



2024 Neptune Beach 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 believe in public service. I believe that each of us should give back to our communities in the manner that best befits our capabilities. In the past 21 years, I have volunteered for many civic and governmental organizations.

The civic organizations include the Save the Ferry Taskforce, Beaches Watch, Beaches Town Center Agency (including Dancin in the Street), and the Neptune Beach Ish Brant Beautification Committee.

For the City of Neptune Beach, I have served two terms each on both the Planning Board and the Community Development Board, with several years as the board Chairman. These last 6 years, I have had the honor to serve on Council Seat 3 and am currently Vice Mayor.

2. **Priorities:** If elected, what are the three most important issues you would address during your term and how would you address them? Please include how you would ensure adequate funding to address the issues.

There are many things that need attention, but ultimately, the top three priorities will boil down to infrastructure, improving fund revenues, and continuing to champion Home Rule.

It should come as no surprise that the many infrastructure issues we currently face are due to aging, deferred maintenance, and unfunded mandates from the State. We instituted multi-year Capital Improvement Plans, performed asset analyses and gathered necessary GIS data, and created project priority lists for our water, sewer, and stormwater needs.

To address funding for these projects, we hired our first Grant Writer to research and apply for infrastructure grants. Neptune Beach has also partnered with lobbying firms to fight for more funding from the County and State as well as argue in support of our Home Rule.

In addition, building relationships with the many officials at neighboring cities as well as higher levels of government can only benefit us. When we invited the Jacksonville Mayor's office to come discuss our infrastructure needs, the City of Jacksonville came through with monetary help. When we asked our State Sen. Clay Yarborough and State Rep. Kiyon Michael to fight against SB 280 which further stripped Home Rule, they supported us and

voted “No”. I, and many others, also reached out directly to the Governor, and thankfully he heard us and vetoed the bill.

3. **Communication**: What, if anything, do you think should be done differently to inform citizens of upcoming issues and solicit their input on the issues?

Like other cities, Neptune Beach already posts upcoming meeting agendas with all pertinent attachments, but the establishment of a Communications Czar could be another way to bridge the information gap with our community. Also, I had already broached the idea of a dedicated FAQ page on our city website, which the Czar could then use to gather frequently asked questions and provide the answers in a unified location for our residents.

4. **Land Development**: What is your opinion of the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code update by Dover Kohl? Is there anything you want to change?

The rewrite of our Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Code was spurred by a number of factors, including an impending Florida State deadline to update the Comp Plan as well as a Land Use Code that had become outdated and full of inconsistencies. By updating the Comp Plan, it followed that we would need to also update the Code that is based on it.

In all honesty, I am agnostic on the whole process. Did the Comp Plan and the Code need updating? Yes. Could we have done it without Dover Kohl? Not exactly, because the answer is that we would have still needed an expert consultant even without Dover Kohl. I myself rated a different firm higher, but the Council ultimately selected DKP.

Is there anything I would change? A qualified yes, which depends on further research and input from both residents and staff. I have always questioned adding Form Based Code to the R4 zoning district East of Third, and I would look into how useful it has actually been.

5. **Penman Road**: What is your opinion of the proposed improvements to Penman Road and what, if anything, would you want to see changed or done differently?

I am very grateful that Penman Road will be receiving the attention it needs from the City of Jacksonville. I appreciate the early concepts they presented at the open houses, but we have let them know that extensive medians in the Neptune Beach portion of Penman Road would be too obstructive to our Penman residents, emergency vehicles, etc. I am hopeful that the COJ planners will incorporate our residents’ input in the next iteration of the plan.

6. **Infrastructure**: Neptune Beach has an aging infrastructure that will be very costly to replace and/or repair. What do you propose be done to address this problem and how would you fund it?

(see my answer to question 2)

7. **Other issues**: Are there any other issues you would like to address if elected? Please explain.

I will continue to fight for Home Rule when the State adversely impacts our communities.