

## **Voter Guide – Lee County and Local Races Primary Election – August 23, 2022**

(print download version from [www.vote411.org](http://www.vote411.org) as of 8/10/2022)

[Cape Coral City Council](#) Districts 1 and 4  
[Fort Myers City Council](#) Ward 3  
[Lee County Clerk](#)  
[Lee County Commissioner](#)  
[Lee County Court Judge](#)  
[Lee County School Board](#) Districts 1, 4, 5, 6

### **Lee County Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller**

#### **Lee County Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller**

**Clerk of the Circuit Court.** The Clerk's primary function is to safeguard the integrity of all court records. The Clerk processes and makes available to the public all case documents, such as civil lawsuits, traffic tickets, and criminal cases. The Clerk is also responsible for managing jurors, maintaining case evidence, processing bail and submitting appeals to state appellate courts.

**County Recorder.** The Clerk records, processes and maintains all Official Records of Lee County dating back to 1887 when the county was founded. Mortgages, deeds, wills, marriage licenses, and liens are some of the many public records made available online. Citizens can also apply for their U.S. passport at the Clerk's office.

**County Chief Financial Officer.** As Comptroller, the Clerk is responsible for managing the budget and accounting of the Board of County Commissioners. To ensure proper government oversight, all county expenses are audited prior to being disbursed. The Clerk also invests and earns revenue on tax dollars.

**Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners.** The Clerk prepares and maintains the records and meeting minutes of the Board of County Commissioners. The Value Adjustment Board, which property owners use to contest their assessed property value, is also administered by the Clerk.

Source: <https://www.leeclerk.org/about-us/role-of-the-clerk>

#### **Kevin Karnes**

**Party:** Rep

**Biographical Info:**

**Why are you running for office and what do you hope to accomplish?** -no response-

**What are the most important challenges facing this office and how do you propose to address them?**  
-no response-

**How do you plan to operate effectively, efficiently, and economically while continuing to maintain customer service?** -no response-

**What plans do you have to address the issues faced by returning citizens?** -no response-

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?** -no response-

*The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan citizens' organization working to improve our government and engage all citizens in the decisions that impact their lives. The League's voter services activities provide unbiased, factual, information that can be used to understand the election process and to reach voting decisions.*

**The League of Women Voters does not support or oppose candidates and/or political parties.**

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## **Liza King**



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**Why are you running for office and what do you hope to accomplish?** I am running to serve as your next Lee County Clerk of the Circuit Court in order to utilize my experience, expertise and abilities to best serve the employees and citizens of Lee County. I commit to focusing on enhancing customer service (in person, via the telephone and on line), ensuring the responsible implementation of technology and that our taxpayer dollars are utilized wisely. I have a combined 29 years of experience both within the clerk's office and outside of the clerk's office. The majority of my career has been in a leadership capacity. This office requires solid leadership in order to get a handle of the organization's operations and fiscal efficiency.

**What are the most important challenges facing this office and how do you propose to address them?**

The two greatest challenges at this time are an increase in the county's population and a decrease in workforce resources. The main priority is to re-align the office's priorities so as to emphasize on the core essential services of the office. Simultaneous to this, cross-training and the use of technology will assist in providing the highest quality of services to the citizens of Lee County.

**How do you plan to operate effectively, efficiently, and economically while continuing to maintain customer service?**

By shifting and re-aligning priorities. Currently, the focus is on continuing to grow, expand and spend taxpayer dollars. Unfortunately, core essential functions such as customer service are lacking. My commitment is to ensure that customer service is our top priority. I am a trusted leader with proven results throughout my entire career. I am able to accomplish the re-aligning of priorities for this office's benefit and accomplish said goals. I am excited about working alongside of all of the valuable employees throughout the organization. The structure is in place, the only component missing is an experience and trusted leader.

**What plans do you have to address the issues faced by returning citizens?** My plans are to have a fluid relationship and work with community agencies such as Florida Right Restoration Coalition and the Homeless Coalition to find resources and solutions that are aimed at success for individuals that continue to cycle through the system. Community partnerships and collaboration are a must.

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?** The Lee County Tax Collector-enhancing partnerships to provide the most efficient customer service experience. Specifically as it relates to driver's license matters. The partnership should be geared towards providing the most user friendly experience for the community.

The Judiciary-find reasonable technology solutions that are aimed at making technology work for the people and not the other way. Technology that produces the results that are intended. Technology solutions that provide efficiency. The Lee County Property Appraiser and Tax Collector-to enhance partnership to find innovative solutions to avoid property fraud before it occurs. Again, proactive measures as opposed to the current reactive measures.

## Lee County Commissioner District 5

The five-member Board of County Commissioners is the legislative and governing body of Lee County, Florida. Each County Commissioner is elected at large for a maximum of three, four-year terms of office. Each Commissioner represents and resides in one of the five Commission Districts. The Board elects a Chair who serves as its presiding officer. The County Manager, the County Attorney, and the Hearing Examiner report to the County Commissioners. The County Manager is appointed by and serves under contract to the Board. This official is directly responsible to the Board for administration and operation of the County's departments, and for the execution of all Board policies. Source: extracted from <https://www.leegov.com/bocc>

### John Albion



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**Why are you running for this position and what do you hope to accomplish?** I held the seat from 1992-2006 (Frank Mann succeeded me). With the remainder of the term being only two years, I can hit the ground running. The key issues are infrastructure, water, and quality of life. I put in many hours when I was a commissioner in these areas working directly to bring in more than \$40 Million for roads and over \$10 million in environmentally sensitive land grants. I was also involved in creating a Regional Water Supply Authority. We need to work on a solution to move Lehigh Acres properties off septic, more improvements for releases from Lake Okeechobee and expand grants to convert from septic to sewer for waterfront properties. I can work with this board to build partnerships for solutions. My key points are to create a balance between a strong economy and the environment to improve our quality of life.

**What specific ideas do you have to increase the supply and quality of affordable housing and to preserve existing affordable housing?** We should look closer at our public transportation transfer stations for opportunities for apartments nearby. Besides the usual possibilities, such as greater density, we need to create roads like Alico Extension to SR 82 and Sunshine to particularly cut down on drive times to and from Lehigh Acres by possibly as much as half. I would like to see a task force created with some of our larger employers to come up with better solutions. We also need to find and utilize all grant and loan program dollars and then make sure people know what is available. Also, we should consider lower (or even waive) impact fees to reduce costs to affordable housing developers.

**With respect to preemption and home rule, is the relationship and balance of power between state and local governments in Florida appropriately addressing local issues? If not, how should it be redefined?**

A. I believe the state is trying to address local issues. More effort can be done.

B. If there are costs being passed down from the state to any local governments, then the state should be responsible to pay for what they are additionally required unless the new expectations are for proper implementation of an already existing local requirement in the state statutes.

**Do you support a Lee County Children's Services Council? Why or why not?**

I would consider a Children's Services Council if there is buy-in from other affected elected offices. There must be a shared vision with measurable goals. I am concerned about the effects of the pandemic on children and their families and now the effects on families regarding the economy. Children can become victims. Such a council will not receive my support to be another bureaucratic layer or a mere "feel good" entity. There must be commitment and with an aggressive goal for an effective plan.

**Do you support payment of the full calculated impact fee? Why or why not?** I have supported impact fees in the past. I also agreed with eliminating and then limiting impact fees to get our economy going. Over the next two years, impact fees will be an issue because of the downturn in the economy we have begun to see in the market. With much higher costs for labor and materials, there is less room for builders to make money. There are also effects that reach our workforce, affordable housing, and jobs. We must find the best ways (balance) to meet the demand without really hurting our workforce.

**What leadership would you provide to protect water quality and water resources in Lee County, including sea level rise, saltwater intrusion, use of herbicides, etc.?** I would back Commissioner Ruane's and Governor DeSantis's efforts, especially regarding water releases from Lake Okeechobee and their position on greater water releases made to the south. I would also support Representative Botano's efforts to expand on the over \$6 million in funding he achieved, and Governor DeSantis signed, for funding to further convert septic for waterfront houses to a central sewer system for homes along the Caloosahatchee River. I will work with Lee County Utilities to try to come up with a plan to move Lehigh Acres toward a central water and sewer system (from septic and wells) and at what point ownership can make sense by Lee County Utilities from the current FGUA. We need to expand the efforts of Lee County Extension services for greater efficiency of water use and reduce the use of herbicides and pesticides along with greater promotion of drip irrigation on farms.

**What efforts would you make to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion in Lee County funded contracts, employment, and services, e.g., transportation, health?** I would work with the Office of Economic Development and direct staff to further this goal. We already have local builders' preference where if a local company is within 3% of the lowest bid (if from an out-of-county company), then we can accept the local company's bid. We could further consider how we reach out and other advantages for companies that meet this intent so long as tax dollars are not much compromised.

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?** Partnerships. We have a great partnership with Hendry County for our garbage and recycling programs. We have worked well in the past with Collier County for roads like Three Oaks Parkway to Imperial. We have worked with all of the municipalities on road projects including landscaping. I will work as a high priority to further these partnerships for flow ways, environmental systems, habitat, transportation, and good planning for a strong economy for all Lee County Citizens. Transportation. Access to jobs, schools, services, quality of life needs. We must work on maximizing capacity and reducing trip times to have a more healthy county. Water quality. We must work together for a more comprehensive approach to make sure releases from Lake Okeechobee stop hurting our estuaries while working together to reduce other pollutants from septic, farms other discharges into our waterways.

## **Joseph R Gambino**

**Party:** Rep

**Biographical Info:**

**Why are you running for this position and what do you hope to accomplish?** -no response-

**What specific ideas do you have to increase the supply and quality of affordable housing and to preserve existing affordable housing?** -no response-

**With respect to preemption and home rule, is the relationship and balance of power between state and local governments in Florida appropriately addressing local issues? If not, how should it be redefined?**  
-no response-

**Do you support a Lee County Children's Services Council? Why or why not?** -no response-

**Do you support payment of the full calculated impact fee? Why or why not?** -no response-

**What leadership would you provide to protect water quality and water resources in Lee County, including sea level rise, saltwater intrusion, use of herbicides, etc.?** -no response-

**What efforts would you make to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion in Lee County funded contracts, employment, and services, e.g., transportation, health?** -no response-

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?** -no response-

## **Michael L Greenwell**

**Party:** Rep

**Biographical Info:**

**Why are you running for this position and what do you hope to accomplish?** -no response-

**What specific ideas do you have to increase the supply and quality of affordable housing and to preserve existing affordable housing?** -no response-

**With respect to preemption and home rule, is the relationship and balance of power between state and local governments in Florida appropriately addressing local issues? If not, how should it be redefined?**  
-no response-

**Do you support a Lee County Children's Services Council? Why or why not?** -no response-

**Do you support payment of the full calculated impact fee? Why or why not?** -no response-

**What leadership would you provide to protect water quality and water resources in Lee County, including sea level rise, saltwater intrusion, use of herbicides, etc.?** -no response-

**What efforts would you make to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion in Lee County funded contracts, employment, and services, e.g., transportation, health?** -no response-

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?** -no response-

## **Lee County Court Judge Group 4**

Each county has a county court. The number of county judges varies with the population and caseload of the county. Sometimes referred to as "the people's court," a large part of this court's work deals with traffic citations, misdemeanors and civil disputes involving \$30,000 or less. County Court Judges serve a 6-year term with no term limit.

## **Lindsay Scott Garza**



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**Name three personal traits that describe the knowledge and disposition you would bring to the court.**

1. Hardworking - I started working in high school while also participating in sports and extracurricular activities. This work ethic and school involvement continued when I went to college where I worked two jobs, one of which included helping FGCU manage and look after other students who lived on campus as a Resident Asst. While working and studying, I was also a member of the student Senate and the Dominican Republic Outreach Program, which brings me to my second trait.
2. Compassionate/Empathetic - While in the Dominican Republic Outreach Program I had the privilege of traveling to the Dominican Republic 3 different times where I worked with at risk youth. This left a lasting impression on my heart and has helped shape me into the person I am today.
3. Fair - While in law school I spent several semesters working for the Public Defender's Office. This experience, in conjunction with growing up in a law enforcement family, allows me to bring a well-rounded perspective to the bench.

**Describe how you would manage and prioritize large caseloads.** As a prosecutor I have handled very large and complex caseloads. To ensure cases are moved through the system efficiently and effectively, I would impose a case management system that holds attorneys and parties accountable. This means motions and resolution deadlines when reasonable under the circumstances. Priority will be given to older cases, however, what is most important is that everyone's rights are protected and the integrity of the case is not compromised. There is a degree of flexibility that will be practiced to ensure the Court's time is spent wisely and cases are progressively moving forward without undue delay.

**What is your preferred method of funding the courts in FL?** Currently courts are funded through the government by way of the people's tax dollars. It has been this way for many years and I do not see a need to disrupt it. Judges are public servants which is why it is so important to ensure cases are being moved through the system in an efficient and economic way.

**Do you believe all Florida citizens and residents have adequate access to legal help and the legal system? If not, what can or should be done to provide wider and better access?** Like most things, the legal system is not perfect and there is always room for growth and improvement. The Public Defender's Office and the Lee County Legal Aid Society provide a wide access to the courts for those who have little means. The Florida Supreme Court set an aspirational goal for Florida lawyers to complete 20 hours of pro bono (free of charge) work a year. Depending on the need in different areas, perhaps this goal could be expanded to include more than 20 hours and provide more incentives for lawyers to participate in pro bono work in an effort to provide wider access.

**Please tell us the number of jury and bench trials you have personally tried and/or the numbers you have presided over.** I have personally tried at least 80 trials, almost all of which were jury trials.

**What year were you admitted to the Florida Bar? How many years have you practiced law and in what areas?** I was admitted into the Florida Bar in 2014 and have been practicing law for 8 years. All 8 years have been as an Assistant State Attorney prosecuting criminal cases. I have prosecuted cases such as DUI, theft, fraud, domestic violence, child abuse & molestation, and attempted homicide. I was also the lead prosecutor for the specialty courts which included Mental Health Court and Drug Court.

**What is your educational background?** I received a bachelors degree in legal studies with a minor in Spanish from Florida Gulf Coast University. I earned my juris doctorate from St. Thomas University School of Law in Miami.

**Describe your community service and years of active involvement.** I've been serving our community as a prosecutor for the last 8 years. I was a member of the Calusa American Inn of Court for 3 years which included yearly volunteer projects with Community Cooperative. I also attend charitable events in the community such as Shine for Hope Hospice, Children's Advocacy Center, and PACE Center for Girls.

## **Archie B. Hayward, Jr.**



**Party:** NON

**Biographical Info:**

**Name three personal traits that describe the knowledge and disposition you would bring to the court.**  
-no response-

**Describe how you would manage and prioritize large caseloads.** -no response-

**What is your preferred method of funding the courts in FL?** -no response-

**Do you believe all Florida citizens and residents have adequate access to legal help and the legal system? If not, what can or should be done to provide wider and better access?** -no response-

**Please tell us the number of jury and bench trials you have personally tried and/or the numbers you have presided over.** -no response-

**What year were you admitted to the Florida Bar? How many years have you practiced law and in what areas?** -no response-

**What is your educational background?** -no response-

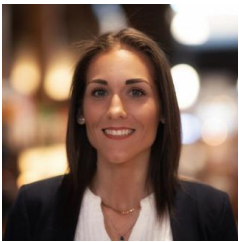
**Describe your community service and years of active involvement.** -no response-

## Lee County School Board

### Lee County School Board District 1

The Lee County School Board is comprised of seven School Board members with five elected from their District and two elected through a District-wide vote of the people. Board Members serve four-year terms on a staggered basis and reside in one of the five districts from which they are voted. The two elected through a District-wide vote reside in any district in Lee County. Members elect their Chair and Vice Chair. The Lee County School Board sets policies and rules that govern the administration of the District. The Board operates according to Florida laws and Florida Department of Education regulations and it sets policy only when members meet in official session. The Board appoints the District's Superintendent, who administers the daily operations of the school system. Source: extracted from <https://www.leeschools.net/board>

### Christine DeVigili



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**Why are you running for office and what do you hope to accomplish?** I'm running for School Board because I want to fix what's broken in the school district I grew up in; not only for my own children, but for every child in Lee County. As a lifelong resident, parent advocate and a mom, I know first hand how vital our schools are to the success of our community. I attended Lee County public schools for my K-12 education, I ran a very large and diverse children's ministry, and I've been a parent advocate for both private and public school parents for many years. I see the struggles our educators, parents and students experience daily. Our district will never truly be successful until parents are made real stakeholders with a seat at the negotiating table when it comes to their children's education. With the right people on the board, we can begin to build bridges between parents and educators that can be walked together, to ensure every child receives the very best education, and every educator has access to everything they need to teach our children.

**What is your understanding of the distinction among schools receiving vouchers, charter schools, and traditional public schools?** Charter schools are funded through the Florida Education Finance Program in the same way as all other public schools in the school district. The charter school receives operating funds from the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) based on the number of full-time (FTE) students enrolled. School vouchers are government-funded scholarships that allow public school students to attend private schools. Vouchers redirect state per-pupil education funding, giving it directly to individual families instead of school districts.

**Teacher and other staffing shortages are a pervasive problem throughout Florida. What are the two or three suggestions you have for the recruitment and retention of staff?** It all starts with a forensic audit. That way we can determine exactly where the district is misusing taxpayer dollars with a primary focus on finding money that can be used to increase teacher salaries and bargain for better insurance and benefits. At the same time, the district must undergo a major shift in its culture; from a game of thrones, to one where teachers are respected by their administrators, students and their parents. This starts from the top down, and is implemented by use of the strategic plan.

**As people become more involved in the details of curriculum and material choices in schools, how would you handle competing parental and educational issues?** Parents are the most qualified people when it comes to making decisions for their children; that's why protecting their rights is my number one priority. Our schools should be composed of students, faculty, and community volunteers (parent or otherwise) that cooperate as a community, and by looking for ways to increase parental/community participation in curriculum and material choices in schools, the district can show stakeholders they genuinely care about building a collaborative relationship for the benefit of our students.

**Recent health and safety concerns currently have a high profile in schools. What experiences do you possess that will support you to make decisions in these areas?** In Dec of 2020 I enrolled at Liberty First University, where I took courses on the Origins of Liberty, Genealogy of the Constitution, American Education System, The Fourth Amendment, and several others taught by renowned Constitutional Attorney, Krisanne Hall. I also began taking classes on Common Law with the Commoner Law Group around this same time. I was determined to uphold my civic duty, so I began to host monthly community meetings to teach citizens and parents about their rights, and equip them to take action by holding the Lee County school board accountable. I tracked every bill that had the potential to impact education and/or parental rights, created an opt-out form, and went into my community to equip parents with the tools they would need to be the best advocate for their children's individual needs, whatever those needs were. I did all of this to inform and empower parents, because I believe parents will always be the very best advocate for their children.

**Do you support the referendum placed on the November 2022 ballot to elect the Lee County School Superintendent? Why or why not?** My personal opinion is this... I believe it's the job of the school board to hire the superintendent, and the only reason this is even an issue is because the current elected school board neglected their duty in hiring one. Instead they hired an outside firm to do their job for them, which caused the community to lose complete trust in the board to do the job they were elected to do. This caused our legislators to act, by giving the power back to the people in the form of an elected superintendent. The only problem with this position becoming an elected one, is that if this person doesn't do a good enough job, we the people have almost zero recourse, and a recall is nearly impossible. Instead, we should be focused on electing a board that will do their job of hiring, and if needed firing, our superintendent; and hold the board accountable in the process.

**What efforts would you make to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion for administrators, educators, students, contractors? And in textbooks?** Through a comprehensive strategic plan as it relates to the best standards and state statutes, and by being accountability-driven, spending less time on operational issues, and more time focused on policies to improve student achievement. Implement policies to ensure school systems act affirmatively to examine the root causes for student performance disparities, while setting clear expectations for the elimination of these gaps, and intentionally confronting disparities among student populations if discovered.

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?**

State Department of Education - Compliance with State laws  
City & County Law Enforcement - School safety & security  
Local House and Senate Reps - Legislative priority alignment

## **Kathy Fanny**



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**Why are you running for office and what do you hope to accomplish?** Lee County schools have an achievement gap in literacy and math. I can help to close the gap. All of the schools in District I in Lee County Schools are Title I schools with literacy and math rates 40% below grade level. I worked as a Title I reading teacher for 26 years. Title 1 is the largest federally funded educational program. The program provides supplemental funds to school districts to assist schools with the highest student concentrations of poverty to meet school educational goals. As a Title I teacher, I was responsible for Individual Improvement Plans (IIP's) on each student for growth in their deficient areas so they could succeed and documented Parental Involvement in the learning process. We can do better with :

- Using retention when necessary, and no longer allowing social promotion
- Creating transitional grades with smaller class sizes
- Involving Educational Diagnosticians to assess learning disabilities
- After school programs with small group instruction

**What is your understanding of the distinction among schools receiving vouchers, charter schools, and traditional public schools?** Traditional public schools serve all students with all levels of students who follow state mandated curriculum and rules. In Lee County, the students have the ability to learn a trade, an Associate Degree or a free college tuition (ACE) Charter Schools can be for profit such as Cape Coral Charter School or city run as Oasis Charter. They have their own boards and may pick their own curriculum. They are not mandated to teach the materials from Tallahassee. They receive the per pupil stipend from the district but can expel students. The money stays with the school for the students who are exited for part of the year as the student returns to public school. Rather than answering to a local school board, charter schools are usually accountable directly to the state charter, which evaluates their budgets, procedures, and outcomes.

Vouchers are available to be used at the per pupil rate if the school will accept that rate. The schools can be religious.

**Teacher and other staffing shortages are a pervasive problem throughout Florida. What are the two or three suggestions you have for the recruitment and retention of staff?**

- We need to improve the salaries and working conditions within the schools so people want to work here.
- We must create an atmosphere of respect for our teachers and treat them like the educated professionals that they are. If we provide enough appropriate staff where needed, such as aides or counselors, and allow planning periods, teachers can be free to educate.
- We need to hire the best and the brightest. We should consider a program to direct our students to careers I education by offering tuition-free college in return for a length of service after graduation.

**As people become more involved in the details of curriculum and material choices in schools, how would you handle competing parental and educational issues?** The choice of material comes directly down from Tallahassee. The approved textbooks are then given to the teachers to choose what best fits the needs of the students. Political bias has no place in schools. It is doing the right thing for all students. The primary purpose of public schools is to educate. Parents have the option of opting their children out of courses they prefer their children not participate in, but it is the job of public education to educate all, free of bias.

**Recent health and safety concerns currently have a high profile in schools. What experiences do you possess that will support you to make decisions in these areas?** I have worked in a classroom for 38 years and have run the active shooter drills and have been through the horror of not knowing if we were safe. There was a person with a gun outside of the school. We kept the students hidden, doors locked, and curtains down. I will not panic in a crisis situation. Health concerns can be complicated as recent pandemic events have shown us. Without a common agreement on the danger of a current health crisis, it is impossible to make a decision that all will agree to abide by. My experiences as a teacher have taught me to adopt a balanced view, prioritize students, and reasonably and calmly enforce the decisions of the superintendent or the Department of Education.

**Do you support the referendum placed on the November 2022 ballot to elect the Lee County School Superintendent? Why or why not?** No, I do not. We deserved to have the most qualified, most experienced, and most educated person serving in this role. When we interview and hire the superintendent, they have gone through an interview process that examines the qualifications, experience, and education. Our schools deserve only the best person in charge. Making the superintendent an elected position brings political bias into the role. Politics have no place in schools.

**What efforts would you make to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion for administrators, educators, students, contractors? And in textbooks?** School boards have committees and policies in place that deals with diversity, equity, and inclusion. We need to keep this committee active while following the rules mandated in Tallahassee. All students need to feel accepted for their diversity so all students can follow their pathway for success.

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?**

1. Safety- Government jurisdictions assist with safety in our schools. They provide the SRO's for the school and help with active drills.
- 2.. Funding- The funding of our schools and programs constitutes about 50 percent of the budget for schools. As a result, the amount of funding available to any given school district reflects a complex set of variables including local tax rates and exemptions.
3. Laws enacted in State, Federal, and locally must be followed. This includes approved textbooks.

## **Sam Fisher**

**Party:** NON

**Biographical Info:**

**Why are you running for office and what do you hope to accomplish?** -no response-

**What is your understanding of the distinction among schools receiving vouchers, charter schools, and traditional public schools?** -no response-

**Teacher and other staffing shortages are a pervasive problem throughout Florida. What are the two or three suggestions you have for the recruitment and retention of staff?** -no response-

**As people become more involved in the details of curriculum and material choices in schools, how would you handle competing parental and educational issues?** -no response-

**Recent health and safety concerns currently have a high profile in schools. What experiences do you possess that will support you to make decisions in these areas?** -no response-

**Do you support the referendum placed on the November 2022 ballot to elect the Lee County School Superintendent? Why or why not?** -no response-

**What efforts would you make to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion for administrators, educators, students, contractors? And in textbooks?** -no response-

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?** -no response-

## **Cathy Stout**



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**Why are you running for office and what do you hope to accomplish?** I'm running for office because the school board has not conducted priorities and I strongly feel we must do the following:

1. Keep our children safe in schools and on school property top priority! I would like to adopt the guardian program along with other security measures.
2. I'm committed to transparency of budgets and curriculum in textbooks and teaching. I would like to itemize a line and zero budget, and have it transparent for the taxpayers.
3. Equality for ALL children's education. No matter what race, cultures, or economic status. I would like to see more real life classes in all the classrooms.

**What is your understanding of the distinction among schools receiving vouchers, charter schools, and traditional public schools?** My understanding of school vouchers are programs that allow parents to pick a school for their children to attend rather than the demographics of the school. Charter schools are schools that are demographically located according to cities. They are typically funded by city tax dollars. Public schools are 100% funded by school tax dollars as well as transportation to and from schools. Extra curriculum such as sports etc. are also funded by tax dollars. As well as many after school programs. Special education and additional tutoring or advanced is provided by public school districts and paid for through tax revenue.

**Teacher and other staffing shortages are a pervasive problem throughout Florida. What are the two or three suggestions you have for the recruitment and retention of staff?**

1. Teachers are underpaid with the enormous cost of living today. Therefore teachers need adjusted pay increase that is significantly represented in the high inflation.
2. Teachers pay-scales and caps need immediately corrected to represent length of service and caps adjusted to years of employment. Also added pay incentives would be utilized to keep teacher retention in regards to retirement.

**As people become more involved in the details of curriculum and material choices in schools, how would you handle competing parental and educational issues?** I do support the Parental RIGHTS Bill for their children's education. However, I do believe if we partner more with parents in their children's educational needs we will be able to incorporate more successful outcomes with both students and parents.

**Recent health and safety concerns currently have a high profile in schools. What experiences do you possess that will support you to make decisions in these areas?** I'm not experienced in either both law or I do not have my license in medical. However, I do have experience as a homeroom parent, and was a chair for PTO for years. This experience gives me great confidence in my ability to communicate with parents and all stakeholders in the school district to come together for better solutions for health and safety for our schools.

**Do you support the referendum placed on the November 2022 ballot to elect the Lee County School Superintendent? Why or why not?** I do support the referendum, all taxpayers vote for who they want in office. As a taxpayer you should choose what is right for you. This also lowers the pay for the superintendent salary, if elected by the taxpayers.

**What efforts would you make to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion for administrators, educators, students, contractors? And in textbooks?** Working as a team! Having a solid belief that schools will ensure that ALL students giving them best education on preparing students for our nation and world. Diversity in schools should become a cultural practice. We lead by action and we must support ALL in school districts. With acceptance, and a unified understanding of diversity which is a positive environment for our schools and sending our children into the world with clear understandings of equality for all.

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?**

1. Security
2. Transparency
3. Diversity

## **Lee County School Board District 4**

The Lee County School Board is comprised of seven School Board members with five elected from their District and two elected through a District-wide vote of the people. Board Members serve four-year terms on a staggered basis and reside in one of the five districts from which they are voted. The two elected through a District-wide vote reside in any district in Lee County. Members elect their Chair and Vice Chair. The Lee County School Board sets policies and rules that govern the administration of the District. The Board operates according to Florida laws and Florida Department of Education regulations and it sets policy only when members meet in official session. The Board appoints the District's Superintendent, who administers the daily operations of the school system. Source: extracted from <https://www.leeschools.net/board>

## **Jason "Big Mama" Jones**



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**Why are you running for office and what do you hope to accomplish?** - no response -

**What is your understanding of the distinction among schools receiving vouchers, charter schools, and traditional public schools?** - no response -

**Teacher and other staffing shortages are a pervasive problem throughout Florida. What are the two or three suggestions you have for the recruitment and retention of staff?** - no response -

**As people become more involved in the details of curriculum and material choices in schools, how would you handle competing parental and educational issues?** - no response -

**Recent health and safety concerns currently have a high profile in schools. What experiences do you possess that will support you to make decisions in these areas?** - no response -

**Do you support the referendum placed on the November 2022 ballot to elect the Lee County School Superintendent? Why or why not?** - no response -

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?** - no response

## **Debbie Jordan**



**Party:** NON

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**Why are you running for office and what do you hope to accomplish?** I am running as I have served on the board in the most difficult times (Pandemic) and have proven leadership skills. I believe there is still much work to be done for the students, families, staff, faculty, and stakeholders of Lee County.

**What is your understanding of the distinction among schools receiving vouchers, charter schools, and traditional public schools?** All schools are funded through the FEFP funds. Voucher programs have increased Family Empowerment Scholarships, McKay with stipulations attached. However they are not subject to the same public and academic accountability standards as apply to public schools. Charter schools are funded in the same manner and do not have to follow the same standards as the Public. The Public Schools are there for all children and can not refuse any child from entering. Public schools have academic standards that must be met by the Department of Education and are held accountable for outcomes. Public schools are not for profit they are there to educate the children and the educators meet the standards.

**Teacher and other staffing shortages are a pervasive problem throughout Florida. What are the two or three suggestions you have for the recruitment and retention of staff?** - Advocate for retention and recruitment projects and developmental opportunities for current and new employees. Also, continuously encourage accountability by the District and leadership at various levels to support those that support our children. Making sure that ALL employees of the district are heard and feel respected in each role that makes our district great. Thinking outside the box and bringing teachers from other countries for the school terms which will also bring in diversity.

**As people become more involved in the details of curriculum and material choices in schools, how would you handle competing parental and educational issues?** We follow the Florida Sunshine Standards. We have processes in place which includes stakeholders, parent, educators in the process when reviewing any new curriculum and materials. This allow participation with those who would like to be involved and is open.

**Recent health and safety concerns currently have a high profile in schools. What experiences do you possess that will support you to make decisions in these areas?** I have had the opportunity to see first hand from sitting on the board for the past three years. We went out for Spring Break and then in a two week period had to plan on how we were going to keep the schools open while making sure that our students and staff remained safe. We needed to make sure they had the tools they needed chrome books, hot spots, shields, wipe, one way hall ways everyone jumped into action to insure that educating of the students continued. After major events took place the entire state went into great lengths to tighten up security in all schools and district locations. Providing a safe environment for learning and teaching. As part of the we had to make these decision while also keeping within the law as well.

**Do you support the referendum placed on the November 2022 ballot to elect the Lee County School Superintendent? Why or why not?** No! I believe that the Superintendent should be appointed and not elected. A Superintendent job is to run the district and must have the qualifications to do so. The appointed Superintendent goes through a very thorough process prior to being offered the position which reports to the School Board of the District. If a Superintendent is not doing their jobs they can be fired. An elected Superintendent is just that. There are no qualification for that position either that you reside in Lee County and you are of age. They could not be fired to not doing their jobs the only person that could remove them would be the governor or be unelected in 4 years. This referendum also is requested for this position be Partisan which should not be. Politics should never come into the district and this would be a position who is always fund raising and could create a lot of conflict of interest.

**What efforts would you make to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion for administrators, educators, students, contractors? And in textbooks?** Lee County School District has an office of equity and diversity and a advisor committee which I would continue. Make sure that we have the best administrators, educators for our students. This goes along with hiring and recruiting which the district continues to reach out to minority colleges. A new policy has been into place regarding Commercial Anti-Discrimination in Business Operations and Practice. Text are put through a process once they are vetted in the State Board Of Education.

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?** 1) our Juvenile Assessment Centers - making sure that every student has adequate learning opportunities.  
2) Budget must work with the state to ensure we receive the correct FEFP funds for our students.  
3) Mental Health- conversations need to continue in order to get much needed fund for Mental Health

## **Dan Severson**

**Party:** NON

**Biographical Info:**

**Why are you running for office and what do you hope to accomplish?** -no response-

**What is your understanding of the distinction among schools receiving vouchers, charter schools, and traditional public schools?** -no response-

**Teacher and other staffing shortages are a pervasive problem throughout Florida. What are the two or three suggestions you have for the recruitment and retention of staff?** -no response-

**As people become more involved in the details of curriculum and material choices in schools, how would you handle competing parental and educational issues?** -no response-

**Recent health and safety concerns currently have a high profile in schools. What experiences do you possess that will support you to make decisions in these areas?** -no response-

**Do you support the referendum placed on the November 2022 ballot to elect the Lee County School Superintendent? Why or why not?** -no response-

**What efforts would you make to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion for administrators, educators, students, contractors? And in textbooks?** -no response-

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?** -no response-

## **Geraldine "Gerri" Ware**



**Party:** NON

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**Why are you running for office and what do you hope to accomplish?** What motivates me to seek this seat at the table representing district four of the Lee County School District but serving all of the citizens of the county is my passion, my purpose in that I have a personal interest in PRESERVING and IMPROVING the quality of our school system. I believe WE can be influential in influencing the quality of the basics thereby increasing the graduation rate; parental and community involvement; addressing the diversity and the fast growth in our population; and in the hiring and retention of teachers and bus drivers.

**What is your understanding of the distinction among schools receiving vouchers, charter schools, and traditional public schools?** These are options that are available to parents and students funded by local, state and nationally to select their learning environment. We are responsible for the education for all children .

**Teacher and other staffing shortages are a pervasive problem throughout Florida. What are the two or three suggestions you have for the recruitment and retention of staff?**

Increase salaries

Assist in securing affordable housing

Continue the Grown Your Own at our local universities

Have a travel team to visit colleges and universities to promote our schools

Participate with tourism

**As people become more involved in the details of curriculum and material choices in schools, how would you handle competing parental and educational issues?**

SYNERGISM is essential

There should be more community and parental involvement with open dialogue.

**Recent health and safety concerns currently have a high profile in schools. What experiences do you possess that will support you to make decisions in these areas?**

I am a Registered Nurse

I have served as a public health nurse, Lee County's first black school nurse, and I have served and continue to serve on community organizations that address health and safety.

**Do you support the referendum placed on the November 2022 ballot to elect the Lee County School Superintendent? Why or why not?**

No, I do not support an elected superintendent because there aren't any required , recommended qualifications to ensure the competency of an elected superintendent. Our children's education is too important to risk with politics

**What efforts would you make to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion for administrators, educators, students, contractors? And in textbooks?**

SYNERGISM is the too I feel would best facilitate in ensuring diversity. This should involve citizens from all cultures in the procurement and hiring process. There must be a priority in equity. Parental and community involvement are essential in textbook selection.

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?**

- Safety
- Health
- Funding

**Lee County School Board District 5**

The Lee County School Board is comprised of seven School Board members with five elected from their District and two elected through a District-wide vote of the people. Board Members serve four-year terms on a staggered basis and reside in one of the five districts from which they are voted. The two elected through a District-wide vote reside in any district in Lee County. Members elect their Chair and Vice Chair. The Lee County School Board sets policies and rules that govern the administration of the District. The Board operates according to Florida laws and Florida Department of Education regulations and it sets policy only when members meet in official session. The Board appoints the District's Superintendent, who administers the daily operations of the school system. Source: extracted from <https://www.leeschools.net/board>

**Gwynetta Gittens**



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**Why are you running for office and what do you hope to accomplish?** I am running to continue my accomplishments of the last 3.5 years and achieve more for our children. As a previous corporate VP, I fight for fiscal responsibility. I publically proved we did not need a \$100M school, but we did need schools and resources in other parts of the district. After 2 years as the "1" of a 6-1 vote, (18 times) there was a 7-0 vote to cancel the project. I focus on NEED not WANT. When the board would not address the need to prioritize unsafe, unsanitary portables in the East Zone, I went public and they were fixed. As the only currently certified board member with certifications in Teaching and Education Leadership, during the height of the teacher shortage I volunteered and taught classes in the East Zone, the area with consistently the highest teacher shortages. I want to continue to fight for the reduction of the Achievement Gap that is the highest in the East Zone. I am running to continue working for ALL of our children, I have not stopped!

**What is your understanding of the distinction among schools receiving vouchers, charter schools, and traditional public schools?** Firstly, everyone must remember we, the Board, are required to work within the law, without regard for any personal beliefs. The Law is the Law! The law states we have to educate ALL children. The Law says Charter schools fall under the jurisdiction of the local school district. The Law has given parents and students choices for their education. Every student is different and not all will thrive, grow and learn in the same type of

environment. What we must remember is equity. Vouchers are fine, however, we must remember the needs, not wants of traditional public schools can be higher and we may not have access to the same resources. Every parent and child should have choices, and those choices should not mean fewer resources for other students but equitable resources for all. Our goal is to "meet the needs of all students."

**Teacher and other staffing shortages are a pervasive problem throughout Florida. What are the two or three suggestions you have for the recruitment and retention of staff?**

As a certified teacher that taught in high school, middle and elementary, and adult education in Lee County, and a board member that keeps in touch with teachers, staff, and administrators in my district I listen to and hear their needs and wants. I have many thoughts but here are 2 suggestions. 1. "Teachers and staff don't leave schools, they leave administrators." We must train and educate our leaders in the art of taking care of their staff. We have some schools with seemingly insurmountable challenges, but the staff stays and works very hard because they are respected, loved, and listened to. It's not just about scores, it's about care. 2. We must provide additional pay and resources for teachers that want to work in 'hard to serve' schools. The East Zone is at the top of that list. We should provide salary supplements and travel stipends and child care help to staff that want to work in the challenging school but can't afford to drive 1 hour each way to work.

**As people become more involved in the details of curriculum and material choices in schools, how would you handle competing parental and educational issues?** I did a Facebook Live video to explain this topic. "The Board" operates totally within the laws provided to us. Legislation is passed, Laws are made and our job is to create Policies explaining How we will follow the law! For example, a law is passed that all schools must be painted green and yellow." The Board decides how to follow the law. We create the Policy... all schools will be lemon yellow and lime green. The community is upset with our color choices. The problem: we did not include the community. So, we ask our Advisory boards, go to the community for input and come up with a new decision...our Policy reads our colors will be school bus yellow and fern green and we followed the law. The curriculum is decided on and vetted in Tallahassee; Florida Dept. of Education (FLDOE). Districts get a list of vetted vendors and books to choose from. If a district chooses a vendor not on the list, FLDOE must vet them. Parents can always ask legislators to change laws they feel are unfair.

**Recent health and safety concerns currently have a high profile in schools. What experiences do you possess that will support you to make decisions in these areas?** As a teacher, there was an emergency lockdown "possible person with a weapon" I rushed students into my adjoining room as planned. My students huddled silently on the floor behind desks. The front room had two doors and I had failed to put the all-clear sign on Both doors. Suddenly law enforcement, with guns, barking dogs etc. came rushing into the room yelling "who is in here....etc. I immediately went to the door hands in the air and yelled, "we are fine, there is no one here but us, and we are safe. I never made that mistake again, but it left a lasting memory in my mind. 1. The bravery and determination of law enforcement to protect our schools. 2. I believed then and now that metal detectors could be another layer of protection. Last week our Safety and Security Dept. previewed "Evolve" a simple walk-through metal detection system that the district is looking into. I have consistently fought for the consideration of metal detectors. We also need more mental health professionals.

**Do you support the referendum placed on the November 2022 ballot to elect the Lee County School Superintendent? Why or why not?** I do not support the referendum, especially after recently going through the process of selecting a new superintendent. We are close to being a \$ 2 billion district that is ever-growing, evolving, and being challenged to follow the law while finding the best methods of educating one of the most diverse districts in the nation. As I have stated before, our children do not have time to wait for a politically aligned individual to learn On-The-Job how to do their job. As an elected official I can just imagine the amount of time needed to just campaign for the position and raise funds. It is dangerous to think that all the businesses we deal with, as a district could possibly be Donors! Basically: 1. We need a superintendent with an education and business background that has the experience to make data-driven, far-reaching student-centered decisions, and 2. A superintendent is not torn between making the best decision for Children or their Political career!

**What efforts would you make to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion for administrators, educators, students, contractors? And in textbooks?** History is a factual story telling of actual events. As the first and only minority elected to sit on the Lee County School Board in over 132 years it is more important to have a Board that represents the makeup of our community. I bring the experience, depth of knowledge, and example to aspiring students and leaders that everyone can be a part of our district. I have been accused of spreading a certain mindset into education and that I must be careful or stop saying diversity, equity and inclusion. I will NOT stop using the words but what if we used "different, fair and infused" instead. I am Different/Diverse, but the same as many of our students and staff. We must legally provide a Fair/Equitable education for all students. As a part of the Board, I should have been infused in. When you infuse cream in tea or coffee, you cannot separate the cream from the coffee, it's just a different shade of coffee.

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?** 1. Locally, we must coordinate with the county and local developers when it comes to growth. The growth of our community has become the county's highest priority. We need to first focus on building schools and providing resources where the need has been evident for many years before we consider enhancing future and incoming communities. When growth plans unfold there should be consideration of all aspects; how will it affect our current education needs. We must prioritize all of our resources. 2. Statewide, the Florida Department of Education can help education in the districts, by reviewing and reallocation of funding. So many times we are given funds with restrictions (categorical) for example "here is the money but you must do this, with this company." Districts and communities have different needs and should have Local Control over their finances, within the law. 3. Fair and equitable pay and conditions for all staff must be coordinated between the FLDOE and local districts.

## **Armor D. Persons**

**Party:** NON

**Biographical Info:**

**Why are you running for office and what do you hope to accomplish?**

-no response-

**What is your understanding of the distinction among schools receiving vouchers, charter schools, and traditional public schools?**

-no response-

**Recent health and safety concerns currently have a high profile in schools. What experiences do you possess that will support you to make decisions in these areas?**

-no response-

**As people become more involved in the details of curriculum and material choices in schools, how would you handle competing parental and educational issues?**

-no response-

**Recent health and safety concerns currently have a high profile in schools. What experiences do you possess that will support you to make decisions in these areas?**

-no response-

**Do you support the referendum placed on the November 2022 ballot to elect the Lee County School Superintendent? Why or why not?**

-no response-

**What efforts would you make to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion for administrators, educators, students, contractors? And in textbooks?**

-no response-

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?**

-no response-

## **Lee County School Board District 6**

The Lee County School Board is comprised of seven School Board members with five elected from their District and two elected through a District-wide vote of the people. Board Members serve four-year terms on a staggered basis and reside in one of the five districts from which they are voted. The two elected through a District-wide vote reside in any district in Lee County. Members elect their Chair and Vice Chair. The Lee County School Board sets policies and rules that govern the administration of the District. The Board operates according to Florida laws and Florida Department of Education regulations and it sets policy only when members meet in official session. The Board appoints the District's Superintendent, who administers the daily operations of the school system. Source: extracted from <https://www.leeschools.net/board>

## **Tia Collin**



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**Why are you running for office and what do you hope to accomplish?** I believe in the power and purpose of public education. During my time in office, I hope to address our transportation issues especially in Bonita Springs and East Lee County. I hope to decrease the usage of portables. I hope to address our teacher retention issues. I hope to address our achievement gap using proven techniques currently employed by other districts. I hope to create more opportunities for the additional 3 years of public education received by some of our ESE students, (fka special education). I hope to increase parental engagement and create a welcoming culture for all Lee County families. I also hope to increase budget transparency so that all residents can clearly see how money is spent in Lee County.

**What is your understanding of the distinction among schools receiving vouchers, charter schools, and traditional public schools?**

Vouchers are scholarships families can use to pay for private school.

Charter schools are publicly funded schools that are operated autonomously.

Traditional public schools are publicly funded schools overseen by the school board and the superintendent.

**What are the two or three suggestions you have for the recruitment and retention of staff?** We especially see this problem in the East Zone of Lee County, though certainly the problem exists county-wide. Some hard to staff schools offer stipends to teachers but it is my understanding that those stipends are being reduced. I would like to examine ways to keep the stipend where it is or increase it. Recently, Monroe County School District has provided school district owned land for the development of affordable housing for teachers and school staff. I have looked at the land owned by the Lee County School District and I believe we have an opportunity to do something similar. Last November, Gulfshore Business reported that a 9.81 acre parcel of district owned land was under contract for just such a measure. Unfortunately, I've since been informed that the deal was called off. We need to revisit this. I would also like to address the amount our non instructional staff is paid.

**As people become more involved in the details of curriculum and material choices in schools, how would you handle competing parental and educational issues?** Parental and community involvement should be encouraged and I look forward to the opportunity to attend the public hearings during which curriculum choices are addressed. It is my hope that those meeting will also be attended by curriculum and education experts who can help us all understand how and why certain curriculum choices are made. Lamar Alexander, former Secretary of Education, said "The purpose of public education is to teach reading, writing, and arithmetic and how to be an American citizen." I agree with this statement. Whatever curriculum choices we make, we need to be sure we're at least doing this. I detest the idea that parents and educators are on opposite ends of the curriculum issue. I believe that we can come together and partner together to make the decisions that are best for our community and I intend to do just that.

**Recent health and safety concerns currently have a high profile in schools. What experiences do you possess that will support you to make decisions in these areas?** I work with a vulnerable population so I've spent a lot of time in masks for the past couple of years. Thankfully the APD and the company I work for listened to public health officials when making decisions related to the health of staff and the people we serve. This method kept our individuals safe and able to receive services. I will definitely carry this method with me, listening to public health officials, and striving to keep all those I serve safe.

**Do you support the referendum placed on the November 2022 ballot to elect the Lee County School Superintendent? Why or why not?** No, I do not support an elected superintendent. The superintendent is in charge of instituting the policies laid out by the board. If it becomes an elected position, how will we know that this

person is capable of performing their job? In addition, an elected superintendent will have to spend time fundraising and campaigning which will take away from time that should be spent on the job of running our schools.

**What efforts would you make to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion for administrators, educators, students, contractors? And in textbooks?**

Title VI prohibits discrimination against students based upon race in schools that receive federal funding. Title IX prohibits discrimination based on sex, and does extend that protection to include the LGBTQ+ community. Title VII prohibits discrimination in employment practices by entities that receive federal funds. Because LCSD receives federal funds, we are bound by these rules and we must make every effort to be sure we are in strict compliance with them. These titles help protect our students, educators, administrators, and contractors. Our goal should be to create a safe educational space for all members of our community.

The Parental Rights in Education law places new restrictions on schools regarding certain topics. We should seek clarification, as other districts are doing, so that we can create a safe environment for all of our students and staff while abiding by the law.

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?**

Matters relating to IDEA and the ADA and Titles related to non discrimination. To ensure our students with disabilities receive the highest level of education possible and that our schools, educators, and staff receive the material and support necessary, it is important to coordinate with the federal government from whom we receive money for these services. In addition, it is important that we provide an equitable and safe environment for all students and staff within our schools.

Matters relating to Title I schools. The goal of the additional funding provided to Title I schools is to increase educational opportunities for low income families and to increase achievement outcomes. We have 45 schools in Lee County that are identified as Title I schools. It is important that we keep this funding as we work toward closing the achievement gap.

School and student safety, coordinated with the Lee County Sheriff's Department, to protect our children and staff in emergencies.

**Jada Langford Fleming**

**Party:** NON

**Biographical Info:**

**Why are you running for office and what do you hope to accomplish?**

-no response-

**What is your understanding of the distinction among schools receiving vouchers, charter schools, and traditional public schools?**

-no response-

**Teacher and other staffing shortages are a pervasive problem throughout Florida. What are the two or three suggestions you have for the recruitment and retention of staff?**

-no response-

**As people become more involved in the details of curriculum and material choices in schools, how would you handle competing parental and educational issues?** -no response-

**Recent health and safety concerns currently have a high profile in schools. What experiences do you possess that will support you to make decisions in these areas?** -no response-

**Do you support the referendum placed on the November 2022 ballot to elect the Lee County School Superintendent? Why or why not?** -no response-

**What efforts would you make to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion for administrators, educators, students, contractors? And in textbooks?** -no response-

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?** -no response-

## **Denise Nystrom**



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**Why are you running for office and what do you hope to accomplish?** As a lifelong educator, a 14-year special education teacher, a 3-year special education administrator, and an 8-year assistant superintendent of schools, and as someone who spent my career in traditional school settings where the focus was on teaching classic literature, American History, math, and science skills that would help students transition from grade twelve to college, vocational training, the military, or a high-paying job, I am concerned that school districts have become political in nature. My goals include increasing student achievement because currently student achievement scores are low, increasing high school graduation rates with students transitioning from high school to college, vocational schools, the military, or a job with upward mobility because 13% of students did not graduate high school, developing a line-item budget that brings accountability to taxpayers and resources to the students, advancing safety protocols, and increasing teacher retention rates.

**What is your understanding of the distinction among schools receiving vouchers, charter schools, and traditional public schools?** Providing parents with vouchers means that the money earmarked for each child for educational purposes would follow the child to whatever school the parents want to send their child to. Charter schools are schools other than the public schools where parents can send their children. Traditional public schools are schools where all children go with the exception of those children who go to a private school, a charter school, or a religious school.

**Teacher and other staffing shortages are a pervasive problem throughout Florida. What are the two or three suggestions you have for the recruitment and retention of staff?** One has to assess the root causes for why there is a problem retaining staff. I believe there are several reasons why retaining staff is a problem. The cost of living in Florida is not commensurate with the salaries staff are receiving. Oftentimes, salaries remain constant for many years meaning that staff do not receive a salary increase from year to year. Many staff have stated that the work environment is less than desirable. I believe that this is a result of bringing politics into the schools making it a divisive place to work. The culture and environment is very important for retention of staff. With regard to teachers and counselors, there is no tenure and they receive a one-year contract. This means that there is no job security. Overall, the work environment needs to be one based on respect for all, a fair work wage with salary increases on an annual basis, and gainful employment for an extended period of time.

**As people become more involved in the details of curriculum and material choices in schools, how would you handle competing parental and educational issues?** Curriculum and material choices must be selected based on Florida's educational standards. For the 2020 to 2023 school year the English language arts standards are based on classic literature, and the social studies standards are based on a Civics curriculum. I began my teaching career in 1986. I retired in 2014. For the entire time that I worked in the field of education no one knew what my political beliefs were. It is my opinion that politics do not belong in the educational setting. Parents have had to take a stand to prevent school district personnel from influencing their children. I am a supporter of parents rights. In those areas where the school has been mandated to teach a subject that parents might consider an infringement of their rights, the school should obtain written consent from the parents.

**Recent health and safety concerns currently have a high profile in schools. What experiences do you possess that will support you to make decisions in these areas?** As an assistant superintendent of schools, I was the Chair of the Safety Committee. Many measures can be put into place that will aid in safety of children and faculty. There can be a single point entry, all other egresses can be alarmed, a video monitoring station can be used to view all of the egresses, devices can be used inside of classrooms that prevent classroom doors from being opened,

telephones can be installed in each classroom, so teachers can reach security staff, safety drills should be conducted, and faculty can receive tactical training so that they are aware of how to respond instead of react.

There are many aspects that relate to health, such as medical health and mental wellness. As an assistant superintendent, I was responsible for overseeing the nurses. There are many school district personnel that are accessible for health concerns, such as nurses, guidance counselors, psychologists, and social workers. These professionals should work collaboratively with parents.

**Do you support the referendum placed on the November 2022 ballot to elect the Lee County School Superintendent? Why or why not?** I do not support the idea of an elected superintendent. I believe that the board members elected by the people need to represent the values of their constituents, and if the superintendent who is hired by the school board is not doing his or her job effectively, the board should be able to terminate the superintendent. I am concerned that the school district and the people would have to wait until the next election cycle to attempt to vote an elected superintendent out of office and that an elected superintendent would perpetually be in campaign mode. I am also of the belief that a superintendent should have previously been an educator who came up through the ranks. If the community members do not like the superintendent that has been hired by the board, elect board members that represent the communities values.

**What efforts would you make to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion for administrators, educators, students, contractors? And in textbooks?** I began teaching special education in 1986 and was a teacher for fourteen years. I was then an eleven year administrator. I retired 7 years ago. I spent my life making sure that all administrators, educators, students and contractors were treated equally regardless of their diversity. The textbooks that are selected has already been approved by the State Education Department based on the criteria set forth. School district personnel utilizes a large, diverse committee to select educational textbooks.

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?** The top three issues that need to be coordinated with other governmental agencies are issues that involve student and staff safety, the mental health of students and their families, and programs that support education such as after-school programs and summer camps. The school district needs to have an ongoing positive relationship with the local police departments and fire departments that will work in conjunction with the schools to respond quickly and appropriately during times of emergencies, with mental health care facilities that can assist children and their families and they are in crisis, end with programs that offer children opportunities to actively be involved in activities that support their growth.

## Fort Myers City Council

### Fort Myers City Council Ward 3

The Fort Myers City Council is comprised of a mayor and 6 councilpersons. The mayor is elected by the registered voters city-wide. Council members are elected by registered voters in their ward and represent that particular ward for a 4-year term. A council member must reside in the ward from which he or she is elected. Source: extracted from <https://www.cityftmyers.com/1168/Mayor-City-Council>

### Chantel L. Rhodes



**Party:** NON

**Biographical Info:**

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**Why are you running for office and what do you hope to accomplish?** - no response -

**What are the most important challenges facing this office and how do you propose to address them?**

- no response -

**What actions will you take to assure quality, safe, clean, attainable housing for city residents? How do you plan to reduce homelessness? How will you make use of the Affordable Housing Trust?** - no response -

**How should the city address economic development and infrastructure improvements while assuring equality and equity for all residents, including those in underserved neighborhoods?** - no response -

**What issues would you address with the Police Department? Do you support civil citations and other diversion programs for juveniles? For adults?** - no response -

**What leadership would you provide to protect water quality and water resources including sea level rise, saltwater intrusion, use of herbicides, etc.?** - no response -

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?** - no response

## **Dorian Scudder**

**Party:** NON

**Biographical Info:**

**Why are you running for office and what do you hope to accomplish?**

-no response-

**What are the most important challenges facing this office and how do you propose to address them?**

-no response-

**What actions will you take to assure quality, safe, clean, attainable housing for city residents? How do you plan to reduce homelessness? How will you make use of the Affordable Housing Trust?**

-no response-

**How should the city address economic development and infrastructure improvements while assuring equality and equity for all residents, including those in underserved neighborhoods?**

-no response-

**What issues would you address with the Police Department? Do you support civil citations and other diversion programs for juveniles? For adults?**

-no response-

**What leadership would you provide to protect water quality and water resources including sea level rise, saltwater intrusion, use of herbicides, etc.?**

-no response-

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?** -no response-

## **Terolyn P. Watson**

**Party:** NON

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**Why are you running for office and what do you hope to accomplish?**

-no response-

**What are the most important challenges facing this office and how do you propose to address them?**

-no response-

**What actions will you take to assure quality, safe, clean, attainable housing for city residents? How do you plan to reduce homelessness? How will you make use of the Affordable Housing Trust?** -no response-

**How should the city address economic development and infrastructure improvements while assuring equality and equity for all residents, including those in underserved neighborhoods?** -no response-

**What issues would you address with the Police Department? Do you support civil citations and other diversion programs for juveniles? For adults?** -no response-

**What leadership would you provide to protect water quality and water resources including sea level rise, saltwater intrusion, use of herbicides, etc.?** -no response-

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?** -no response-

## **Carlbert White**

**Party:** NON

**Biographical Info:**

**Why are you running for office and what do you hope to accomplish?** -no response-

**What are the most important challenges facing this office and how do you propose to address them?**

-no response-

**What actions will you take to assure quality, safe, clean, attainable housing for city residents? How do you plan to reduce homelessness? How will you make use of the Affordable Housing Trust?** -no response-

**How should the city address economic development and infrastructure improvements while assuring equality and equity for all residents, including those in underserved neighborhoods?** -no response-

**What issues would you address with the Police Department? Do you support civil citations and other diversion programs for juveniles? For adults?** -no response-

**What leadership would you provide to protect water quality and water resources including sea level rise, saltwater intrusion, use of herbicides, etc.?** -no response-

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?** -no response-

## **Cape Coral City Council**

### **Cape Coral City Council District 1**

Virtual Candidate Forum2022 Cape Coral District 1 Candidate Forum<https://youtu.be/SILe0ra6TIw>Description:The City of Cape Coral operates under the Council-City Manager form of government. City council members are elected at large from seven districts. The mayor also is elected at large and is the eighth member of council. The mayor presides over council meetings. The City Council enacts ordinances and resolutions, adopts the budget, comprehensive plan and land-use regulations. The Council appoints the City Manager, City Auditor and City Attorney, as well as the members of all boards and commissions. The City Manager hires all department directors and oversees the day-to-day operations of the city. Source: extracted from [https://www.capecoral.net/government/city\\_government/overview/index.php](https://www.capecoral.net/government/city_government/overview/index.php)

## **Carol Rae Culliton**

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**Why are you running for office and what do you hope to accomplish?** Through my charitable foundation, I have been involved in projects that have improved life in Cape Coral generally and improved the quality of life for many in the Cape and Lee County. I feel that I can accomplish much more as a City Council member.

**What are the most important challenges facing this office and how do you propose to address them?**

Clean water  
public safety  
strong economy and economic diversification

**What actions will you take to assure quality, safe, clean, attainable housing for city residents? How do you plan to reduce homelessness?** There is code compliance to help insure quality and safe housing. Zoning regulations insure a certain degree of cleanliness and the rest is up to the individual, Homelessness is not just a Cape Coral issue and is better addressed through a countywide effort.

**How should the city address economic development and infrastructure improvements while assuring equality and equity for all residents, including those in underserved neighborhoods?** Infrastructure must be in place to attract businesses and manufacturing. Existing areas must be provided with water and sewer.

**What issues would you address with the Police Department? Do you support civil citations and other diversion programs for juveniles? For adults?** Cape Coral is blessed to have an excellent police department. They need to be provided the equipment and training to meet our needs. Civil citations should be just another tool available to officers.

**What leadership would you provide to protect water quality and water resources in Lee County, including sea level rise, saltwater intrusion, use of herbicides, etc.?** As a city we do a good job on controlling what we allow in the water. We need to encourage the state and the feds to pursue constant testing and monitoring water released from Lake "O" and determine the source of the Lake's contamination.

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?** Crime, traffic and pollution. None of these stop or start with a boundary line. Cooperation with neighboring agencies is a must.

**Jean Pierre Etcheverry, Jr.**

**Party:** NON

**Biographical Info:**

**Why are you running for office and what do you hope to accomplish?** -no response-

**What are the most important challenges facing this office and how do you propose to address them?**  
-no response-

**What actions will you take to assure quality, safe, clean, attainable housing for city residents? How do you plan to reduce homelessness?** -no response-

**How should the city address economic development and infrastructure improvements while assuring equality and equity for all residents, including those in underserved neighborhoods?** -no response-

**What issues would you address with the Police Department? Do you support civil citations and other diversion programs for juveniles? For adults?** -no response-

**What leadership would you provide to protect water quality and water resources in Lee County, including sea level rise, saltwater intrusion, use of herbicides, etc.?** -no response-

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?** -no response-

**William "Bill" Steinke**



**Party:** NON

**Biographical Info:**

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**Why are you running for office and what do you hope to accomplish?**

I have been coming here since 1961, first lived here in 1977 and have been permanent since 1998 – long time. I have extensive business and leadership experience and wish to use it for the betterment of our City, it's citizens and business owners, as well as my children and grandchildren that live here – I have a vested interest in Cape Coral's future. My Grandfather and Grandmother who raised me always said "leave things better than when you found them". My intentions will be just that.

**What are the most important challenges facing this office and how do you propose to address them?**

Infrastructure – we must catch up with the growth we have experienced over the last few years and be prepared for future growth. As soon as those that wanted to live here were told they could work from anywhere - we were an obvious choice and more will follow.

Water and Environmental Quality – from the start, Cape Coral has been considered a waterfront wonderland. We must continue the quest to be proactive with new measures and insure steps committed to previously are fulfilled to care for our waterways, estuaries, beaches and Gulf.

Homes that are affordable for our workforce – our residents need services and business owners need workers. While we have 2% (ish) unemployment, the 98% that are working are far less than what we need. Affordability is a primary concern for them. My real estate and business owner background will allow me to introduce new concepts and/or dispel myths or misunderstandings regarding housing options not being taken advantage of currently.

**What actions will you take to assure quality, safe, clean, attainable housing for city residents? How do you plan to reduce homelessness?**

In most cases, I think homelessness is tragic. The cost of housing in our area has driven many of our citizens out of our city, some to move in with friends or relatives and unfortunately some to fend for themselves on our streets and in their cars. I am a supporter of the Cape Coral Caring Center and several other organizations that do their best to assist those in need. I and the Company I work for, as well as the RPCRA have worked with Habitat for Humanity to provide housing to deserving families in need. Through Builders Care and Realtors Care we help those with homes stay in them when unforeseen circumstance arise. Through my involvement with Florida Realtors, I have been involved with the introduction and passage of Hometown Heroes legislation, which provides down payment and closing cost assistance to many categories of critical workers in our area. I have previously shared my thoughts on increasing more attainable housing options and I am committed to that effort.

**How should the city address economic development and infrastructure improvements while assuring equality and equity for all residents, including those in underserved neighborhoods?**

In my opinion, the structure of the City Council affords each neighborhood to be represented in issues that the Council is confronted with, through the Council Member that lives in that neighborhood (District). So, when considering roads, Police, Fire, transportation, utilities, etc., the impact on each District should be considered when allocating resources. Different resources are needed in different areas at different times and a coordinated and cohesive approach needs to be applied to insure no one goes unserved in the needs that confront them.

**What issues would you address with the Police Department? Do you support civil citations and other diversion programs for juveniles? For adults?**

My Grandfather and two of my sons were/are career law enforcement officers and I was a volunteer officer with the Sheriff's Department for 9 years. They have one of the toughest jobs in the world we live in today. While every industry has a couple bad apples, our Cape Coral finest do their best to protect and serve, which leads us to be one of the safest cities in Florida. Minor infractions that warrant it, that could be dealt with outside of our court system, would certainly lighten the load on our resources and provide as an incentive to abide by the laws we all are expected to live within. A well selected and trained Officer should have the judgement and authority to apply whatever measure is appropriate - warning/education, citation, or arrest. That authority should be applied fairly, equally and without prejudice. An Officer that violates or misuses that authority should be dealt with immediately for the benefit and protection of our citizens and the honor of the badge.

**What leadership would you provide to protect water quality and water resources in Lee County, including sea level rise, saltwater intrusion, use of herbicides, etc.?**

Since the devastation caused by Lake O releases in '17 down the St. Lucie and '18 down the Caloosahatchee, I have been involved, through Florida Realtors Political Action Committee, to address that issue. It actually had been being addressed, although not at the speed it is today,

because of massive increased funding, partly as a result of our involvement in the issue. I just visited the C-43 Reservoir project on June 24th and it is on schedule to be operational in '24 and is AMAZING. Restrictions on fertilization have been put in place and we need to monitor compliance. City sewer utilities need to be expanded to our growth areas as quickly as possible to reduce the need for drain fields and septic systems. Existing septic systems need to be inspected on a regular basis to ensure proper maintenance and condition, so as not to allow leakage into our aquifers and estuaries. Any future development needs to have "effect on water quality and quantity" as one of its vetting components.

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?**

Roads, Transportation and Utilities/Services. State and Federal funding is available for a variety of developmental and maintenance issues and we need to make sure Cape Coral gets its fair share and is considered in the overall future of Lee County and the State of Florida. State, County and Regional services need to consider Cape Coral's needs, as well as resources it has to offer in all decision making. Obviously, our presence and participation in meetings/sessions that address these issues is extremely important. I would be quick to volunteer to be a part of a delegation to represent Cape Coral when the need arises.

**Ally Wharton**



**Party:** NON

**Biographical Info:**

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**Why are you running for office and what do you hope to accomplish?** Cape Coral is the fastest-growing city in Southwest Florida. There has never been a time more critical than now to plan for our future. I live here, work here and play here...and I hope to serve here too.

We deserve a City Council member that represents all of Cape Coral. A leader with proven problem-solving skills and practical business experience that will hold our elected officials accountable. I'm proud to be that leader. I hope to accomplish a prosperous future for all of Cape Coral's citizens.

**What are the most important challenges facing this office and how do you propose to address them?**

My top 3 issues are as follows:

- Livability - continual improvement of quality of life
- Community - creating an attractive place for our residents, businesses, and visitors
- Economic & Environmental Longevity

I believe we need to future proof our city and make it an attractive, livable place for all walks of life. Sustainable development that attracts visitors, works for our citizens and takes care of our environment.

**What actions will you take to assure quality, safe, clean, attainable housing for city residents? How do you plan to reduce homelessness?**

Each and every one of our citizens has a right to safe, clean and attainable housing. Our current tax rates and skyrocketing home values are pricing folks out of their homes and away from our city. Focus on mixed-used development, provide incentives for developers to create their profitable businesses, while at the same time building accessible housing. We need to invest in reliable public transportation and multi-use facilities that protect our environment. Ending homelessness is a multi-faceted approach. We must start with community outreach and provide meaningful resources to those in need. This starts with access to health care, including mental health and substance abuse treatment. The city needs a plan for increasing awareness, training our public service heroes how to support folks when they are struggling and educate them on When we plan city development, we must increase the affordable housing stock, increase shelter availability and access to public transport

**How should the city address economic development and infrastructure improvements while assuring equality and equity for all residents, including those in underserved neighborhoods?**

Assess affordable housing fees on developers who want to build market-rate housing. Fees allow developers to get to work quickly, and the fee they pay is contributed to a city fund for affordable housing in various parts of the city. Encourage multi-use facilities, include mixed-income developments on City-owned land to increase supply of multi-family units, advocate for higher income assistance limits. Facilities that hold grocery stores, restaurants and affordable living units serve multiple benefits inside one space. Cape Coral needs to focus on ways to attract residents and tourists alike. We can use this opportunity to enhance public interest in the downtown area and create safe, affordable homes.

Advocate for more realistic income assistance levels. With the cost of living rising, we need to adjust our income limits for families and individuals who need economic assistance.

**What issues would you address with the Police Department? Do you support civil citations and other diversion programs for juveniles? For adults?**

Our Police Department is currently understaffed and overworked. Community outreach and a positive perception are key to keeping them, and our citizens safe. We must work together to create a public persona, and actions that back it up, that our Police are here to keep us safe. They must act in kindness and with a servant heart, and City Council must support these efforts. They need to be well paid and well trained. I support civil citations, we are not here to penalize our citizens and the Police Departments goal is to deter crime and prevent repeat offences. Civil Citations are a great opportunity to demonstrate patience and understanding, while still upholding our laws. I believe it is of utmost importance for our youth, statistics prove that entering the judiciary system at a young age does not foster recovery, it fosters more crime. I believe the same for adults, in order to best protect our safety, and economic prosperity, we need less prison time and more opportunity to do good.

**What leadership would you provide to protect water quality and water resources in Lee County, including sea level rise, saltwater intrusion, use of herbicides, etc.?**

My family owns and operates a commercial marine company in Cape Coral. My partner has dedicated his life to serving our waterways, his health and safety, and the prosperity of our personal future depends on clean, quality water. I have the resources and connections to address the root cause issues of overdevelopment and pollution.

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?**

- Livability - continual improvement of quality of life
- Community - creating an attractive place for our residents, businesses, and visitors
- Economic & Environmental Longevity

These are my top priorities for Cape Coral, and that means these are the top issues to coordinate with our local resources. It's a team effort on every level, and we must get buy in from all of our city government in order to be successful.

**Cape Coral City Council District 4**

The City of Cape Coral operates under the Council-City Manager form of government. City council members are elected at large from seven districts. The mayor also is elected at large and is the eighth member of council. The mayor presides over council meetings. The City Council enacts ordinances and resolutions, adopts the budget, comprehensive plan and land-use regulations. The Council appoints the City Manager, City Auditor and City Attorney, as well as the members of all boards and commissions. The City Manager hires all department directors and oversees the day-to-day operations of the city. Source: extracted from [https://www.capecoral.net/government/city\\_government/overview/index.php](https://www.capecoral.net/government/city_government/overview/index.php)

**Joshua Clark**

**Party:** NON

**Biographical Info:**

**Why are you running for office and what do you hope to accomplish?** As a small business owner and have recently finished building my own home in the Cape. I have not had one negative experience of any city employee. To improve the quality of life for our citizens. I would like to eliminate / amend some of our ordinances that hinder the quality of life for our hard working families and small business owners.

**What are the most important challenges facing this office and how do you propose to address them?**

Outdated ordinances that hinder the quality of life for hardworking families and small business owners

**What actions will you take to assure quality, safe, clean, attainable housing for city residents? How do you plan to reduce homelessness?** I would like to see affordable house for our teachers, and first responders. As hard as it to admit we have a homeless problem, but it is real. Unfortunately I do not have a good answer for the homeless needs at this time.

**How should the city address economic development and infrastructure improvements while assuring equality and equity for all residents, including those in underserved neighborhoods?** I feel we are very behind in our infrastructure. We need to restructure our roadways to accommodate the rapid commercial and residential growth. I strongly support a large indoor community center

**What issues would you address with the Police Department? Do you support civil citations and other diversion programs for juveniles? For adults?** I believe our cities police department is doing a great job. I believe diversion programs are a good way to teach our youth to follow laws without sending them down the wrong path.

**What leadership would you provide to protect water quality and water resources in Lee County, including sea level rise, saltwater intrusion, use of herbicides, etc.?** I would be willing to serve as counsel liaison on the waterway advisory board for the city. And continue working with department directors on updating our watering and fertilizer ordnances.

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?** Roadways, Waterways, and County and state permits in order to complete our projects in a timely manner.

## **Patty Cummings**

**Party:** NON

**Biographical Info:**

**Why are you running for office and what do you hope to accomplish?** -no response-

**What are the most important challenges facing this office and how do you propose to address them?**  
-no response-

**What actions will you take to assure quality, safe, clean, attainable housing for city residents? How do you plan to reduce homelessness?** -no response-

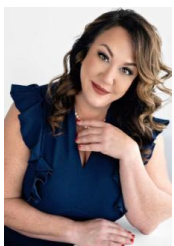
**How should the city address economic development and infrastructure improvements while assuring equality and equity for all residents, including those in underserved neighborhoods?** -no response-

**What issues would you address with the Police Department? Do you support civil citations and other diversion programs for juveniles? For adults?** -no response-

**What leadership would you provide to protect water quality and water resources in Lee County, including sea level rise, saltwater intrusion, use of herbicides, etc.?** -no response-

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?** -no response-

## **Jennifer Nelson**



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**Why are you running for office and what do you hope to accomplish?** I ran in 2017 for my daughter and her generation of friends. She was 11 at the time and claimed to me she would never return to Cape Coral because there was nothing here for her. I'm running to finish what I started in making Cape Coral a place where future generations will want to return and lead in the community where they grew up. I would like to finish the purchase of the old golf course so that we have precious green space we can strategically develop as an amenity for our residents and visitors.

**What are the most important challenges facing this office and how do you propose to address them?**

Finding qualified, experienced, and diverse candidates to run is a challenge. I always encourage residents to apply for our City boards and committees so that they learn and educate themselves on how our city works. Attracting generational, cultural, and gender diverse candidates is key to having a well rounded board from all walks of life.

**What actions will you take to assure quality, safe, clean, attainable housing for city residents? How do you plan to reduce homelessness?**

As a member of the Affordable Housing Committee in Cape Coral, I understand the challenge of affordable housing we face like many other SWFL communities. We have one affordable housing project being built now but it will be specific for seniors. I want more developers who will assist us with this very important need and I will support land use and zoning changes to assist these type of developments coming to our city. Homelessness is a concern as our city is growing. In 2019, I created a Homeless Taskforce in Cape Coral that partnered with stakeholders throughout Lee County. This resulted in our police department creating a Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) which includes a social worker that can assist our homeless with finding the correct services match within Lee County.

**How should the city address economic development and infrastructure improvements while assuring equality and equity for all residents, including those in underserved neighborhoods?**

Our growth and infrastructure should be sustainable long term. Planning and developing key areas within our city based on our list of priorities is crucial. Attracting businesses that fit our demographic is important for workforce development in our future leaders and the only way to address equality and equity is through education.

**What issues would you address with the Police Department? Do you support civil citations and other diversion programs for juveniles? For adults?**

Making sure we have enough police officers for our growing city is very important as we want our service response times to be quick. Diversion programs for both juveniles and adults is an important piece to rehabilitation and turning lives around for the good.

**What leadership would you provide to protect water quality and water resources in Lee County, including sea level rise, saltwater intrusion, use of herbicides, etc.?**

I sponsored a stronger fertilizer ordinance in 2018 and formed a taskforce of fertilizer, landscaping and environmental professionals to help us create an ordinance that both businesses and environmentalist supported. As a member of the SWF resiliency compact, we are beginning to address our shoreline erosion and sea level rise resiliency efforts as a region. Educating and communicating to our residents is very important when it comes to these issues so that everyone knows how to do their part in protecting our largest economic driver, our water.

**What are the top three issues to coordinate with other governmental jurisdictions and why?**

Water quality, home insurance, and affordable housing are issues we coordinate with our county, state, and federal officials. It's important to collaborate and work together because these 3 issues affect us regionally.