



VOTERS' GUIDE – CANDIDATES & ISSUES

For Portage County, Ohio

MAY 2, 2023 PRIMARY/SPECIAL ELECTION

This voter's guide is a joint venture of the *Record-Courier* and the League of Women Voters of Kent and Northern Portage County.

The League of Women Voters of Kent and Northern Portage County are non-partisan political organizations that promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government and act on selected governmental issues. **The League of Women Voters does not support or oppose any candidate or political party.** The League is fully committed to ensure compliance—in principle and in practice—with the LWVUS' Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy. Any person who subscribes to the purposes and policy of the League shall be eligible for membership.

Candidates at the local level.

KENT CITY: There is only a Democratic primary election in Kent for Wards 1 and 6.

The LWV of Kent asked the candidates to provide biographical information and to answer questions. The candidates were invited to participate by entering their responses on the VOTE411 website in accordance with the following guidelines.

The League of Women Voters of Kent reserves the right not to publish any material determined to be libelous, damaging to a person or group, or offensive in accordance with the League's values and as outlined in its publishing policy. It reserves the right to offer alternative wording to the candidate. The League will not correct spelling, grammar or punctuation. Each candidate is solely responsible for the text they submit, including the truth of his/her statements. Each candidate is advised in writing to carefully note the word limitations listed on their questionnaire since no text beyond the word limit will be included. A candidate's answers are accepted and printed only with the understanding that the material will not be used in any way that may be deemed to be an endorsement by the League of his or her candidacy or views.

TALLMADGE CITY (Voters in Brimfield A Split 2 and Brimfield E Split 2): There is only a Republican primary election in Tallmadge. The candidates were invited to participate by the LWV Akron Area by entering their responses on the VOTE411 website.

RAVENNA CITY AND STREETSBORO CITY: There are no primary elections for candidates in Ravenna and Streetsboro. All candidates who filed will appear on the November 7, 2023 General Election Ballot. There is an Issues Only ballot for voters in Ravenna.

Issues: The issues are listed with the language appearing on the ballot.

Visit www.vote411.org to view a side-by-side comparison of the candidates' biographical information and all of the questions and answers.

The League of Women Voters of Kent and Northern Portage County thank the *Record-Courier* for providing the print version of the Voters' Guide. We also thank Faith Lyon, Director, Theresa Nielsen, Deputy Director, and the staff at the Portage County Board of Elections for their valuable assistance in compiling this material. The information contained in this publication may not be reproduced without consent of the League of Women Voters of Kent.

League of Women Voters of Kent kentlww.org

President: Deborah Barber Voter Guide Co-Chairs: Nena Hankins, (330)673-0128 & Barbara Hipsman Springer

League of Women Voters of Northern Portage County northernportagecountylww.org

Voter Service Co-Chairs: Raji Alladi and Janice Simmons-Mortimer

KENT CITY COUNCIL WARD 1
VOTE FOR NO MORE THAN ONE



Melissa Celko

Party: Dem

Campaign Facebook: www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100090711304276

Training & Experience: 30 + years in healthcare, tech, wellness and leadership, trained in non-clinical mental health and wellness.

Education: MBA & BA from Ursuline College

Campaign Mailing Address: 545 Pioneer St, Kent OH 44240

Q: What issues are high priority for your city in the next few years and what is your take on solutions?

A: To make Kent is the best place to live, work and play. Kent should be known as a safe and equitable community where everyone feels welcome. This means a great place to live with diverse housing options, a welcoming environment for visitors with lots to do and a place where companies and entrepreneurs what to build businesses. Key issues that cities all over the country are facing and Kent is no exception, are addressing disparity, pedestrian safety, climate action and repair our streets and aging utility infrastructure.

Q: Looking at the recent derailment in East Palestine, help us understand how Kent could protect its citizens. What measures exist or should be undertaken?

A: We must work with with state and national partners to institute appropriate oversight of the aging railroad infrastructure and hold the railroad companies responsible for improving safety controls. These derailments are a failure of oversight and regulation along with the railroad companies poor management. We should insist on a thorough independent review of all rail lines going into and out of the area. We must also advocate for more transparency in safety measures when toxic chemicals are being transported. This is a problem affecting the entire country but we must find ways to act collectively while ensuring as much local oversight as possible.

KENT CITY COUNCIL WARD 1
VOTE FOR NO MORE THAN ONE



Benjamin Tipton

Party: Dem

Education: BA, Kent State University; MA, University of British Columbia

Campaign Mailing Address: 128 N. Prospect St., Kent OH 44240

Q: What issues are high priority for your city in the next few years and what is your take on solutions?

A: I call Kent home and I'm highly committed to the success of this community. You may see me walking to work at Kent State University every day, rain or shine. My kids attend Kent City Schools. My family is deeply rooted in this place and we seek to serve and support all the amazing people and progress of this city.

I've been very involved with City of Kent volunteer boards over the past 8 years, having served for 6 1/2 years on the Board of Zoning Appeals, 3 years on the Fair Housing Board, and most recently on the Salary Review Committee. I've learned a lot from these experiences and have also seen what issues need addressed in our fair city.

I am running for City of Kent Ward 1 Council to help ensure that the town the I live and work in continues to develop in a positive way. The changes to our town over the past 15 years have improved many facets of life in Kent and I look to support similar activities.

Q: Looking at the recent derailment in East Palestine, help us understand how Kent could protect its citizens. What measures exist or should be undertaken?

A: The city of Kent, unfortunately, is no stranger to railroad accidents. Railroad oversight resides with the federal government, but the City of Kent could advocate for its citizens by ensuring that all crossings are safe (where most derailments occur) and that all the railroads that cross our city are fully engaged in the safety of our community. We are in a moment in our region that such advocacy and engagement should occur. I would support such efforts.

KENT CITY COUNCIL WARD 6
VOTE FOR NO MORE THAN ONE



Jeff Clapper

Party: Dem

Campaign Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/202077045844724/

Training & Experience: Planning Commission member for the City of Kent since 2017

Education: Graduate of Kent Roosevelt High School Class of 1995

Campaign Mailing Address: 473 Miller Ave., Kent OH 44240

Q: What issues are high priority for your city in the next few years and what is your take on solutions?

A: I think the most important issue that can be addressed is making sure each and every resident of Kent know that they are fundamental to the success of the city. It is very easy to look at all the redevelopment of downtown and see growth, resurgence and our tax dollars at work. I want to make certain that we can look at our neighborhoods to see the same success and efforts being made. Streets, Sidewalks and Safety! Those are the three things I hear comments about the most and think we can easily make improvements upon. We can do a better job paving and maintaining roads. Sidewalks must be in good repair and free of obstructions like over grown hedges or parked cars. I'd like to see an increased police presence in neighborhoods not only to deter crime but to catch the abundant speeders and stop sign runners that put people at risk. To achieve any success here or with any other issue I plan to be a conduit for residents to communicate their concerns and address them quickly as possible.

Q: Looking at the recent derailment in East Palestine, help us understand how Kent could protect its citizens. What measures exist or should be undertaken?

A: I believe the most important step we can take is to try to reduce the possibility of train derailments before they happen. As a community we need to insist that stringent regulations are applied to railroads and are vigorously enforced through the Federal Railroad Administration. This will require a concerted effort between city, state and federally elected officials along with the support of our citizens to make sure that the safety of people is placed above the desire for profit of corporations. Once regulations are put in place there is still the possibility of accidents and derailments. It will be important to make sure our first responders have access to and are up to date with the latest training and methods to deal with incidents as they occur so that we can minimize the impact on people, homes, businesses and our environment.

KENT CITY COUNCIL WARD 6
VOTE FOR NO MORE THAN ONE



Tracy Wallach

Party: Dem

Campaign Email: twallach@kent.edu

Training & Experience: 15 years on Kent City Council

Education: BA Kalamazoo College, Kalamazoo, Michigan, MA Kent State University, Kent, Ohio

Campaign Mailing Address: 231 Starr Avenue, Kent OH 44240

Q: What issues are high priority for your city in the next few years and what is your take on solutions?

A: CLIMATE CHANGE:

A colleague of mine and I pushed to require all future City buildings to meet LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards. Since this requirement was passed, two new Leed compliant City buildings have been constructed.

Council directed City management to work on a Climate Action Plan. This plan is focused on reducing Kent's greenhouse gas emissions.

I drive an electric car.

Q: Looking at the recent derailment in East Palestine, help us understand how Kent could protect its citizens. What measures exist or should be undertaken?

A: Kent's emergency responders already have action plans in place in case a situation like that in East Palestine arises. If Kent's resources are insufficient to deal with an emergency derailment, then the State would be contacted to send additional vehicles and personnel to the scene from surrounding areas.

As an example, Kent recently had a fire emergency downtown. Kent's emergency personnel and additional resources sent from surrounding areas by the state, quickly gained control of the situation and kept it under control.

TALLMADGE CITY MAYOR
VOTE FOR NO MORE THAN ONE



Adam Bozic

Republican

EDUCATION

Masters - Sport Administration, Bachelors - Sport Management

TRAINING/EXPERIENCE

Current At-Large City Councilman

WEBSITE www.bozicforoffice.com

FACEBOOK www.facebook.com/BozicforMayor/

Q: Why are you the best candidate for the office?

A: Tallmadge has experienced immense growth and change in the past thirty years and our leadership should be a direct reflection of an ever-evolving community, one that continually evaluates the needs of our residents. As a Veteran, long term resident, father, business owner and former city employee, I am the best candidate for the Mayor of Tallmadge. My vision for the community closely aligns with the expectations our citizens deserve. If I am elected, I will place an emphasis on 1.) Accountability and Transparency in City Government; 2.) Responsible Growth and Community Planning; 3.) Continual Improvement of the Parks and Recreation Amenities; and 4.) Support and Retention of our Safety Force Professional.

Q: What is your vision for economic development for your community over the next ten years?

A: Economic Development is at the core of city growth, development and long term sustainability. To be successful in Economic Development, the following areas will be addressed upon my election to Mayor: 1) Small Business Access to Resources, including the creation of an online centralized Business Resource Center. This could provide access to Local, State and Federal funding options available. 2) Technology Upgrade and Investment - As many jobs become remote, implementing a highly reliable fiber network will continue to attract residents and provide an advantage when businesses are looking to move into Tallmadge. 3.) Creation of a Business Task Force - The Task Force will be composed of local business professionals within the community to prioritize where the city can improve and assist with growth and development from a business point of view.

Q: What are the most significant issues facing your community and what ideas do you have to address these issues?

A: The issues facing our community: 1. Our Planning & Zoning guidelines, standards and codes are high priorities. Economic Development is driven by good planning. We need a strategic vision for the future, not just what works for today. 2. "Hello, can you hear me?" I hear you Tallmadge! As more residents grow frustrated with our lack of cellular coverage, I will find the right people and right solution to improve our communication. Living in Tallmadge with bad cell reception should not be a standard. 3. Improving walkability, and while a huge financial undertaking, creating a phased plan to connect our sidewalks and hike/bike trails providing residents with more ways to hike, run, walk or bike throughout the city. 4. Safety services are, and will always be, a priority. Attracting and retaining the best talent has become increasingly more difficult. It is my goal to find solutions to attract candidates to Tallmadge and retain the best talent.

TALLMADGE CITY MAYOR
VOTE FOR NO MORE THAN ONE



Dennis K. Loughry

Republican

EDUCATION

Attended the University of Akron and obtained several professional designations.

TRAINING/EXPERIENCE

Please go to loughryfortallmadge.com to view my training and experience.

WEBSITE loughryfortallmadge.com

FACEBOOK www.facebook.com/search/top?q=loughry%20for%20mayor

Q: Why are you the best candidate for the office?

A: After serving our city for over three decades, I feel uniquely equipped to lead us forward. During this time, I have been dedicated to the betterment of our community, serving on the school board for 11 years and contributing to various roles including civil service commission, at large councilperson for 9 years, president of city council, director of public service, and director of economic development. My work as the director of economic development also allowed me to participate in regional economic development boards. Beyond my public service, I have also built successful organizations through my experience as a businessman and coach. Through these roles, I have learned how to build strong, effective organizations and value the opinions of others while treating them with the respect they deserve. My involvement in local civic organizations and foundations, including serving as the executive director of the Tallmadge Chamber of Commerce, has provided me with a broad perspective.

Q: What is your vision for economic development for your community over the next ten years?

A: I am committed to promoting a healthy Summit County, where the success of each community is interconnected. With my proven ability to foster positive relationships, both new and existing, I am confident that I can help elevate our community to new heights of prosperity. I believe a rising tide lifts all boats, and that a thriving Akron is essential to our regional economic development. To this end, I am committed to ensuring that Tallmadge remains competitive in our economic development efforts and that our local businesses receive the recognition and support they deserve. By encouraging our residents to shop locally, we can help our community grow stronger and more vibrant. Finally, I recognize the importance of supporting our neighbors like Brimfield in their economic endeavors, particularly with the development of the JEDD. By collaborating and promoting growth throughout the region, we can ensure a prosperous future for our communities over the next decade and beyond.

Q: What are the most significant issues facing your community and what ideas do you have to address these issues?

To enhance the functioning of government entities, three issues must be addressed: trust, safety, and stewardship. These concerns are equally applicable to Tallmadge. In order to increase trust, I will ensure employees behave in a transparent, respectful, and truthful manner. We will enhance our communication channels both internally and externally, and encourage residents to become involved in city government. I, along with my reports, will hold regular outreach meetings with the public and host one-on-one meetings. By 2030, 1 in 4 Ohioans will be over the age of 65. Tallmadge is the second oldest city in Summit County, and this figure is likely to be higher for us. As a result, a larger portion of our budget should be put toward safety services for our aging neighbors. Lastly, government money is taxpayer money, and we are entrusted to act as responsible stewards on behalf of the public. All financial decisions will be based on projected ROI- and made with very thorough analysis.

TALLMADGE CITY DIRECTOR OF FINANCE
NO CANDIDATE FILED

TALLMADGE CITY DIRECTOR OF LAW
NO CANDIDATE FILED

TALLMADGE CITY WARD 2 COUNCILMAN
VOTE FOR NO MORE THAN ONE

Bill Laymon
Republican
NO RESPONSES YET.

Donald J. Pavlik
Republican
NO RESPONSES YET.

TALLMADGE CITY WARD 3 COUNCILMAN
VOTE FOR NO MORE THAN ONE

Jonathon D. Bollas
Republican

1 Proposed Tax Levy (Renewal) Edinburg Township

A majority affirmative vote is necessary for passage.

A renewal of a tax for the benefit of Edinburg Township for the purpose of providing and maintaining fire apparatus, mechanical resuscitators, underwater rescue and recovery equipment, or other fire equipment and appliances, buildings and sites therefore, or sources of water supply and materials therefore, for the establishment and maintenance of lines of fire-alarm communications, for the payment of firefighting companies or permanent, part-time, or volunteer firefighting, emergency medical service, administrative, or communications personnel to operate the same, including the payment of any employer contributions required for such staff under section 145.48 or 742.34 of the Revised Code, for the purchase of ambulance equipment, for the provision of ambulance, paramedic, or other emergency medical services operated by a fire department or firefighting company, or for the payment of other related costs that the county auditor estimates will collect \$86,000 annually, at a rate not exceeding 1.5 mills for each \$1 of taxable value, which amounts to \$36 for each \$100,000 of the county auditor's appraised value, for 5 years, commencing in 2023, first due in calendar year 2024.

FOR THE TAX LEVY

AGAINST THE TAX LEVY

2 Proposed Tax Levy (Renewal) Nelson Township

A majority affirmative vote is necessary for passage.

A renewal of a tax for the benefit of Nelson Township for the purpose of general construction, reconstruction, resurfacing, and repair of streets, roads, and bridges that the county auditor estimates will collect \$79,996 annually, at a rate not exceeding 2 mills for each \$1 of taxable value, which amounts to \$34 for each \$100,000 of the county auditor's appraised value, for 5 years, commencing in 2023, first due in calendar year 2024.

FOR THE TAX LEVY

AGAINST THE TAX LEVY

3 Proposed Tax Levy (Renewal) Nelson Township

A majority affirmative vote is necessary for passage.

A renewal of a tax for the benefit of Nelson Township for the purpose of general construction, reconstruction, resurfacing, and repair of streets, roads, and bridges that the county auditor estimates will collect \$79,996 annually, at a rate not exceeding 2 mills for each \$1 of taxable value, which amounts to \$34 for each \$100,000 of the county auditor's appraised value, for 5 years, commencing in 2023, first due in calendar year 2024.

FOR THE TAX LEVY

AGAINST THE TAX LEVY

4 Proposed Tax Levy (Additional) Ravenna City School District

A majority affirmative vote is necessary for passage.

An additional tax for the benefit of the Ravenna City School District for the purpose of current expenses, that the county auditor estimates will collect \$2,674,101 annually, at a rate not exceeding 6.9 mills for each \$1 of taxable value, which amounts to \$242 for each \$100,000 of the county auditor's appraised value, for 5 years, commencing in 2023, first due in calendar year 2024.

FOR THE TAX LEVY

AGAINST THE TAX LEVY

5 Proposed Tax Levy (Renewal) Stow-Munroe Falls City School District Summit and Portage Counties A majority affirmative vote is necessary for passage. Shall a levy renewing an existing levy be imposed by the Stow-Munroe Falls City School District for the purpose of providing for the emergency requirements of the school district in the sum of \$7,300,000 and a levy of taxes to be made outside of the ten-mill limitation estimated by the county fiscal officer to average 6.28 mills for each \$1 of taxable value, which amounts to \$196 for each \$100,000 dollars of the county fiscal officer's appraised value for a period of 10 years, commencing in 2023, first due in calendar year 2024?

FOR THE TAX LEVY

AGAINST THE TAX LEVY

6 Proposed Tax Levy (Additional) Lake Local School District (Stark and Portage Counties)

A majority affirmative vote is necessary for passage.

An additional tax for the benefit of Lake Local School District for the purpose of current expenses that the county auditor estimates will collect \$8,277,576 annually, at a rate not exceeding 13 mills for each \$1 of taxable value, which amounts to \$455 for each \$100,000 of the county auditor's appraised value, for a continuing period of time, commencing in 2023, first due in calendar year 2024.

FOR THE TAX LEVY

AGAINST THE TAX LEVY

7 Proposed Tax Levy (Additional) Mogadore Local School District Summit and Portage Counties

A majority affirmative vote is necessary for passage. An additional tax for the benefit of the Mogadore Local School District for the purpose of current expenses that the county fiscal officer estimates will collect \$1,066,000 annually, at a rate not exceeding 9.9 mills for each \$1 of taxable value, which amounts to \$346 for each \$100,000 of the county fiscal officer's appraised value, for a continuing period of time, commencing in 2023, first due in calendar year 2024.

FOR THE TAX LEVY

AGAINST THE TAX LEVY

8 Proposed Tax Levy (Additional) Springfield Local School District Summit and Portage Counties A majority affirmative vote is necessary for passage. Shall a levy be imposed by the Springfield Local School District for the purpose of providing for the emergency requirements of the school district in the sum of \$1,739,000 and a levy of taxes to be made outside of the ten-mill limitation estimated by the county fiscal officer to average 3.77 mills for each \$1 of taxable value, which amounts to \$132 for each \$100,000 of the county fiscal officer's appraised value, for a period of 5 years, commencing in 2023, first due in calendar year 2024?

FOR THE TAX LEVY

AGAINST THE TAX LEVY

9 Proposed Tax Levy (Renewal and Increase) Waterloo Local School District

A majority affirmative vote is necessary for passage.

Shall a levy renewing \$939,557 and providing an increase of \$840,453 be imposed by the Waterloo Local School District for the purpose of avoiding an operating deficit in the sum of \$1,780,010 and a levy of taxes to be made outside of the ten-mill limitation estimated by the county auditor to average 8.3 mills for each \$1 of taxable value which amounts to \$276 for each \$100,000 of the county auditor's appraised value, for a period of 5 years, commencing in 2023, first due in calendar year 2024.

FOR THE TAX LEVY

AGAINST THE TAX LEVY

10 Proposed Tax Levy (Replacement) Mantua Shalersville Fire District

A majority affirmative vote is necessary for passage.

A replacement of a tax for the benefit of Mantua Shalersville Fire District for the purpose of providing and maintaining fire apparatus, mechanical resuscitators, underwater rescue and recovery equipment, or other fire equipment and appliances, buildings and sites therefore, or sources of water supply and materials therefore, for the establishment and maintenance of lines of fire-alarm communications, for the payment of firefighting companies or permanent, part-time or volunteer firefighting, emergency medical services, administrative, or communications personnel to operate the same, including the payment of any employer contributions required for such personnel under section 145.48 or 742.34 of the Revised Code, for the purchase of ambulance equipment, for the provision of ambulance, paramedic, or other emergency medical services operated by a fire department or firefighting company, or the payment of other related costs, that the county auditor estimates will collect \$948,000 annually, at a rate not exceeding 2.99 mills for each \$1 of taxable value, which amounts to \$105 for each \$100,000 of the county auditor's appraised value, for 5 years, commencing in 2023, first due in calendar year 2024.

FOR THE TAX LEVY

AGAINST THE TAX LEVY

11 Local Liquor Option For Particular Location (By Petition) Kent City 1B

A majority affirmative vote is necessary for passage.

Shall the sale of beer, wine and mixed beverages, and spirituous liquor be permitted by 265 West, Inc., (dba Kent's Underground), an applicant for a D-5i liquor permit, who is engaged in the business of operating a bar/restaurant at 265 W. Main Street, Kent, Ohio 44240 in this precinct?

YES

NO

12 Local Liquor Option For Particular Location (By Petition) (Sunday Sales) Kent City 1B

A majority affirmative vote is necessary for passage.

Shall the sale of wine and mixed beverages, and spirituous liquor be permitted for sale on Sunday by 265 West, Inc., (dba Kent's Underground) an applicant for a D-6 liquor permit, who is engaged in the business of operating a bar/restaurant at 265 W. Main Street, Kent, Ohio 44240 in this precinct?

YES

NO