

## **SANDY GOLDING – Candidate for Jacksonville Beach District 3 Seat 6**

### **Jacksonville Beach Candidate Written Questions**

- 1. How will you address the budgetary shortfalls caused by the loss of the Better Jacksonville Plan, as well as the proposed amendments that change property tax exemptions? What is your plan to preserve the levels-of-service for Jacksonville Beach residents?**

#### **Loss of Better Jacksonville Plan revenues:**

Revenue from the Better Jacksonville Plan (BJP) has provided Jacksonville Beach with anywhere between about \$900k and \$1.3M each year for many years, and that is expected to be the case until the tax expires at the end of 2030. About \$4.9M of this revenue was applied to upgrading the waste treatment plant.

Other notable projects undertaken with this revenue have been:

- a. A portion of the 9<sup>th</sup> Street improvements (\$700k)
- b. The 11<sup>th</sup> Street N rebuild project
- c. Wingate Park parking & road improvements
- d. Duval Dr. improvements
- e. School sidewalks
- f. A new cart storage facility for the Golf Course

In the next few years, the city is continuing to budget \$70k per year from this funding for school sidewalk improvements. About \$3M of this revenue is planned for use in 2022 for street improvements east of 3rd Street, between 13th Ave S and 16th Ave S.

When Jacksonville Beach no longer receives revenue from the Better Jacksonville Plan in 2030, we will have to undertake infrastructure projects as we did before we had this revenue, with careful planning and budgeting to ensure our levels of service are not compromised. However, since this revenue is expected to be received for the next 11 years, the incoming city council's obligation must be to ensure we do not overcommit future Better Jacksonville Plan funds.

#### **Loss of Revenue from the Constitutional Amendments:**

The city is not expecting to see an appreciable loss of revenue from passage of Amendment 2. However, the loss of revenue from passage of Amendment 1 is estimated to be \$567k, and that's a lot of money to make up.

Since property taxes go into the General Fund, the General Fund is the first place to look for savings. In FY2019, the General Fund paid \$150k toward operating expenses for the golf course while it was closed for renovations. The golf course will be opening soon and is expected to do a better job of taking in revenue, so that expenditure is expected to go away. That leaves \$417k that we are spending this year that we won't have next year if Amendment 1 passes.

One of the best revenue generators we have right now is becoming debt-free. In 2020 we'll retire two outstanding bonds, which will reduce the budget by about \$4.4M. Although, due to accounting practices, not all of this \$4.4M would be recoverable directly into the General Fund, there should be enough General Fund savings to more than offset the expected loss of revenue from passage of Amendment 1.

Although, as noted above, we will not have to cover the anticipated \$417k shortfall caused by passage of Amendment 1 after FY2020, we can expect to have to cover it in FY2020. Another potential way to address the \$417k shortfall is with Better Jacksonville Plan revenue. In FY2019 we are spending about \$500k of BJP revenue to service a bond that was taken out against that revenue stream. That bond will be paid off in FY2019, which will free that \$500k, which can be used for water, sewer, and stormwater improvements or recreational facility capital improvements. With BJP money applied to those items, General Fund money would not be needed for them.

Lastly, the FY2019 budget identified an opportunity to pursue an agreement with Duval County to reduce the tax increment funding percentage utilized in the Redevelopment Districts in order to receive/retain more revenue in the City's General Fund. I have checked with city staff and they have not yet determined how much to recommend be restructured, but this could provide some or all the relief we will need for budget shortfalls.

In short, we have multiple ways to address any shortfalls attributed to passage of Amendment 1 that should not require an increase in taxes or negatively affect levels-of-service for Jacksonville Beach residents.

**2. What are Jacksonville Beaches' infrastructure needs when it comes to sea level rise and resiliency and what would you propose to address these issues?**

As we have seen with Hurricanes Matthew and Irma, weather events and flooding are a major risk for our coastal community. Many coastal communities in Florida are now planning for resiliency to proactively address enhanced storm surges, tidal flooding and stormwater runoff issues. Advanced planning for our coastal community is definitely preferred over reacting to emergencies because it provides comprehensive solutions and saves money by allowing time for competitive bidding. It is important to note that FEMA has found that for every \$1 spent in mitigation, \$4 is saved in disaster relief. So, planning and investing in resilient infrastructure helps prevent flooding, protects our home values and reduces our flood insurance costs.

I spoke with our Public Works department and, as a result of the damage and flooding from the storms in recent years, Jacksonville Beach has initiated projects for rebuilding the beaches and dunes and improving the City's stormwater systems.

Per our Public Works department, the Climate Institute lists protecting and maintaining natural barriers such as the dunes as one of the primary strategies for increasing a city's

resilience. So the dune restoration projects are extremely important for Jacksonville Beach resiliency. In addition to the city's projects, we owe a special thanks to Fletcher High School teacher Kevin Brown and his Marine Science Service Club students who have worked tirelessly to help restore vegetation on the dunes along our beaches.

Jacksonville Beach's Planning & Development Department currently represents the city on the Duval County Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) Advisory Committee regarding natural hazards such as hurricanes and flooding. The LMS is a planning process required by the State of Florida to oversee a plan of mitigation initiatives to help the county be resilient and anticipate and prepare for hazard avoidance. In Duval County, this process is overseen by the Duval County Local Mitigation Strategy Advisory Committee which meets quarterly.

Some of the Jacksonville Beach projects on the LMS project list are:

- Beach renourishment
- Dune revegetation
- Extending stormwater outfalls to 10 feet seaward of the dune to avoid breaks in the dune
- Increase the height of dune walkovers to accommodate the growing dune
- Emergency generator for the water plant at Osceola Avenue
- Portable pumps for our lift stations
- Putting utilities underground east of 3<sup>rd</sup> St (between Seagate Ave and 7<sup>th</sup> Ave N and between 17<sup>th</sup> Ave S and the St Johns County line)

Fortunately, other coastal communities in Florida are learning which approaches to increase resiliency are working and which are not, so we should be able to adopt their best practices.

As a member of the Jacksonville Beach City Council, I will support the projects on the LMS project list as well as any other projects identified by our Public Works department to ensure we are proactively investing in resilient infrastructure.

### **3. Do you agree with the current parking solution? Why or why not?**

#### **In the Central Business District:**

I believe our current paid parking solution in the downtown City lots has been helpful in generating revenue to provide more officers in the downtown area and to increase safety in the paid parking lots. However, I think we need to re-evaluate the price we are charging for parking during times when there is a high demand for parking (i.e. holidays, events and peak times). I also believe we need to have spaces with time limits near our commercial businesses to encourage turnover and discourage people from parking in these spaces all day. I also support keeping parking free for all residents of Jacksonville Beach and implementation of a residential parking program to prevent creep into residential areas surrounding the downtown from people who don't want to pay to park.

As a proponent of making our community more livable, walkable and bike-able, the livable community philosophy is to focus more on our people and less on cars. So, I support anything we can do to encourage other modes of transportation besides cars. I love the Beach Buggies business and concept that has helped provide alternative “beachy” transportation to our downtown and to other Jax Beach businesses. In the very near future, as a result of our Downtown Action Plan, we will be installing more bike racks in the downtown area and this will help to encourage biking to our downtown. With the increase in the use of low speed vehicles, I would also like to see us add some parking for low speed vehicles in the downtown area.

Several years ago, the council approved a 50% reduction in required parking for businesses that are not bars or restaurants in the CBD and I was a supporter of this. I think this reduction in parking requirement is a good thing that will help to encourage a diversity of businesses into our downtown area as well as encourage other forms of transportation.

Finally, there has been talk for over 20 years about building a parking garage for the downtown. In a recent Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) workshop, the CRA members discussed parking in the downtown and agreed we currently don’t have a parking problem during the day; the only times we have a parking problem is late at night and during events. In 2009, it was estimated that a parking garage that provided only 282 spaces would cost \$7.8 million to construct. Today, that cost is expected to be even higher. Because our downtown area is still very seasonal, a parking garage will be under-utilized most of the time and will not be a revenue generator, nor will it be revenue neutral. And with the current nighttime public safety issues, a parking garage will only increase the number of people our police will have to deal with late at night. I could only support the addition of a parking garage if it is done as a public/private endeavor in conjunction with the addition of a desired mix of development that will stimulate the revitalization of the downtown during the day and bring our locals to our downtown.

**In our residential neighborhoods:**

Over the last several years, some of our neighborhoods have seen single family homes replaced with multi-family homes, primarily townhomes. As a result, there has been an increase in the number of cars parking in our neighborhood streets where these new multifamily properties exist. Currently, our Land Development Code requires two parking spaces per residential unit. However, the new multifamily homes/townhomes are oftentimes four bedroom units rented by 3-4 different people who drive 3-4 cars. When these properties only have space for two cars, the other 1-2 cars end up parking on the street and this is having a negative impact on the neighbors and our neighborhood streets. I support re-evaluating the parking requirement for multifamily properties to ensure that new multifamily developments are not having a negative impact on our neighborhoods.

**4. Please explain what personal and/or professional community service experience has prepared you to serve as an elected official for the citizens of Jacksonville Beach?**

On a professional level, with 15 years of Project Management experience, my strength is getting things done, consensus building, problem solving and working with teams. I believe this will be invaluable when working with my fellow councilors, City staff and the citizens of Jacksonville Beach.

On a personal level, I have devoted over 17 years of my personal time to serving our community. My involvement started 17 years ago when I led the effort to open the first public dog park in Jacksonville Beach. In order to understand how to get things done in City Hall, I started attending the City Council meetings. As a result, I began learning about the issues facing our city that impact our quality of life. I am a true believer that citizen involvement is key to good government and I realized there was a need to educate and engage citizens in the decisions being made by our local government; for this purpose, I founded Beaches Watch in 2004.

My most notable and proud accomplishment has been leading the effort to pass the height referendum in Jacksonville Beach to ensure our community would not become overdeveloped like Daytona Beach. With the help of many dedicated volunteers, we were able to get the petition signatures needed to place the height limit on the ballot and give the voters the opportunity to choose what they wanted for our community. The height referendum was overwhelmingly passed by 76% of the voters, ensuring any future decisions regarding the height of development would be determined by the voters.

As the founder and President of Beaches Watch for over 14 years, I have been a leader in the community, organizing community conversations, promoting meaningful citizen engagement, and working with local elected officials to implement solutions that ensure our quality of life remains great in Jacksonville Beach.

I have also been actively involved in researching issues and providing factual information to our citizens and the City Council. Often times, I have provided information that City Council members would not have known otherwise; this information has been important to the decisions they have made.

I have also been actively involved in working with citizens. I have been someone that people could contact about their issues and concerns, helping to identify a course of action toward resolution of their concerns. As a City Council member, I will be someone who will continue to openly communicate with the citizens in our community and work to find resolutions to your concerns.

For the last 17 years, I have contributed to the betterment of our beach community in the following ways:

- Founder and President of the nonpartisan civic organization Beaches Watch, Inc. (2004 to present)
- Led the effort to pass the 35-foot height limit in Jacksonville Beach
- Led the effort to open the first public dog park in Jacksonville Beach, Paws Park at Wingate Park
- Founder and President of Friends of Paws Park; managed the dog park volunteers, fundraisers and improvements for the dog park
- Led the effort to keep a waste transfer station from being built within a half mile of two elementary schools and hospital in Jacksonville Beach
- Organized a bus trip to Tallahassee in support of preservation of marshlands in Jacksonville Beach
- I was instrumental in getting Dan Burden and Glatting-Jackson consultants hired to assist us in the creation of the Downtown Vision Plan.
- Participated in the creation of the Jacksonville Beach Downtown Vision Plan and Downtown Action Plan
- Participated in successful efforts to save the Beaches Branch Library
- Participated in successful efforts to save the St. Johns River Ferry
- Participated in successful efforts to preserve the Mayport fishing village when a cruise ship terminal was proposed
- Beaches representative on the Water Coalition in support of the Riverkeeper efforts to protect the St. Johns River from surface withdrawals and nutrient damage
- Served on Mayport CRA Citizens Advisory Council (appointed by Jacksonville City Council member Bill Gulliford)
- Served on Jacksonville Beach Chief of Police selection committee
- Jacksonville Beach Citizen Police Academy (CPA) graduate, 2005
- Jacksonville Beach Police Department CPA Alumni Association volunteer

In all of my community service, I have worked cooperatively and collaboratively with citizens, our City Council members, and City staff to protect or improve our quality of life and ensure our community remains a great place for us to live, work and play.

I am honored to be endorsed by our local beaches leaders because they know what I have done for the last 17 years. I have earned their respect and trust as someone who has the knowledge and commitment to serve on the Jacksonville Beach City Council.

- **Bill Gulliford**, Jacksonville City Councilor (2011 to present)
- **Charlie Latham**, Jacksonville Beach Mayor (2012 – present)
- **Bruce Thomason**, Jacksonville Beach City Councilor (2014 to present)
- **Lee Buck**, Jacksonville Beach City Councilor (2004 – 2012, 2014 – present)
- **Fland Sharp**, Jacksonville Beach Mayor (2004 – 2012)
- **Penny Christian**, Jacksonville Beach Mayor Pro-tem/City Councilor (2004 – 2012)
- **Steve Hartkemeyer**, Jacksonville Beach City Councilor (2006 – 2014)
- **Tom Taylor**, Jacksonville Beach City Councilor (2006 – 2014)
- **Nancy Broner**, School Board Representative (2002 to 2010)

- **Elaine Brown**, Neptune Beach Mayor (2016 – present)
- **Harriet Pruette**, Neptune Beach Mayor (2008 – 2016)
- **John Weldon**, Neptune Beach Vice-Mayor/City Councilor (2002 – 2010)
- **Ellen Glasser**, Atlantic Beach Mayor (2017 – present)
- **Terry DeLoach**, Jacksonville Beach Planning Commission (1994 – 2017)
- **Linda Lanier**, community leader

## 5. What differentiates you from your opponent?

First and foremost, my lengthy community service and unwavering commitment to the betterment of our Jacksonville Beach community for the last 17 years, differentiates me from my opponent.

I have a proven record of getting things done in the Jacksonville Beach community (see my community contributions in answer #4). I have been a staunch advocate for improving our quality of life and ensuring our beach community is a great place to live, work and play. I am passionate about our quality of life in Jacksonville Beach and I have not sat on the sidelines; when there have been issues that impact our quality of life, I have gotten involved.

As the founder and President of Beaches Watch for over 14 years, I have been a leader in the community, organizing community conversations, promoting meaningful citizen engagement, and working with local elected officials to implement solutions that ensure our quality of life remains great in Jacksonville Beach.

For the last 17 years, I have attended City Council meetings, workshops and budget meetings. I understand the issues that have faced our city over the years. I know what has been done, what has worked and what hasn't. Having this historical perspective will be critical to addressing our current and future issues. With the loss of senior leadership at City Hall, having this historical knowledge and understanding of the issues makes me uniquely qualified to ensure the City continues to move in the right direction.

Through attending the Jacksonville Beach Citizen Police Academy (CPA), volunteering with the CPA Alumni Association and riding with our Jacksonville Beach police officers, I understand the issues faced by our police department. I have also participated in our community workshops to discuss and address some of our public safety issues. I am prepared to provide the support our Jacksonville Beach Police Department needs to ensure their safety and the safety of our community.

I understand our Land Development Code and our Comprehensive Plan, both of which are very important to ensure our community grows in the way we have intended for it to grow. This knowledge is critical to ensure that future development is properly managed and consistent with our plans as well as the desires of our community.

I have also attended and participated in our City Board meetings (Planning Commission, Board of Adjustment and Community Redevelopment Agency), so I understand what these boards do and the issues they are dealing with. I am prepared to ensure these boards have the tools they need to do the jobs they are appointed to do.

I have developed relationships with all our beaches leaders through my lengthy community involvement and I will be able to work collaboratively with our neighboring beach communities and the City of Jacksonville.

As your representative, I will focus on the following priorities for Jacksonville Beach:

- Promote pedestrian, bicycle and vehicle safety improvements for Penman Road
- Promote a livable, walkable and bike-able community with a vibrant and safe downtown that appeals to locals
- Focus on public safety and support for our first responders
- Support our local businesses and encourage businesses that enhance our quality of life
- Support smart growth plans and decisions that enhance our special beach community's character and quality of life
- Commit to maintaining a well-managed and fiscally sound budget
- Promote open government and encourage citizen participation

I promise to do the following throughout my campaign and while serving you on the Jacksonville Beach City Council:

- Listen openly to all sides of every issue
- Make decisions based on what is in the best interest of the community
- Be open and honest
- Be professional and respectful in all communications and public discourse
- Be accessible
- Be a good steward of your tax dollars

I have been serving the Jacksonville Beach community as a citizen for the last 17 years. Now I am ready to continue making a difference in our community as your representative on the City Council.

I would be honored to have your vote on November 6.

If you have any questions or wish to talk with me further about your questions or concerns, please contact me at:

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For more information, please visit: [www.VoteSandyGolding.com](http://www.VoteSandyGolding.com)