



## 2020 Atlantic Beach MAYOR Candidate Written Questions

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1. **Qualifications and Motivation:** What qualifications in terms of education, experience, and prior community service do you bring to your candidacy for public office? Please explain what motivates you to run for office at this time? I am a uniquely qualified candidate with a diverse background of education and professional experience. My success in executive leadership, business ownership and engineering accomplishments makes me perfectly suited to lead our city toward the right solutions for outstanding problems. I am running because I see areas many areas that need better solutions and a city that needs to be better protected. As a proven and trusted leader at many capacities and through much adversity, I feel I am best suited for this job.
2. **Priorities:** If you are elected Mayor, what are the three most important issues you would address during your term and how would you address them? In your response, please include how you would ensure adequate funding to address the issues. There are several very pressing issues for the city of Atlantic Beach, each of which I feel is a fundamental duty of city government to provide.
  - 1.) Making our city streets and neighborhoods safe is one. Our streets have gotten downright dangerous. Families are afraid to let their children play in the street, near-miss accidents, impaired driver reports on the rise and we are seeing more incidents of serious crime within our city. Most residents moved here for Atlantic Beach's uniquely safe & quiet neighborhood enjoyment. We can restore this by working with the commissioners and ABPD to a.) Enforce existing laws b.) Reduce large congestion problem areas c.) Listen better to the residents who are the eyes/ears of city activity d.) Provide police all they need to do their job e.) Utilize enhanced technology options.
  - 2.) Managing city finances is another area of real opportunity. Let's face it, taxpayers want to think their city is managing their money as efficiently as residents do in their homes. Many do not feel this is occurring now. So a Mayor Ray will work with the other commissioners to a.) Develop a budget based on resident benefit and lessening taxpayer burden b.) Prepare a conservative budget in response to so much uncertainty and unrest c.) Build back city reserves to a level that the city can perform no matter the severity of an event d.) Review in detail all financial reports to ensure consistent accuracy e.) Address pension unfunded liability exposure.
3. Property Rights Overreach is another concern I hear often from residents. I had my own experience with this as well. Recent legislation has reduced our ability to freely use our property with impervious, dumpster and other regulation changes. These strangling

regulations have not been proven in science, yet unduly punish residents who want to improve the enjoyment of their homes and often result in added costs or being denied for improvements all together. A Mayor Ray will work with all other elected officials and city staff to restore regulations based on science and city-wide benefits, as well as look for ways to assist residents with costs and the efficiency of permitting. A Mayor Ray will also lead the effort to communicate effectively to all residents any ideas they are considering in this area and solicit ideas from residents/contractors/city staff to ensure any regulation change provides the benefit needed while not punitive in nature.

3. **Budget:** In the event of a budget shortfall, would you consider a millage increase to maintain levels of service? If not, what specific items in the budget would you recommend adjusting? What specific strategies would you suggest to raise additional funds? Please be specific. There are many spending areas that could be evaluated to reduce before a Mayor Ray would advocate for increasing millage rates. Some examples to reduce spending include land acquisitions, city facility upgrade, and purchase of new vehicles. A Mayor Ray will find many things to improve the management of the people's money. She has the record and experience of helping struggling facilities turn profitable. She started her own businesses that sold for significant profit by being cost conservative. A Mayor Ray can get Atlantic Beach back on strong and responsible financial footing and be prepared to weather whatever comes our way. Reduce waste, be financially nimble and treat every dollar spent with the same consideration as the resident who gave it to you. A Mayor Ray has the experience to set a budget that pushes every department to perform at their highest spending efficiency and lowest waste. She would respond to events like a Pandemic with immediate pull-back of non-essential spending and would have immediately began projection scenarios to share and assure residents their city is prepared and solid to ride out a storm. When it was anticipated early in this year Florida homeowner insurance rates would spike 20-40%, this should have been included in the discussion to roll back millage rate. At a time with covid, insurance spike and market uncertainty, it would have been a great time to provide some financial relief with a roll-back millage. A Mayor Ray can bring her foresight, market experience being nimble and her foresight to right this ship to a strong, responsible and responsive financial footing.
4. **Charter Amendment:** The proposed Atlantic Beach Charter Amendment will extend the Mayor's term of office from two to four years, reduces the number of allowable consecutive terms for the Mayor from four to two terms, and limits any Mayor holding office as of November 2022, who has served two consecutive terms, to one additional consecutive four-year term. What is your position on the proposed Charter amendment? Please be specific. Keeping your ability to elect your Mayor every 2 years secures your EVER IMPORTANT SWING VOTE for regulations, ordinances, charter changes, etc. because a majority vote 3-2 will forward ANY agenda item. Also, moving Mayor term to 4-years would create off-year election for 2 commission seats that would ONLY attract like-minded candidates because those of differing views would understand they would be a minority vote, i.e. lame duck. There is chatter about the distraction to a Mayor every 2 years. If a Mayor is doing a good job for the city, engaging with residents and working on what matters, these invalidate this view. Case in point, Mayor Brown of Neptune Beach just won 2nd term unopposed. They like her in her city and no one wanted to run against

a favorable incumbent. Remember, city government has the BIGGEST IMPACT ON YOUR DAILY LIFE. Keep your OPTIONS OPEN & Say NO.

5. **In-house Attorney:** Would you support hiring an in-house city attorney? Why or why not? I think it is imperative we have an inhouse, on staff attorney for the City of Atlantic Beach. This in no way reflects my thoughts on the current contracted attorney, but I believe we have too many issues we are facing here (discrimination lawsuits, rising safety & crime, unrest in our country, etc.). There is also much uncertainty in the world around us to be left without an invested legal advisor. The best protection for our city would be with an attorney who is readily available, on-staff and an in-house legal counsel.
6. **Land Development Regulations:** Describe specifically any changes to the Atlantic Beach Land Development Regulations you would support. What would you aim to accomplish by these changes? I am in favor of lessening burdensome property rights that have not scientifically proven to provide benefit. Recent impervious regulation that restricted use down to 45% of your property and added swimming pools to the regulation has not been proven to aid in storm water problems. I would advocate for taking swimming pools out of the recent regulation and restoring the regulation to the previous 50% use of your property. I would also expect a full stormwater master plan that is targeted to ultimately address all areas of Atlantic Beach in a manner based on water hydraulics and science of water flow AND would include use of city assets as part of overall plan. From that master plan, it can be decided, and communicated, the specific path, funding and timeline for remedy to these residents/business that continue to suffer. During the interim, there may be some regulations required, but the goal would be to fully provide relief for any normal weather event.
7. **Parking:** Are the present parking arrangements in the Town Center and beach accesses adequate for residents and visitors? What changes (if any) do you favor? There are several serious beach access parking safety issues right now, including back-out parking and excessive volume. Safety needs to be addressed to avoid unexpected outcome. This starts with knowing the actual number of parking spots required for beach renourishment throughout our city in a fair, undistruptive manner. Once this is confirmed under current conditions, then we can proceed with plan to mitigate the problem areas with a well-designed, even-handed plan. Beaches Town Center paid parking program has been a hot button issue for many, me included. It took thirteen months of startup time, is poorly designed for seniors, has confusion and problematic equipment and there has been poor communication with residents.
8. **Parks:** What changes or improvements would you like to see made to Atlantic Beach parks? Our parks are a true city treasure and need to be protected and cherished by all who call this community home. But the reality is they are underutilized due to often muddy conditions and mosquito/gnat infestations. Beautiful tree canopy and vast space make them a true sight for all of us to enjoy. Many island cities face, similar to Atlantic Beach, is limited stormwater retention capacities. So many other island cities have looked to some existing parks to aid in stormwater retention with the vision of creating

beautiful natural park space around them for attractive passive use. In most cases, they eliminated some nearby area flooding during most rain events and aerated them to be part of the city mosquito problem. Most kept or increased the tree canopy when pursuing this park enhancement. What followed from this besides less area flooding problems was attractive, passive use parks for everyone to enjoy including walking trails, flourishing wildlife and its natural beauty. Native vegetation was used on the sides of drainage ditches to avoid becoming silted in.

9. **Public Safety:** What are the most important crime & public safety issues in Atlantic Beach and what should be done to address them and fund them? Please be specific. Crime is on the rise, as is congested roads & high traffic volume (pedestrians, vehicle, & bikes). There are too many near-miss reports to not be aware of the seriousness of these issues. We need a city government focused clearly on City Charter that prioritizes & protects public safety first. Solutions start with clear understanding of the issues with study, trends & incidents review followed by full collaboration by all related parties to find the right solution for the city of Atlantic Beach and our neighbors that share this island.
10. **Resilience:** What are the Atlantic Beach infrastructure needs when it comes to sea level rise and resiliency and what would you support to address these issues? We have many demands for our failing and/or inadequate infrastructure needs that need addressing now. Fundamentals like failing roads & inadequate storm water are leaving residents homes and streets flooded. Most parts of our city parks are often muddy and unusable and access walkovers are in need of repair. I would advocate that each of these be addressed with science, foresight for expected growth and with the quality of residents' lives in mind. The science of sea level rise is being actively studied and we should remain plugged into the findings of that for possible future action.
11. **Campaign Pledge:** Will you make a pledge to carry out a campaign based on issues and facts and renounce the use of name-calling and inuendo? What will you do if such literature (for instance by mass mailings) is distributed? I pledge to continue a campaign founded on issues and facts and free of name-calling or other personal attacks. Democracy works best with citizens are involved and receive all candidate positions on the issues and how they would proceed to solve resident problems so they can appropriately vote for the candidate which best represents their approach to governance of their city.
12. **Other issues:** Are there any other issues you would like to address if elected? Please explain. Correcting failed projects with the implementation of systems to include a project timeline, contractor incentives and ROI calculation for each. The Town Center (TC) Paid parking is still not functioning, 13 months after startup. This is unacceptable and it must be a priority to BE INVOLVED to find the right solution that best serves the residents and businesses of Atlantic Beach. Impervious overreach to 45% of property use, including restrictions on pools, needs to be rescinded Day 1. A thoughtful long-term strategic plan needs to be developed to finally address the unabated city-wide flooding problems that affect many

residents. Lastly to restore our city to its cherished roots as a neighborhood community with a rich talent of service and diverse backgrounds, one that all residents know is securely & appropriately prepared to weather any storm. I will bring a City Hall that works selflessly to serve the residents & business owners who entrust me to lead this beloved community we call home.