to service the citizens in that area. The Parks Director and the Parks Commission have been working on this goal and the Commission needs to continue to help and support their efforts. 2. The financing of the 911 Consolidated Dispatch Authority will run out in four years from the PSAPs. We need to work with all townships, cities, and citizens to develop a sustainable funding model after the PSAPs are no longer contributing (total approximately \$5.5 million a year)!

Q: What policies and programs will you promote to enhance citizen engagement in the well-being of our communities and the democratic process?

A: I will promote respect of all people through kindness and engagement (listening and interacting through constructive dialogue). We may not all agree on everything but we can agree to listen and be respectful of all. Commissioner John Gisler suggested a Citizens Budget Survey a couple of years ago and this year the County has begun the first such survey. As elected officials being accessible and approachable is a high priority of mine.

Q: How will your political philosophy or platform guide your actions on the Commission?

A: My servant leadership is conducive for bringing people together in solving problems facing the County through listening to everyone. I have a seasoned perspective of governance, the Commission (the policy making body) hires the Administrator (responsible for the daily operations) and we both work as a team leading the County government within the laws of the State and Federal governments and with all citizen input. We need individuals with leadership experience and the desire to listen to all citizens in developing policy and budget for local issues and priorities in spending. I have the experience and skills to accomplish these objectives

Christine Morse

Party: Dem

Biographical Info:

Age: 45

Occupation / Current Position: Attorney (retired). Student in KVCC's Culinary Arts Program. Community activist.

Education: J.D. Wayne State University Law School; B.A. in Political Science Michigan State University; Current student of KVCC's Culinary Arts Program

Experience & Qualifications: My background is in politics, law, charitable organizations and more recently community activism. I have a husband with a small business and three children in Portage Public Schools. I have lived on both coasts, Japan, Chicago, and the east side of Michigan. I want to help make my chosen home town the absolute best it can be for its citizens now and in the future.

Campaign Email: morsechristine@hotmail.com

Campaign Facebook Page: <http://www.facebook.com/vote4Morse>

Campaign Phone: (269) 743-9634

Questions:

Q: How will your talents, experience and skills enable you to succeed in your work as a Commissioner to improve the quality of life for residents of Kalamazoo County?

A: To me, the most important aspects of being a County Commissioner include: educating our constituents on what the Board of Commissioners provides to the community; learning from our constituents what is important to them in terms of county management; and putting those ideas into action. Educating and learning require communication skills. I am a people person first and foremost. I truly enjoy getting to know new people from all walks of life. This skill will serve to provide District 9's constituents with a responsive Commissioner who respects their opinions.

Q: What are the two most critical issues facing your District in the next ten years? What actions will you take as a member of the Commission to address them in the next two years?

A: For District 9, I believe the critical issues include continued business growth and development as well as promotion of all of the wonderful assets our District already offers. In recent years, Texas Corners and Oshtemo have been experiencing growth in both large and small businesses that create a sense of community and convenience that our residents enjoy. People generally value having local choices for shopping, dining, recreation and working. As a Commissioner, I will work to promote District 9 as an attractive location for businesses big and small to provide options for our residents for both work and play.

Q: What policies and programs will you promote to enhance citizen engagement in the well-being of our communities and the democratic process?

A: If elected, I will hold monthly meetings in District 9 with the intent of informing the constituents of the Board's recent activity. Additionally, said meetings will give constituents an opportunity to raise issues relevant to the County as well as any concerns they may have. Through my Facebook site, I will continue to promote County activities as well as encourage any questions or comments the constituents have concerning County activities. I would also like to highlight the incredibly diverse programs and entities that the County provides and supports through Facebook postings to raise awareness as to all that the County does.

Q: How will your political philosophy or platform guide your actions on the Commission?

A: My goal for serving on the the Board of Commissioners is to provide a responsive, listening ear to the people I will serve. We have to use the available information to determine what will most benefit the majority of the people we serve. What the people want is more important than my personal stake in any particular issue or for any future political aspirations I may have. I also think that the Board should avoid becoming so partisan on every issue. We are all neighbors. I believe on most issues, we can find common ground. The principles of cooperation and collaboration will inform my actions as a Commissioner if I am elected.

Kalamazoo County Commission District 10

Description: City of Portage precincts 1, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 18

The Board of Commissioners is the legislative policy-making branch of Kalamazoo County Government. The Board is responsible to the citizens for development and administration of policies and the annual budget. The Board has 11 members who are elected from districts according to population.

Term: 2 years

Candidates (choose 1):

Nasim Ansari

Party: Rep

Biographical Info:

Age: 71

Occupation / Current Position: Retired; community service

Education: MS, MBA

Experience & Qualifications: Kal County Commissioner, Portage Mayor Pro Tem, Portage City Council member, Member Kal County Planning Cmte, Vice Chair Inter-governmental Coop Cmte, Parks and Rec Commissioner, Board of Directors Convention and Visitation Bureau, Board Member Portage Community Center, President Portage Small Business Assoc, Retired local govt employee, member Kalamazoo County Aeronautics Board, Adjunct Professor

Campaign Website: <http://nasimansari.com>

Campaign Email: nasimhansari@yahoo.com

Campaign Facebook Page: <http://www.facebook.com/17YearsOfServiceAndCounting/>

Campaign Phone: (269) 327-0016

Questions:

Q: How will your talents, experience and skills enable you to succeed in your work as a Commissioner to improve the quality of life for residents of Kalamazoo County?

A: As in the past, my experience on the Kalamazoo County Commission, the Portage City Council and multiple county and city boards will once again be an asset to the County Board of Commissioners. As a retired local government employee, a small business owner and adjunct professor, I am fortunate to have the leadership, administrative and personal relations skills necessary to serve effectively on the Board. I strive to be a compassionate public servant and a good listener.

Q: What are the two most critical issues facing your District in the next ten years? What actions will you take as a member of the Commission to address them in the next two years?

A: With such excellent success, the greatest opportunity lies in maintaining this pace of success while finding efficiencies to strike a balance between economic growth and a high quality of life for all citizens. Attracting talent is always a goal in our region. The units of government should focus on place-based development to attract and retain a strong workforce. There are opportunities for mixed-use housing. In case Crossroads mall were to follow the suit of closing like in other places in the country, I foresee the redevelopment of the area as a City Center with mixed-use housing.

Q: What policies and programs will you promote to enhance citizen engagement in the well-being of our communities and the democratic process?

A: Communication has been the cornerstone of effective citizen engagement. Through my years serving the public my accessibility and open lines of communication have and will continue to forge a smooth understanding of all issues at hand. On a more specific level, outcomes can only be determined when there is a complete understanding of all viewpoints. The Kalamazoo Gazette published an editorial in which I was recognized as a “bridge builder”.

Q: How will your political philosophy or platform guide your actions on the Commission?

A: Serving the very community that has welcomed me with open arms from day 1 is and remains my greatest opportunity and passion. One value I feel strongly about is maintaining wide-open transparency – especially with respect to decisions and actions that impact our community. Further, I have always maintained a firm distaste for frivolous politics that stray from the issues at hand. Through the years and till today, this viewpoint I hold is something our community has considered a valuable asset to our local government.

Steve Carra

Party: Rep

Biographical Info:

Age: 29

Occupation / Current Position: Legislative Aide for State Representative Steve Johnson.

Education: Graduated from PNHS in 2007 and WMU in 2011 with degrees in economics and political science and a minor in mathematics.

Experience & Qualifications: After pursuing degrees in economics and political science, I did research assistance at Acton Institute in Grand Rapids. My time there helped organize my thoughts and strengthen my Christian convictions while simultaneously understanding and embracing the concepts of liberty and the proper role of government.

Campaign Website: <http://www.facebook.com/SteveCarra4KalamazooCounty/>

Campaign Email: stephencarra@gmail.com

Campaign Facebook Page: <http://www.facebook.com/SteveCarra4KalamazooCounty/>

Campaign Phone: (269) 267-4641

Questions:

Q: How will your talents, experience and skills enable you to succeed in your work as a Commissioner to improve the quality of life for residents of Kalamazoo County?

A: I believe in less government and more freedom. With each vote and consideration I take, I will consider whether it increases the size and scope of government and whether or not it restricts the actions of people in their individual lives. I have socially conservative values including profound respect for the sanctity of life. I also understand and respect your rights which are given to you by our Creator. With my youth, energy and innovative mind, I will be successful in protecting and restoring your God given rights.

Q: What are the two most critical issues facing your District in the next ten years? What actions will you take as a member of the Commission to address them in the next two years?

A: I stand on the side of freedom. Although I am supportive of having public safety and an enforced rule of law, I feel as though people are too frequently treated as guilty until proven innocent. I will also stand on the side of the taxpayer. Less taxes means more freedom to spend your money as you see fit. In general, I believe you know what's best for you and your family and I want to protect your ability to keep more of your hard earned money. Over the next 10 years I will consistently fight to defend your freedom and to lower your taxes.

Q: What policies and programs will you promote to enhance citizen engagement in the well-being of our communities and the democratic process?

A: I will hold monthly office hours to give people the chance to come and share their thoughts and concerns with me. I pledge to be accessible and transparent. Good governance is of, by and for the people and you deserve to be heard throughout the process. In addition to being accessible to you, I will explain each of my

votes and post them on social media. I hope to engage the public in the decision making process. Everyone drops a pearl, a wise man picks them up. I don't have all the answers and I want to hear what you believe will enhance the well-being of the community. Together, we can make good policy for our community.

Q: How will your political philosophy or platform guide your actions on the Commission?

A: Grounded in the principles of constitutional conservatism, I will respect all tax payers, not just the ones who want special treatment. I am for lower taxes across the board, not just for special interests. So each vote I take, I will be looking out for the interest of the people at-large. With less government and more freedom as a philosophy, the decision making process is left more locally to the community and families to discern what is in their best interest. That's what I believe in and I want to restore your opportunity to pursue your happiness as you see fit.

Mike Quinn

Party: Dem

Biographical Info:

Age: 71

Occupation / Current Position: Co-owner with my wife of Shamrock Montessori

Education: M.S. Statistics, WMU 1998. B.A. Applied Mathematics, WMU 1991. H.S. Diploma, Loy Norris 1965.

Experience & Qualifications: Two terms on County Commission. Nine years on County Veterans Committee. Four years on Portage Board of Review. Peace Corps Volunteer, Nicaragua 1975-77. Marine Corps Viet Nam veteran. Co-owner of small business for 33 years.

Campaign Email: mikedquinn@sbcglobal.net

Campaign Phone: (269) 267-2880

Questions:

Q: How will your talents, experience and skills enable you to succeed in your work as a Commissioner to improve the quality of life for residents of Kalamazoo County?

A: My life orientation is toward service: in the Marine Corps in war, in the Peace Corps in natural resource development, in small business as a preschool owner, and in local government. These experiences, often challenging, have been formative. I have learned the value of initiative and persistence, and strive to work with others to muster all available resources against the problems we face. I have found ideology to be a poor guide for action; far better to keep an open mind, listen to people, study the problems, and pray for wisdom.

Q: What are the two most critical issues facing your District in the next ten years? What actions will you take as a member of the Commission to address them in the next two years?

A: District 10 is one of the more fortunate and prosperous districts in the county. Portage city government deserves a lot of credit for that, and for economic development. The foresight and generosity of Portage voters maintains great public schools in this city. However, mental health and substance abuse issues, senior issues, and food insecurity for some are problems to be worked on here. County programs directed to these issues should be equally available to all residents in need of them, and at convenient times and accessible locations.

Q: What policies and programs will you promote to enhance citizen engagement in the well-being of our communities and the democratic process?

A: Kalamazoo County government has quite a number of citizen boards and committees corresponding to the multitude of county activities. By and large, these boards and committees are populated by citizens with keen interest and some expertise in the relevant issues. County government would do well to hear from them more often, and to give more weight to their recommendations before taking actions. Showing respect to those unpaid volunteers in that way could do a lot to encourage their continued engagement.

Q: How will your political philosophy or platform guide your actions on the Commission?

A: Resources should be directed to improve the social safety nets for those most in need of aid and services: children, adults, and elderly in poverty, the homeless, the mentally ill, and those with substance abuse problems, among others. To say that it costs too much in taxes to help the vulnerable is bogus. The costs, direct and indirect, of leaving people in the street are much higher than the costs to get them into stable housing. Putting elderly into nursing homes costs way more than helping them stay in their own homes. Ignoring the mentally ill and addicted is far more expensive than effective treatment programs.

Kalamazoo County Commission District 11

Description: City of Portage precincts 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 15, 17, 20

The Board of Commissioners is the legislative policy-making branch of Kalamazoo County Government. The Board is responsible to the citizens for development and administration of policies and the annual budget. The Board has 11 members who are elected from districts according to population.

Term: 2 years

Candidates (choose 1):

Scott McGraw

Party: Rep

Biographical Info:

Age: 57

Occupation / Current Position: Kalamazoo County Commissioner, 11th District

Education: B.A., English, Western Michigan University. Portage Central High School

Experience & Qualifications: Current county commissioner for 11th District for the past two terms. Small business owner for 20+ years, member of Portage Rotary Club, Kalamazoo County Farm Bureau, Michigan Press Association, Kalamazoo Gospel Mission Board of Directors, Discover Kalamazoo, governmental lake boards for Austin, Long and Gourdneck Lakes, Chair of Kalamazoo GOP, Secretary of 6D GOP, attend Portage Radiant Church.

Campaign Website: <http://www.scottmcgraw.vote>

Campaign Email: scott@scottmcgraw.vote

Campaign Phone: (269) 548-7004

Questions:

Q: How will your talents, experience and skills enable you to succeed in your work as a Commissioner to improve the quality of life for residents of Kalamazoo County?

A: Having grown up in Portage and returned here to raise my family, I have a prospective that helps in representing the people of this area. My professional acumen is in management and communications. As a small business owner for more than 20 years, I have the abilities and experience to help guide the county forward during these difficult times. I will continue to work hard for Kalamazoo County to keep our county government running effectively and make it responsive to the citizens. We all deserve a government that is dedicated to service and accountable with our tax dollars.

Q: What are the two most critical issues facing your District in the next ten years? What actions will you take as a member of the Commission to address them in the next two years?

A: The plunging property values within our core city and ineffective programs and services. I have supported a re-investment program by the county to help redevelop blighted and vacant land as taxable properties in the city. I am on the building advisory committee for the new county complex and our desire is to see a new courthouse developed in the downtown around property that is prime for future development, spurring \$100 million+ in new values. Our old courthouse has been sold and will come back on the tax rolls. The county has helped nurture a new hotel downtown, expanding on to our former property behind the county building

Q: What policies and programs will you promote to enhance citizen engagement in the well-being of our communities and the democratic process?

A: I believe in Freedom of Speech and support the county's policies regarding that. I encourage citizens to express their opinions, but it isn't a burden for every citizen to attend the BOC meetings. I meet daily with people in my district and throughout the county to gather their input and know the pulse within the

community. That is a burden the commissioners should bear. I participate on many board and committees to help the county connect with its citizenry. As commissioners, we need to engage with our citizenry and be their voice in county government. I have taken on a commitment of dozens of committees to ensure those values.

Q: How will your political philosophy or platform guide your actions on the Commission?

A: I believe strongly in something that former President Ronald Reagan once said, "Government's first duty is to protect the people, not run their lives." Too often, our government (at all levels) is trying to control the lives of its citizens through regulation, laws and taxes. I believe in lower taxes, less government and personal freedom. That's not as impactful at the county level, but can still be relevant. Our focus should be on the people of the county and what affects them. As commissioners, we need to make sure we have the best and brightest people employed and engaged at the county and we need to support administration to lead them.

Meredith Place

Party: Dem

Biographical Info:

Age: 29

Occupation / Current Position: Contract Administrator, Clerical-Technical Union of MSU

Education: University of Iowa, BA (2012). Majors: Political Science and Communications Studies. Certificate: Sustainability

Experience & Qualifications: Commissioner, Planning Commission, City of Portage; Vice-Chair, Environmental Health Advisory Council, Kalamazoo County; Member, League of Women Voters Kalamazoo-Area; 2nd Vice-Chair, Executive Board Member, Kalamazoo County Democratic Party; Treasurer, Michigan Democratic Party 6th District Federal Committee; State Central Delegate, Michigan Democratic Party

Campaign Website: <http://www.facebook.com/vote4meredith/>

Campaign Email: vote4meredith@gmail.com

Campaign Facebook Page: <http://www.facebook.com/vote4meredith/>

Campaign Phone: (319) 775-2395

Questions:

Q: How will your talents, experience and skills enable you to succeed in your work as a Commissioner to improve the quality of life for residents of Kalamazoo County?

A: My service on numerous public boards as well as institutional knowledge from my husband, who served 14 years on the county board, prepares me to hit the ground running as a County Commissioner. I currently serve on the Portage Planning Commission; I am Vice-Chair on the Environmental Health Advisory Council for Kalamazoo County, a member of the League of Women Voters, and I am leader in multiple organizations in my community. By staying active in my community and continuing to build relationships with individuals across the county, I bring valuable insight to the position with solutions to problems the county is currently facing.

Q: What are the two most critical issues facing your District in the next ten years? What actions will you take as a member of the Commission to address them in the next two years?

A: As a Commissioner, I will focus on issues related to revenue distribution and economic development. Counties are receiving less funding from the federal and state government. Yet we still need to provide essential services to our community. I will address these shortfalls by taking an active role in the budget process, collaborating with other communities, and building public-private partnerships. I will take a multifaceted approach to facilitating growth in our community through strategic partnerships with economic development engines like Southwest Michigan First to partnering with neighborhood associations on neighborhood beautification.

Q: What policies and programs will you promote to enhance citizen engagement in the well-being of our communities and the democratic process?

A: As a Commissioner, I will work to make the budget process more collaborative and transparent through district meetings, distribution of a multi-media budget survey, and information sharing. To encourage citizen participation, I will tirelessly promote advisory boards and committees to the public and all civic-minded organizations. The experiences I have gained through serving on advisory boards is invaluable; I believe those who serve not only gain a better understanding of how government works but provide necessary perspectives needed to address real issues facing our community.

Q: How will your political philosophy or platform guide your actions on the Commission?

A: I believe that in a democracy all citizens deserve to have a seat at the table. Before I ask someone to vote for me, I will ask them what they care about most and how they want to be represented. Government is a collection of our community's values and should reflect the best of us. The board needs a Commissioner who will listen and who bring back the focus from playing politics to building a community we are all proud to call home.

Local Proposals

Kalamazoo County Senior Millage Proposal

Description:

For the purpose of creating a local fund to provide education, safety, dignity, independence, home services, and healthy living programs to Kalamazoo County residents age 60 and older (Seniors) using the Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department to improve the quality of living for our Seniors, shall the limitations on the total amount of taxes which may be levied against taxable property within Kalamazoo County, Michigan, as provided for by Section 6 of Article IX of the Michigan Constitution of 1963, be increased up to the amount of \$0.35 per thousand dollars of taxable valuation (.35 mills) for a period of six years, beginning with the December 1, 2018 levy and extending through the 2023 levy, which shall raise in the first year an estimated \$2,829,252.

Additional information:

- The proposed increase in Kalamazoo County property taxes will cost up to \$35 a year for a home with a taxable value of \$100,000.
- Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department will administer the funds, while local agencies will deliver the services to qualified seniors.

Yes - For the Measure

No - Against the Measure