

VOTER GUIDE



City of Owensboro Candidates for City Commission

**Primary Election
May 18, 2004**

*Questionnaire and compilation by
Steve Rocco*

public concerns → citizen action



**PUBLIC LIFE FOUNDATION
VOTER GUIDE
Candidates for Owensboro City Commission
May 18, 2004, Primary Election**

BACKGROUND OF THE CANDIDATES IN TERMS OF EDUCATION,
WORK EXPERIENCE IN THE CIVIC ARENA, SPECIAL SKILLS AND
EXPERTISE

City Commission candidates Charles Castlen and Jim Glenn did not respond to questions sent to them by Public Life Foundation. Not all of those responding submitted their photos.



BOBBY BLANDFORD:

I was born and raised in Owensboro. I have Christian values and integrity. I attended Owensboro Technical High School and am a veteran of the Korean War and a member of Amvets. Also I am a retired Captain of the Owensboro Fire Department after 25 years of service and I serve on the Police and Firefighters' Retirement Fund Board. In addition, I am a volunteer for Hospice.



CANDANCE BRAKE:

I am 33 years of age. My family includes my husband of 10 years, Dr. Nicholas Brake, Owensboro Community and Technical College, and two children, ages 6 and 4.

In the area of education, I received a master's degree in Public Administration from Western Kentucky University, a bachelor's degree in history from Brescia University and I am a 1988 graduate of Owensboro Catholic High School.

My work experience includes the following:

Greater Owensboro Chamber of Commerce, executive vice president; Chamber of Commerce/KCTCS, vice president Workforce Development; Daviess County Deputy Judge/Executive; Chamber Programs Manager/Leadership Owensboro, Executive Director; Western Kentucky University, Adjunct Professor, Political Science; and Consultant, Economic Development and Workforce Development

My civic experience includes these agencies and organizations I am or have been affiliated with:

AirPark Committee; AirPark Design Review Board; Brescia University Alumni Board (President and Member); Brescia University Board of Trustees; Citizens Committee on Education; Chamber of Commerce Board; Girl's, Inc. (Board Member and Treasurer); Greater Owensboro Alliance for Education (Member, Executive Director); H.L. Neblett Center, Volunteer; Junior League of Owensboro; Kentucky Industrial Council; Kentucky Industrial Development Council - Seminar Planner ; Leadership Owensboro Curriculum Committee; Leadership Owensboro Graduate Owensboro Catholic Schools Development Committee; Owensboro Rotary (Member, Board Member, Program Chair); PRIDE, Member; Saint Stephen Cathedral (Member, Children's Liturgy Leader, Capital Campaign Committee); Settle Memorial Preschool, Parent Volunteer; Skills, Inc. Board Member and Chair; Sutton Elementary, Parent Volunteer; United Way Allocations Committee; United Way, Board Member; Volunteer Center, Board Member.

In addition, I have these special skills and expertise:

A deep understanding of the opportunities and hurdles for economic development in our region

Excellent relationship with regional governments, county government, existing industry and regional educators on all levels

A vision for how transportation, utilities, community development projects and human infrastructure can be enhanced and utilized for our region's progress

A broad base of relationships with people from every walk of life. For example, my dad, with whom I have a close relationship, is a skilled craftsman and was a member of a union until retirement; and my husband has a doctorate. I have a unique sense of empathy with people.

A keen sense of organizational structure and the ability to quickly analyze operational and output issues and to conceptualize innovation methods to address issues



BOB DARLING:

I graduated from Daviess County High School in 1967, attended Western Kentucky University. I returned to Owensboro in 1972 after my father suffered a stroke to manage his business. Later that year I worked at WSTO, then Big Rivers Electric. In 1974 I was employed by Owensboro Municipal Utilities as a Water Plant Operator in which position I stayed until retirement in 2000. Because this position was shift work in nature my community involvement was limited. During this time I served as President of the Owensboro Amateur Radio Club for three years. I have also served as founding President of the Owensboro Water Garden Society. For four years I served as President of the Old Owensboro Neighborhood Alliance where my skills were honed working with our local government. I graduated the Leadership Owensboro class of 2002. At the present time I serve on the boards of Citizens Health Care Advocates as their Program Committee Chair and as President of Community Solutions for Substance Abuse which involves me with leaders from local, state, federal and national level.

BILL DECHMAN:

In the area of education, I graduated from Daviess County High School in 1985 with an Honors Diploma; I attended the United States Air Force Academy from 1985-87, receiving an Honorable Discharge; and I received a

B.A. from Western Kentucky University with a major in mathematics and a minor in business.

Work Experience:

After graduating from Western Kentucky University, I went to work for Energy Management Associates in Atlanta, Georgia, as a consultant. I was responsible for working with clients and programming a financial forecasting model which was widely used in the utility industry. I eventually returned to Owensboro and for the past 10 years have been employed as a blue collar worker in private industry. I voluntarily resigned my position as a utility operator with US Filter earlier this year to begin pursuing opportunities in the field of education. I presently work as a substitute teacher in the Owensboro Catholic Schools on an as-needed basis.

Civic Arena:

During the past 15 years I have been actively involved in several political campaigns. Approximately 10 years ago I performed volunteer work on several Habitat projects. In more recent years I have been working with home school students who need help in the area of mathematics.

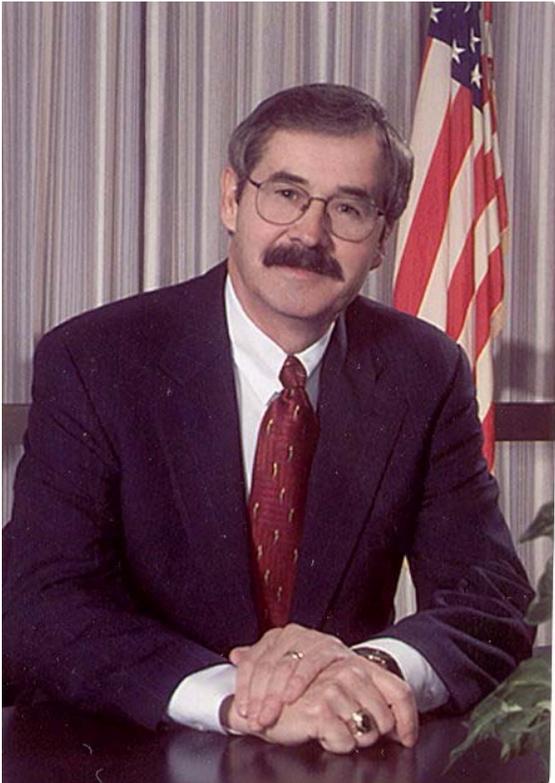
Special Skills and Expertise:

I have completed college level course work in accounting, finance and economics. I have real world experience in the area of financial forecasting. I understand the importance of listening to others, having a dialogue, gathering as much information as is reasonably possible, and analyzing the big picture before making decisions.

JOHN FROEHLICH:

1. B.S. Degree History (Minor Political Science and Journalism)
2. Eighteen years of experience as Executive Director of non-profits.
3. Owned business employing approximately 35 employees grossing \$350,000.00 to \$500,000.00 each year for five years.
4. Past and present civic involvement include:
 - Junior Achievement Project Business Consultant for over twenty years
 - Part-time Ceramics Teacher at Owensboro Community College for eight years
 - Marine Corps League of Owensboro
 - RiverPark Center "Arts in Education" Instructor
 - Chair of the "Arts on the Boulevard" Fine Arts and Crafts Show (June 2004)
 - Founding Member and Board member of PRIDE
 - Owensboro Motor Sports Festival
 - Theatre Workshop of Owensboro Board Member for nine years

Owensboro Breakfast Rotary Club President 1990- 1991
Owensboro Rotary Club Secretary/Treasurer 1983 - 1984
“First Night” Committee Member
Owensboro Bicentennial Celebration Committee Member
Chapter Member Charter Member of Owensboro Breakfast Rotary Club
Shelton Memorial Committee Member
Vietnam Memorial Traveling Wall Committee Member
Vice-Chair of PRIDE of Owensboro-Daviess County
Chair of the Owensboro-Daviess County Christmas Parade for three
years
Chairman of Wendell Foster Center Human Rights Committee
Board of Directors of Owensboro Art Guild
Board of Directors of Audubon Council for Economic Education



RON PAYNE:

I am currently Assistant Professor of Accounting at Brescia University. Prior to this position I was City Manager of Owensboro, Kentucky, the City's Chief Administrative Officer, for six years until my retirement in August of 2003. I served as Director of Finance & Administration for the City from September 1993 until taking office as City Manager on February 1, 1997.

Previously I served 14 years with the City of Tulsa, Oklahoma, first as Controller and Deputy City Auditor and eventually as Director of Finance. I was Owensboro's City Auditor from 1975 to 1979 and also worked for the accounting firm of Coopers & Lybrand.

I am a Certified Public Accountant. I hold a Bachelor of Science in accounting from Brescia College and a Masters of Science in accounting from the University of Tulsa. I am a veteran of the U.S. Navy and served in Vietnam. My wife Denise and I have two sons, Brian and Adam.

I am a member of the American Institute of CPA's, the Board of Trustees of the RiverPark Foundation, Board of Contributors of the *Messenger-Inquirer*, the Board of Directors of the Riverport Authority and a member of the Advisory Council of MISAS.



BILLY POGUE:

Graduate of Owensboro Catholic High School
Attended Lindsey Wilson College
Obtained Kentucky Real Estate Brokers License
Real Estate Sales Associate, Home Realty 1999-2003
Owner, William T. Pogue Real Estate Inc., 2004
Treasurer, Owensboro Board of Realtors, 2004

Treasurer, Mentor Kids Kentucky, 2004
Past Treasurer, The Volunteer Center of Owensboro
Member, Professional Standards Committee, Kentucky Association of Realtors
Member, Owensboro Board of Realtors
Member, Kentucky Association of Realtors
Member, National Association of Realtors
Volunteer, Apollo Band Booster

Serving on various boards has led me to play a significant part relating to finances. I have served as treasurer for various agencies, including developing and maintaining a budget, on-going review of the cost to do business, and overall financial oversight to ensure maximum return.

DAVID SMITH:

My background in education is as follows: I graduated from Owensboro High School in 1985 and from Kentucky Wesleyan College (KWC) in 1989 with a B.A. in Political Science. In 1987 while at KWC, I was one of 105 students across the country to be awarded a Harry S. Truman Scholarship. This scholarship is merit-based and given to those committed to careers in government or public service, and have outstanding leadership potential.

I received a M.A. in Public Policy with a concentration in Urban Political Economy from the University of Chicago in 1993. In 1996 I participated in the weeklong Kentucky Institute for Economic Development. The Institute provides training in the basic principals of economic development and is “designed to equip participants with the tools necessary to compete aggressively and successfully for new development in their communities.” I also attended the Innovations in Economic Development Conference at the University of Minnesota in 1997 and was author of “Comprehensive Tax Base Sharing” which appeared in *Economic Development Commentary* in the Summer 1994 issue.

In 1993 I was hired by the Daviess County Fiscal Court as a Policy Planner/Facilitator and assisted Kim Logsdon and County Judge Executive Buzz Norris. I left to work for Congressman Ron Lewis in the summer of 1994 and established the first Congressional Field Office in Owensboro. I rejoined the Fiscal Court in early 1995 and for the next two years oversaw the county's economic development, workforce training, solid waste, and sewer agencies. I performed research and analysis on the long-term financial feasibility of a county landfill and wrote Request for Proposals for

countywide garbage collection and for self-funded employee health insurance. I also researched and wrote “Doing Business in Daviess County,” a 100-page booklet containing information on local, state, and federal permits, taxes, regulations, financing, and services.

Since 1997, I have been manager and part-owner of Yeiser's Warehouse--a 75,000-square-foot warehouse operation and BJY Enterprises - a regional trucking company.

I currently serve on the Government Affairs Committee of the Greater Owensboro Chamber of Commerce and on the I-69 Evansville-Henderson Study Advisory Committee. I was previously a member of the Kentucky Industrial Development Council.

I have excellent research skills that allow me to bring proven ideas to solve problems.



ROGER STEWART:

I am a graduate of Daviess County High School. I attended Western Kentucky University and Brescia University. I am a graduate of the

Kentucky School of Banking at the University of Kentucky. I was a veteran of the Vietnam War era. I was a charter member and president of the Breakfast Optimist Club of Owensboro. I coached baseball and girls softball and was on the Owensboro Babe Ruth League Board. I worked in banking for 14 years in Owensboro and was Vice-President of the Hartford Bank. I was owner/operator of Stewart's Motor Sales for eight years. I am presently the District Manager for the Conseco Insurance Company. I am a person committed to the people of Owensboro.



JAMES R. WOOD:

Education:

I am a graduate of Owensboro High School and have received a B.A. from the University of Kentucky and a J.D. from the University of Kentucky College of Law.

Work History:

Prior to Law School, I taught Philosophy [including Ethics and Logic] at the University of Kentucky and at Berea College, and served as a Criminal Justice Planner with the Bluegrass Regional Crime Council. Following

admission to the Bar, I served as a Public Defender in Eastern Kentucky and as an Assistant Commonwealth Attorney in Jefferson County, Kentucky prior to opening my private law office in Owensboro.

Civic Involvement:

I serve, or have served, on the following local Boards:

Western Kentucky Legal Services, eight years, serving two years as Chairman

Volunteer Center, two years

OASIS, six years, one year as Chairman

Gateway Foundation, Treasurer

Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children, three years

Board of Deacons, Third Baptist Church

Daviess County Fish and Game Association, fifteen years

POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF THE CANDIDATES

BOBBY BLANDFORD:

My political philosophy in the proper role of city government is to listen to the needs of the people of Owensboro and take a non-partisan attitude toward solving problems. I believe in spending our tax dollars wisely and within our city budget.

CANDANCE BRAKE:

Local government is the unit of government closest to citizens' every day life, and therefore, should respond accordingly. Local government exists to provide core, basic services such as protection of life and property, providing recreational opportunities and good roads and drainage. Local government should also set the direction of a community (based on the citizens' input) and ensure that the community has the proper tools in place to achieve the goals set.

BOB DARLING:

In my opinion the proper role of local government is to provide leadership, assistance and empowerment in the lives of the citizens we serve. And at the core of my philosophy of government is the word "serve," not rule. Because what is government but the collection of citizens trying to succeed in this life together.

BILL DECHMAN:

I am fiscally conservative, socially conservative. I believe local government's primary focus should be on public safety (police and fire protection), infrastructure (roads, sewers, etc.) and efficiency in the delivery of services. Parks and Recreation are important to the overall quality of life in a community but are secondary on my list of priorities when it comes to budgetary issues.

JOHN FROEHLICH:

The Role Of City Government Is To:

1. Provide the basic services that provide a safe and enjoyable community in which to live.
2. To collaborate with and assist the appropriate individuals and agencies to expand existing and recruit new businesses that provide high paying jobs and assist those ultimately responsible for appropriate education programs that enable our workforce to be competitive with other markets.

RON PAYNE:

The proper role of government in our country was established early on by our founding fathers and is incorporated in the preamble to our Constitution. At the local level this begins with public safety, strong police and fire departments, followed by a good quality of life, a well maintained infrastructure and a responsibility for economic development, good paying jobs for our citizens.

BILLY POGUE:

I feel that government is the people's voice on how our community operates. As elected officials, we must act as representatives, and be good stewards of our local tax dollars. The City Commission is to provide leadership through setting policy and direction for the betterment of our community. I feel that our elected officials need to go a step further, and provided more oversight to the various departments, board appointments, and overall operation of city government to ensure future viability for our years to come.

DAVID SMITH:

I am a conservative when it comes to the role of government but not a strict one. I strongly believe that government should only be involved in private enterprise when there is a monopoly, market failures or barriers to market entry. Government's first priority is to provide public goods such as streets, police and fire protection. However government should wisely invest seed

money in projects that could improve the public good, even those not typically considered a true government function.

ROGER STEWART:

My political philosophy centers on my belief that government should be a mechanism that looks out for the best interests of the citizens, and provides the opportunity for the area to succeed.

JAMES R. WOOD:

Municipal (i.e., local) government has the duty and purpose to provide for public safety, basic infrastructure, governance and administrative services. Few citizens object to police and fire protection, sanitation services, building and maintenance of streets and sewers, and providing (or franchising the provision of) essential utilities. Parks and recreation programs, once considered luxuries, are now viewed by most citizens as necessities. Other amenities, such as museums and the arts, can be considered to the extent citizens are willing to provide funding through taxes after the basic services are provided. Citizens must keep in mind, however, that corporate officers considering relocation usually examine the amenities provided by a municipality, as well as the necessities, in evaluating a prospective location.

In the last seven years, I have helped restore basic services to an excellent level, and have maintained a good balance in the amenities (or “arts”). We continue to improve public safety services, and expand storm water work as funds allow. We continue to keep streets in good repair, and expand our park system. Arts funding is stable at this time.

<p>WHO ARE THE PRINCIPAL PEOPLE VOLUNTEERING FOR YOUR CAMPAIGN? WHO ARE YOUR PRIMARY CONTRIBUTORS? WHO ARE YOUR ADVISORS?</p>
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BOBBY BLANDFORD:

The primary volunteers, contributors and advisors for my campaign are my family and friends. I have not asked for any donations for my campaign from the public or any organization.

CANDANCE BRAKE:

My campaign volunteers vary in age from six to 77. Volunteers and contributors range from union members, CEO's of corporations, non-profit

employees, non-profit volunteers, teachers, educational administrators, former and current elected officials, small business owners, attorneys, stay-at-home moms, health care administrators, college students, high school students, retired people...My campaign reflects my broad base of family and friends and the many faces which make Owensboro such a unique community--and I am very proud of it.

BOB DARLING:

The shortest answer to this question is "friends." I have found the best support from citizens whom I have helped "empower" in their own lives and helped them work through issues important to them. My contributors have been citizens that believe in my message of empowerment. And my advisors have been the learning process of involvement with this community.

BILL DECHMAN:

Most of my "contributors" are family, friends and acquaintances who simply give of their time. I live a modest life and most of the people I associate with are folks of modest means. Beyond myself, my primary financial contributions have come from a few accomplished individuals who are familiar with my capacity for making intelligent and thoughtful decisions. In my opinion an advisor is anyone who is willing to take the time to intelligently and thoughtfully discuss an issue or offer constructive input. I become more informed by listening to others and educating myself about the different perspectives on various topics.

JOHN FROEHLICH:

The group of individuals assisting me consists of five "twenty something's" (three men, two women) one retired 50 plus male and one retired 60 plus female. Of the approximately \$2,500 I will spend in both campaigns, 80% will come from my pocket.

RON PAYNE:

Friends, family and individuals who have come to know me in my role in city management are supporting my candidacy. Contributions will be listed in reports to the State and will be printed in the local newspaper.

BILLY POGUE:

Volunteers for my campaign are people in this community that are ready for a change. Everyday citizens that work, pay taxes, and are tired of their voices not being heard are prime volunteers. My campaign is funded through

personal contributions as well as funds derived from fund-raisers. I accept money from people who agree with me regarding my views of our community. I do not accept money from individuals that have their own agenda or want special favors. My campaign will be one of positive, energetic leadership that this community hasn't seen in a long while.

DAVID SMITH:

My family, friends and local businesspeople are the principal volunteers, contributors, and advisors.

ROGER STEWART:

I am being helped with my campaign by a number of friends and family. Financially, my campaign is self-financed. My nephew, Blake Hood, has assisted with a great deal of advice. He is a political science major and has helped me with my research.

JAMES R. WOOD:

Those contributing to my campaign, volunteering for campaign work and providing counsel and advice represent a broad cross section of Owensboro. They represent virtually all occupations and income levels. I remain extremely grateful to my family, who sacrifice time and energy in order to campaign and because of the time taken by the duties of office. Support also comes from a wide variety of individuals who display yard signs, who put bumper stickers on their vehicles and perform other duties in contacting individuals for support. Additionally, I am thankful to all of those individuals who have trusted me and supported with their vote. I continue to welcome input from all citizens of Owensboro. "Primary contributors" are reflected on my campaign finance reports.

WHY ARE YOU SEEKING THIS OFFICE?

BOBBY BLANDFORD:

The reason for seeking this office is because I want to make a contribution of service to the citizens of Owensboro. I have seen Owensboro grow and prosper and feel my understanding of the city government operation will enable me to make good decisions for the city to continue its growth potential.

CANDANCE BRAKE:

I have a passion for public service. I have a passion for Owensboro. Owensboro is at a critical point where we have some tremendous opportunities - but we have to seize those opportunities. I believe my talents and perspectives can be positive tools in our community's seizing these opportunities.

BOB DARLING:

I am seeking this office to open the doors for more citizen involvement in local government. Too much of asking the citizens their opinions but not really caring what they think has gone on in the past. In other words, bringing the citizens onboard after plans or decisions have already been made or put in place. Our untapped citizens are our greatest asset.

BILL DECHMAN:

My primary reason for seeking the office of City Commissioner is to be a voice for working families by making sure our tax dollars are spent wisely, responsibly and in a way which respects the clearly expressed will of the people.

JOHN FROEHLICH:

It concerns me that little in the way of new or innovative ideas have come from the City Commission since David Adkisson left office. Were it not for a proactive staff, little would have happened in the last nine years. In my opinion, "the tail is wagging the dog." I am prepared to do more than just complain about the situation.

RON PAYNE:

For most of my life I have been committed to government service, beginning when I volunteered for the U.S. Navy during the Vietnam Conflict to my 30 years working in local government. I want to continue that commitment and therefore I am running for City Commissioner. I believe I have the knowledge and experience to make a significant contribution to our community and the next City Commission. Great progress has been achieved in the last few years in addressing the many needs of our community and I am proud to have played a role in these achievements. I wish to see those efforts continue, including storm water projects, riverfront development, park programs and the numerous transportation projects. But many challenges lie ahead. Our economic development program needs to be revisited and revamped. Owensboro needs goods paying jobs and to achieve

this will require a coordinated approach on the part of many agencies with a major role being played by our local governments. I believe my education and experience will allow me to work effectively with the next Commission to develop the vision needed to move our community forward.

BILLY POGUE:

I am seeking this office to “better this community for everyone”. For many years the people of Owensboro have felt that their voice wasn't being heard, that their opinions were not being asked for, and that a select few were making all the decisions. This community, with my leadership on the commission, will have a voice, will be offered many ways to express their opinions and I will make sure that no city business is done behind closed doors. I am a people person, I am a problem solver, and I have the energy and motivation to provide a great direction for this community.

DAVID SMITH:

First, I have a desire to get back into active public service. As my work experience and Truman Scholarship show, I have a strong commitment to public life. Second, I understand that my nine-month old son's future is closely tied to Owensboro's future and I want it to be as bright as possible.

ROGER STEWART:

I am running for City Commissioner because I believe we, as a city, can do better. We can do a better job investing in economic development. We can do a better job when it comes to providing jobs that will pay a living wage. And, we can do a better job when it comes to investing in our social problems and making the lives of our citizens better and more prosperous.

JAMES R. WOOD:

I am seeking reelection to continue the accomplishments of the past seven years, to move forward with the new initiatives (Riverfront, Recreation and Parks, and others) we have started, and to grow the City so that opportunities will be here for our children. My initial motivation to seek this office was to address what I viewed as a misplaced emphasis on nonessential amenities at the expense of basic municipal services. As soon as I was sworn in, the Commission started with the Decision 2002 program and in fact did reestablish an emphasis on basic services. We have made improvements in police, fire, storm water, sanitation and other services for which we can all be justly proud.

IF ELECTED, HOW MUCH TIME WOULD YOU BE ABLE (OR WILLING) TO DEVOTE TO THIS OFFICE? WHAT OTHER OBLIGATIONS (EMPLOYMENT, CIVIC, FAMILY, ETC.) COULD BE DISTRACTIONS FROM THE DUTIES OF THIS OFFICE?

BOBBY BLANDFORD:

I will be able to devote the majority of my time to the role of City Commissioner. I do not have any other obligations that would be a distraction from the duties of this office.

CANDANCE BRAKE:

I will devote whatever time it takes for me to be an accessible, informed and involved member of the commission.

BOB DARLING:

I believe this office requires more than just a part-time fancy. I realize that some Commissioners would have other full-time jobs, but those of us elected that do not, need to carry the extra load by investing as much time as possible or needed. If you do not meet with the citizens at their gatherings how do you get a handle on the state of the City and its needs.

BILL DECHMAN:

I believe I will be able to devote a significant amount of time to the job if elected. Being single, the time I devote to being a Commissioner will be second only to my employment. I have no other formal obligations which would detract from my ability to give the office the time it requires and deserves.

JOHN FROEHLICH:

I am recently retired and my only other non-family obligation is that of one of five "managing partners" in Gallery 412, a fine art cooperative of approximately 40 artists. Although the office is "part-time," I believe it will require in excess of 30 hours a week to properly accomplish anything meaningful.

RON PAYNE:

I will devote whatever time is necessary to fulfill my obligations as a city commissioner. Although I am currently working as an Assistant Professor of Accounting at Brescia University, I will be able to devote the necessary time as the University supports community involvement and service.

BILLY POGUE:

If elected to the City Commission, I will make the time necessary to fulfill my complete obligation to the residents of this community. My real estate brokerage firm allows me to have the flexibility needed to serve as the people's voice on the city commission. I do serve on various boards in the community, which generally meet during the noon hour. My father, who has lost his vision, will continue to be a number one priority in my life along with my sister and my nephew. This community means so much to me and I will work night and day to fulfill the responsibility that I hope is bestowed upon me.

DAVID SMITH:

I will devote the time necessary to handle all official duties. I am passionate about Owensboro and my experience means I will not be spending time learning how government works or wondering how it can work better. To limit who should serve on the commission based on whether they can devote all of their time to this "part-time" position, would exclude the very people with the knowledge and experience that Owensboro needs to be involved the most.

ROGER STEWART:

If elected, I will give total focus to the people of Owensboro; I am self-employed and have the time to devote to this job. My family supports me fully. I want to have the opportunity to give back to our community.

JAMES R. WOOD:

The question is not how much time one is "able" or "willing" to spend doing this job; the question is how much time it takes to "do" the job properly. Over the past seven plus years I have devoted whatever time it took to be fully informed as to all issues before the commission and to do the job "properly." Usually that takes in excess of 20 hours per week. Often it takes much more than that, detracting tremendously from time available for occupational needs. Nonetheless, one spends or should spend the amount of time necessary to properly do the job. I think my record speaks for itself in terms of being fully and completely informed on all issues in making reasonable and logical decisions regarding those issues. The tone of the second part of this question is quite presumptuous.

You ask whether "other obligations (employment, civic, family, etc.) would be distractions from the duties of this office." I do not consider family to be

a “distraction” from the duties of this office but rather a motivating factor for doing this job properly. Nor do I think civic involvement constitutes a “distraction” from this office but rather is complimentary to the other “civic” things one does in pursuit of this office. As stated above, I spend the amount of time required to do this job properly, but I make every effort to not allow it to be a "distraction from" my family.

Many people think of City Commission work as merely attending City Commission meetings and perhaps stopping by City Hall from time to time. They do not think of the time spent researching various issues, meeting with department heads or heads of other agencies. Nor do they consider the amount of time spent on weekends presenting keys to the City and performing other ceremonial functions. Nor do they consider the times when people approach you with time-consuming questions when you are at a ball game, or eating out with your family, walking on the Greenbelt, or doing other daily activities.

<p>TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU FEEL GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE OPEN AND ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC? HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU FEEL OPENNESS IS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT?</p>
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BOBBY BLANDFORD:

The city government should be open and accessible to the public. As City Commissioner I would be an employee of the citizens of Owensboro and would be responsible for caring for their needs.

CANDANCE BRAKE:

I support open and accessible government. Openness is good for citizens and elected officials. We have all different perspectives and ideas for improvement. Accessibility leads to the sharing of these ideas and perspectives.

BOB DARLING:

I believe in a fully open and accessible government. Owensboro has always been known as having “good ole boys” behind the scenes running our government, right or wrong. That's why I believe citizen involvement in our government is so critical. Stakeholders, often seen as the “good ole boys, or girls” need and should seek the help from the rest of this community. An elected official who has the support, backing and understanding of the community can help this community achieve our best.

BILL DECHMAN:

I believe openness is important, and government should be as open and accessible as possible with appropriate discretion given to the issue under consideration. Sensitive personnel issues involving non-elected citizens should not be the subject of media sensationalism.

JOHN FROEHLICH:

Government should be open and accessible to the public. We are elected “public servants” not “kings.” There are few situations that justify “closed door meetings.”

RON PAYNE:

I feel openness is essential to effective local government and is why I worked to establish the neighbor alliance program while city manager. This program has been very successful in connecting our local government to its citizen. I would like to continue this effort by working to create a community summit to establish a vision and strategic plan for our city. If we are to be successful and have a strong and vibrant community for years to come we must decide today what our vision of the future is and develop the necessary program to achieve this vision.

BILLY POGUE:

We have to remember the reason city government exists, “FOR THE PEOPLE.” Therefore it is crucial to be open and accessible for the people we serve. People feel that when the public is not kept informed, that there is wrongdoing going on. I want to make City Hall as open and accessible as possible.

DAVID SMITH:

Government should be, and is required by law to be, very open. Basically, the public should have access and input in government except in early policy formation and “brain-storming” activities. If all idea sessions and staff meetings were open to the public the wildest, most unique ideas would never be put forward and Owensboro needs fresh, new ideas.

Openness is vital to local government, as people feel closer to it and if they feel they are shut out of the process they will become even more cynical and withdraw from civic life.

ROGER STEWART:

I believe the government is a mechanism of the people and it is very important that the government be as open and forthcoming as possible. I think Owensboro's City government is doing a good job when it comes to disclosure to the public.

JAMES R. WOOD:

During the last seven and a half years I have made every possible effort to ensure that City Commission issues are open and accessible to our taxpayers. We have instituted the City Action Line (687-4444). A few years ago we started the Neighborhood Association Program in an effort to provide a vehicle through which citizens can have access to government and have input without the perceived formality of attending City Commission meetings. All twelve Neighborhood Associations have now been formed and are now “up and running” well. That vehicle provides an amazing degree of input into local government. We also have Citizen Service Representatives answering the phones to facilitate answering taxpayers' questions. Additionally, the Information Services Department produces Community View programs on various issues to inform citizens.

It is not only “openness” that is important, it is the perception of openness that is important. One has to make a point of returning all phone calls and responding to all e-mails in order to ensure that the government is not only open, but that it is apparent that it is open.

HOW DO YOU THINK THOSE ELECTED TO PUBLIC OFFICE CAN FACILITATE INCREASED PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN CITY GOVERNMENT? DO YOU PROPOSE ANY SPECIFIC STEPS OR CHANGES TO ENHANCE OPENNESS, TRANSPARENCY AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS?

BOBBY BLANDFORD:

The citizens of Owensboro should feel they could attend the City Commission meetings and voice their concerns and complaints and know they will be heard and appropriate action taken.

CANDANCE BRAKE:

ENTHUSIASM will increase involvement. We already have excellent

mechanisms in place for citizens to be involved. I believe that energy begets energy. If people feel like good things are happening, they will be more likely to participate.

BOB DARLING:

In your question you used the word “can.” I believe the word “must” fits much better. Public officials must facilitate increased involvement. A citizen that is empowered provides our city with resources beyond anything we as a community could afford, if we could find this resource. Owensboro has several groups working hard to empower our citizens, PRIDE, PLFO, Hager Foundation, Young Foundation, Community Solutions for Substance Abuse, Citizens Health Care Advocates, Community Conversations, etc, etc. I believe these must have our involvement as local elected officials and support. Remember the phrase “United we stand, divided we fall.”

BILL DECHMAN:

Moving the commission meetings to 5:30 or 6:00 might better accommodate the schedules of many citizens who don't get off work until 5:00.

JOHN FROEHLICH:

Increased public involvement is as much a responsibility and obligation of the public to participate as it is of the government to make meeting more accessible. It has been my limited experience that most people just want to “complain” about closed government. The challenge is to get the general public to actually take advantage of existing opportunities to participate in addition to increasing accessibility to meeting.

RON PAYNE:

First is to continue our support of the neighborhood alliance program and work to call a community summit as described in my answer to the previous question. I would also develop a program to survey our citizens periodically to determine how satisfied they are with city services.

BILLY POGUE:

I want to return the City Commission meetings to 6:30 instead of 5:00. The average work schedule is 9:00-5:00, which leaves out the working population on input to important decisions. We need to make the City Commission meetings heard on the radio, so those who do not have cable or who have a visual impairment will be able to be kept informed on current events. I will do everything in my power to make city government more

accessible.

DAVID SMITH:

Elected officials can increase public involvement by conducting government in an open and fair manner and making sure the public is informed during the policy making process and given plenty of time and different venues to provide input.

I would like to see major programs and proposals taken more directly to the people in their neighborhoods, possibly using the neighborhood alliance meetings. I believe the Decision 2002 process should be used more often in giving the public an opportunity to make their priorities known. I am disturbed by the recent trend of local government and others of hosting forums advocating specific agendas and calling the results “public opinion.” The views are only those of the people who care the most about the issue, not the general public. I do not intend to imply that the opinion of those passionate about a particular issue does not count, only that it cannot be considered the opinion of the entire community. Therefore, I propose the use of more scientific or comprehensive surveys of citizens’ needs, for example the Doble Report and the Decision 2002 ballot.

No matter what elected officials do, however, the public can only be engaged to the extent that it wishes to be engaged with.

ROGER STEWART:

I think that the government must let the people know that they are expected to be involved in their futures. We must let them know that the jobs of elected officials can not be done effectively without public input. Also, the government is not a government of the people if elected officials don't listen. That is something I promise to do. I will listen to what the people want and will do my best to make it happen.

JAMES R. WOOD:

We will continue to work with and through the Neighborhood Associations. We will continue to facilitate answers to taxpayers’ questions through the City Action Line and the Citizen Service Representatives. I will continue to respond to citizens' phone calls and e-mails. We will continue to have an open forum during and at the conclusion of the Commission meetings so that citizens can voice their opinions on issues on the agenda and on issues which are not at that time on the agenda.

**AS A CANDIDATE FOR CITY OFFICE, HOW MAY THE PUBLIC
CONTACT YOU AND GIVE YOU INPUT?**

BOBBY BLANDFORD:

As a City Commissioner I can be contacted in person, by phone or e-mail at any time and will be open to all communications.

CANDANCE BRAKE:

I will be available by phone, email and will be available to meet and listen.

BOB DARLING:

As I have strived to seek this community out by attending or being involved with as many citizens as the day will support, I would always be open to discuss and involve our citizens or guests in my work with government. They should not have to seek me out. The other Commissioners and I must be standing and talking with the public before they are concerned enough to seek us. I will be seeking them.

BILL DECHMAN:

My home phone is 691-9854. My mailing address is P.O. Box 21191, Owensboro, KY 42304-1191.

JOHN FROEHLICH:

I may be contacted by phone at 685-0267 or by e-mail.

RON PAYNE:

I can be contacted at the following e-mail address or phone numbers:
paynerl@adelphia.net Home: 926-3033 Office: 684- 0000.

BILLY POGUE:

The public my contact me at my office at 685-2121 (voice mail available), or at home at 686-1302 (evening). Or I may be e-mailed.

DAVID SMITH:

My phone number is published and I will have a web site and e-mail later this summer.

ROGER STEWART:

I am always available by home phone (685-0888), by cell phone (929-8486), or by e-mail RStewart03@adelphia.net.

JAMES R. WOOD:

Citizens can contact me at City Hall (phone: 270-687-8565, fax: 270-687-8585), at my private office (phone: 270-685-3316, fax: 270-684-1136), at my residence (270-683-9278) and by e-mail (Jwoodlaw@aol.com).

WHAT ARE THE TOP ISSUES THAT CONCERN THE CITY OF OWENSBORO AND ITS CITIZENS, AND HOW DO YOU BELIEVE CITY GOVERNMENT CAN ADDRESS THOSE CONCERNS?

BOBBY BLANDFORD:

1. Economy

The City must work with the County and State to entice businesses to our community.

2. Water Drainage

Updating our old sewer system as needed. Keeping the ditches clean in and out of the City to insure proper water drainage.

3. Tax

Make sure our tax dollars are spent wisely for all the citizens of Owensboro and not for unnecessary projects.

4. Drugs

I support drug programs for our community, both rehabilitation and prosecution.

5. Merger

I support the merger of City and County working together as a unit, not duplicating services and saving the taxpayers money.

CANDANCE BRAKE:

I believe the top five issues (not ranked) are economic development, educational attainment in all age groups, substance abuse, a need for a unified community vision and the lack of cohesion in the community in many public service areas.

BOB DARLING:

A. The top issue the City faces is the cost from substance abuse. The extra burden placed on police, our courts, our jail and families cost all of us with no benefits. Over a million dollars that could benefit this community is lost every year, and that does not cover how much is spent by those seeking treatment for this scourge.

Supplying an answer to this problem must be multifaceted. Education,

- prevention, treatment and long term recovery must all be addressed.
- B. Another top issue as always, is securing more and higher paying jobs. This issue must be job one. But the reason I have listed this second is lack of better paying jobs is hurting this community, but substance abuse is killing us. To improve our job market I believe a job coalition needs to be formed from local governments, the Chamber and industrial recruiters. We can work together to cover our gaps concerning job recruitment.
- C. Merger must be listed in the top five. We have reached a point in our history where our three government (Owensboro, Daviess County, and Whitesville) system is not the most effective answer. Owensboro will lose its position of third largest city on January 1, 2010 and with other possible mergers in the state we might drop to sixth or seventh largest. To go from third to seventh puts Owensboro in a weak position to attain state or federal dollars.
- D. Of course drainage and flooding issues will always be a concern to a city built on flatland. Following the Storm Water Master Plan as much as possible, working close with our Federal delegation to secure the maximum dollars. Heavy runoffs from storms causes sewage backup and pollutes our environment. This issue may never be solved completely, but standing knee deep in water in one's front yard does not make a citizen appreciate our new riverfront better.
- E. Which brings me to downtown redevelopment and our revitalized riverfront. Owensboro was started on the Ohio and finally we are returning our interest to the riverfront. The redevelopment and revitalization needed will take many years but local government must stay focused on making our downtown the hub from which this community grows. The "hot" area of business has been south Frederica for many years, but is now moving to U. S. Highway 54. Communities with a strong downtown project that community as full of pride in itself.

BILL DECHMAN:

1. Economic Development - maintain infrastructure; have business-friendly policies; work with EDC to make sure our community strengths are being effectively marketed.
2. Talking to Frankfort with one voice - encourage discussions with Daviess County Fiscal Court and elected state representatives to establish community priorities which are impacted by decisions in Frankfort.
3. Illegal drug activity with special emphasis upon meth - make sure local law enforcement has the resources needed to effectively address the apprehension of dealers; work with Daviess County Fiscal Court and

Daviess County law enforcement to find more cost effective ways for addressing abuse issues (intervention is more cost-effective than incarceration).

4. Increased city/county cooperation where feasible; merger - find common ground where possible; promote and participate in open forums involving a variety of community leaders where the public can come and express their concerns both pro and con.
5. Stormwater - continue work using the master plan as a guide and giving priority to the most severely impacted areas.

JOHN FROEHLICH:

1. Development of a “City Master Plan” including waterfront development, downtown redevelopment, inner city redevelopment and beautification of major traffic arteries. Accomplished under the direction of a professional team and involvement of literally thousands of community volunteers in hundreds of community workshops.
2. Resolution of the sewage and storm water drainage problems.
3. Improved cooperation between the two governmental agencies and the initiation of dialogue concerning the advisability of merging some or all of the governmental services. Continue to find common ground where both agencies of government can cooperate with the secondary agenda of searching out those areas where departments and services might be combined.
4. Expansion of and increased efficiency in the delivery of basic services.

RON PAYNE:

1. Community Vision-- City government should take the lead in bringing our community together to develop a community vision. This vision should lead to the development of a strategic plan with goals and objectives.
2. Economic Development-- I would propose we establish an economic development function within city government to work with the Chamber and local business to expand our economy. The function would be a structure similar to the neighborhood alliance program and could be funded with increased revenue generated by job growth.
3. Transportation-- we need to continue our progress with improving our street and highway infrastructure. This would include such projects as the By Pass extension, Martin Luther King, Jr. Loop West, the widening of Southtown Boulevard, and working with others to widen US Highway 231 to Interstate 64.

4. Storm Water Drainage-- we need to continue our progress in addressing the many drainage problems in our community. While City Manager I recommended many programs that have led to the progress we have made in addressing this problem but much remains to be done.
5. Riverfront Development-- our location on the river is one of this community's greatest assets and we need to continue development of our riverfront. I would work to accomplish this by continuing our efforts to seek federal and state funding and also explore private development opportunities.

BILLY POGUE:

Increasing fees and taxes -- more oversight to the governmental agencies such as Owensboro Municipal Utilities (OMU) and Regional Water Resource Agency to ensure rates are not excessive. The City Commission allows OMU to unilaterally increase the BCA & ECCA rate on our OMU bills without being brought before the elected officials. And the City entered into a franchise agreement with Atmos Energy allowing them to add a new one percent fee to our gas bills. The former city manager told the public that the city will be receiving \$100,000 a year, up from \$10,000, from the gas company. This “new money” that was referred to was fees that were tacked onto our gas bills. Misleading the public is not a good leadership style.

Increasing the business population -- Government must make the regulations and environment user-friendly to the business population. Small businesses account for many of the jobs and revenues this city comes to expect. We must look at ways such as planning and zoning regulations interfere with the ease of conducting business.

Duplication of services --The residents of Owensboro account for over 60% of the Daviess County budget and get no return on their investment. County cooperation is needed immediately until further discussion on consolidation can begin. The parks master plan showed a need for a single park system instead of Owensboro and Daviess County having their own. We are paying for duplication of services which could save all the taxpayers some money. The consolidated 911 center is a much needed resource for the safety of our community. We must look at the different ways we are duplicating services to this community and the additional cost we are burdening our residents with.

Drug problem -- The city, county and state law enforcement officials will have to come together to battle this ever-growing problem. With drugs being so readily available, this is truly a regional effort. Prevention in the schools and assistance where it can be reached is an important step into battling this

issue. Tougher punishments for those who break the laws are needed to deter this ever-growing community issue. I will commit to work with the Owensboro Police Department to make the resources necessary to tackle this issue.

Owensboro-Daviess Urban County Government-- A commission needs to be appointed to draft a “well written charter” for the citizens’ review. It is of utmost importance that the entire community does understand how this consolidation will occur. The discussion and dialogue regarding ways to grow our community so we will not wither on the vine, like other communities who have lost population and tax base. This plan is not drafted overnight, it’s not one person’s thoughts, but a community-wide effort with a series of “town hall” meetings to ensure full citizen support. This has to be an effort that the community supports and a way that will show the cost-effectiveness of doing so. The ultimate goal will be to provide better government for all of our community.

DAVID SMITH:

1. The first issue in all elections is economic development. Since 1995 the number of jobs in Daviess County has increased by only three percent. By comparison, McCracken County has seen a five percent increase, the state an eight percent increase, and Warren County a 15% increase. I understand that government does not create jobs - the private sector does - so I propose to increase jobs by helping existing industry expand their markets locally and nationally by starting new programs and partnerships. I learned quickly as a business manager that it is easier and cheaper to keep the customers you have and convince them to use more of your services than it is to attract new customers. I believe the same is true for our local economy. Littleton, Colorado has pioneered the practice of “economic gardening” and I believe the city and county should partner with the Economic Development Corporation and the local libraries to help existing businesses grow.

The second issue is getting our “fair share” from Frankfort and Washington. Paul Coomes in two recent reports on Owensboro has stated that Owensboro is “a self-reliant region in a big government state” and that, by his estimates, Owensboro pays \$65 million more in state taxes than it receives in services. Examples of Owensboro's problem in this area abound. The RiverPark received only \$7.5 million from the state, whereas Paducah's Four River's Center received \$20 million and Bowling Green’s Southern Kentucky Performing Arts Center (SKyPAC) has already received over \$6 million for property acquisition. Other areas, such as Paducah, Bowling Green and

Northern Kentucky have received state funding for convention centers and Murray, Northern Kentucky and Pikeville have received (or will soon receive) money for arenas and special events centers. Owensboro has self-funded its convention and sports facilities. I believe by bringing city, county and business leaders together we can lobby more effectively and make a start at turning this around.

The third issue is better use of tax dollars. Opinion surveys at the national and local level continue to bemoan government's waste of tax dollars. Locally the public was not surprised when the "temporary" tax increase was made permanent. Promises that economic growth would pay for local services and projects have been made since 1995, but it seems that the revenue from this growth cannot keep up with spending. I propose to increase government effectiveness through a top-to-bottom efficiency study of city government similar to the one Evansville is currently undertaking, a benchmarking program to compare how Owensboro delivers services compared to other successful cities and by instituting an in-house problem solving program, based on the Government Accountability Project in Chicago in the early 1990's.

The fourth issue is workforce training and the biotechnology sector. This may seem a little simplistic but in order to increase worker pay we must increase worker productivity. To increase worker productivity we must increase worker skills. To increase worker skills we need the Advanced Technology Center (ATC). The Kentucky Advanced Technology Institute was opened in 1987 in Bowling Green and I believe part of that city's growth can be attributed to the institute. The ATC may have a similar affect on our job growth.

An important part of the ATC is the biotechnology labs. Owensboro's economic history is littered with missed opportunities. We were a large wagon manufacturing center but did not bridge to the automotive era, we were a large vacuum tube maker but did not bridge to the transistor and silicon chip era. We are a large agriculture commodity center, will we bridge to the high-value biotechnology era? Many states would like to lure Large Scale Biology from Owensboro, but our agricultural future depends on it staying here and the ATC will play a large role by providing the lab space and worker training needed.

The fifth issue would be upgrading the Audubon Parkway to I-169. This

issue is both symbolic and tangible. The symbolism is very important, as Owensboro has always felt left out of the interstate transportation network. While the location of I-69 just 20 miles from the end of the US 60 By-pass is good, the emotional lift of an interstate highway in Daviess County cannot be underestimated. It is tangibly important for two reasons. First, it will help economic development. In March, 2000, *Site Selection* magazine published a list entitled "America's Top 100 Small Towns for Corporate Facilities." Approximately 71% of the top 21 small towns had direct access to interstate highways. Second, it will require Owensboro to think long-term, as it will take years for the upgrade process to take place, and it will require a massive, unified lobbying effort. The Owensboro City Commission can help begin that effort.

ROGER STEWART:

- A. Economic Development--We can promote our community demonstrating our many positives and work with all our leaders to attract new industry.
- B. Living Wages--Recruit businesses with higher base wages and educate to fill the requirements for the industry. We also need to encourage competition for the work force.
- C. Education--The Owensboro area has great institutions of learning, from elementary through the college level. We need to combine our efforts for growth through what the city needs and what education can provide.
- D. Drug Abuse--We need to continue the funding of treatment and rehabilitation facilities for drug abuse. Our law enforcement needs the support of everyone to seek out and punish the dealers and suppliers of drugs.
- E. Making the Most of Opportunities--We have the promising development of the new Wal-Mart which will provide many jobs and lay a foundation for economic development in the eastern part of our community. We have the opportunity to get the Technology Center at Owensboro Community and Technical College campus. We also have the opportunity to be close to I-69 which is a very promising development. We are at a rare point in time when it comes to economic development and we can squander these opportunities or we can make the most of them by making them part of a larger economic development campaign.

JAMES R. WOOD:

Public safety: Under the heading of Public Safety I will encompass both police and fire issues. We must continue to implement the installation of mobile data terminals in all police vehicles to facilitate officer

communication, and to ensure officer safety. Video cameras also need to be installed in all vehicles. We also need to continue implementation of a take-home vehicle fleet. Consolidation of 911 emergency dispatch services should also be included under the heading of Public Safety and needs to be moved beyond the mere ability for Police and Sheriff to communicate with each other.

Most importantly, we must expand our effort to attack the issue of illegal drugs. A “metro” drug task force is needed to consolidate and coordinate the efforts by the Owensboro Police Department and the Daviess County Sheriff's Department in the fight against illegal drugs, particularly methamphetamine. Drug use/trafficking respects no geographic or political subdivision boundaries. We cannot permit situations where both departments, without being aware of the others activities, are investigating the same individuals and wind up facing each other in stake out situations with the possibility of shots being fired. A coordinated joint drug task force should be implemented. This would require additional funds, some of which may be available through grants but much of which will have to be “found” within existing budgets. In the Owensboro Fire Department we must continue to train fire fighters as emergency medical technicians so they can continue to be first responders. We must also complete the traffic override system.

Infrastructure/street and roads: At the present time the City of Owensboro has excellent plans for the improvement of traffic flow. That planning must be brought to fruition with the actual construction with what is now on paper. We are acquiring right-of-way for the Martin Luther King Jr. Loop West and must continue with that project. Because of state budget problems, other road projects will potentially be delayed. We must do everything we can to move that construction forward. Southtown Boulevard must be widened in order to facilitate traffic from MidAmerica AirPark and from Carter Road into the west entrance of our shopping centers. The Bypass extension to alleviate congestion on U.S. Highway 60 East must be moved forward. If necessary the city should look at the possibility of acquiring right-of-way in order to encourage the state to move this project up on its construction timetable. Expansion of Fifth Street Road to Jack C. Fisher is necessary and the installation of sidewalks or a spur of the Greenbelt is necessary. Additionally, we will have to look at congestion on U.S. Highway 54, particularly in view of the expansion of shopping facilities in that area.

Economic Development: The City alone has little ability to “recruit” an industry. The recruitment of industry involves state government in a very fundamental fashion. However, the City must continue to work jointly with Daviess County Fiscal Court and with Greater Owensboro Economic Development Corporation (GOECDE, formerly Industry, Inc.) to pursue new industry. The Executive Director of GOECDC spends a significant amount of his time actively recruiting businesses. The City must support those activities. We must also continue to demand state construction of the proposed Technology Center on the Owensboro Community and Technical College campus, to be operated in conjunction with Western Kentucky University. Workforce training and education is essential to provide the well-educated, well-trained workforce that existing industry, as well as potential new industries, requires. As a function of industrial recruitment, we must also pay particular attention to those civic services and amenities at which corporate officials look when they investigate potential areas for expansion. Further, we cannot ignore existing industry/business; we must do those things reasonably necessary to retain, and promote expansion of, our existing employers.

Storm water: People often ask whether storm water is an annoyance or an actual hazard. If you live in an area that is safe from flooding, and only occasionally drive through or detour around a flooded street, then you probably feel that storm water is merely an annoyance. If, however, you live in an area where a combined storm water/sanitary sewer backs up, leaving contaminated water in your yard, in your driveway, in your basement, under your house or in your house, then storm water is most definitely a health hazard. Because the majority of Owensboro homes are connected with combined sewers, with the potential of sewage spilling into any overflow from storm water runoff, storm water must continue to be a priority. By implementing a capital construction program, we will continue to build phases of the storm water master plan in order to relieve flooding in those areas where it still presents a hazard to health. Even if those residences are fewer in number than the ones that are safe from flooding, it is a civic responsibility to alleviate that health hazard; hence storm water will continue to be a priority.

Recreation and Parks: Some individuals feel that the City of Owensboro has some nice parks and that is all that is required. How simple it would be if that was true. The City must continue to provide opportunities to both youth

and adults for physical activities/sports. Hence at the minimum we must maintain those parks, fields, and other recreational facilities we have in order to continue to deliver the services we currently provide. We KNOW that we will soon be faced with an ice rink that no longer functions. The piping system of the existing ice arena has lived much longer than anticipated and is probably on the verge of a catastrophic failure. We have continued operation several years longer than many thought possible. Hence we must make preparation for the construction of a new ice arena. That should properly be in the geographic setting for an expanded recreation complex. To place it otherwise would not be good planning. We will probably face major repairs at our existing pools, and need to consider an option of an aquatic facility that provides more than the traditional “flat water.” It goes without saying that the remainder of the Adkisson Greenbelt should be completed as soon as is possible. The southern most segment of that, of course, cannot be completed until Southtown Boulevard is widened and the west portion of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Loop is completed. This hopefully gives one an idea of the interconnected nature of many city projects.

AS AN ELECTED OFFICIAL, DO YOU FEEL YOUR PRIMARY FOCUS SHOULD BE ON INTERNAL CITY GOVERNMENT MATTERS (STREETS, SEWERS, POLICE AND FIRE PROTECTION, ETC.) OR EXTERNAL MATTERS RELATING TO COMMUNITY PROGRESS (COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, NETWORKING IN FRANKFORT, ETC.)? HOW WOULD YOU BALANCE YOUR DUTIES ACCORDINGLY?

BOBBY BLANDFORD:

As an elected official I feel the internal and external matters facing Owensboro are both vital to our community and I would balance my duties as priorities arise.

CANDANCE BRAKE:

There needs to be a healthy balance between the two. From time to time, certain issues of either focus may require more time than the other. But both are equally important.

BOB DARLING:

Every commission candidate has strengths and weaknesses in their areas of

knowledge of government. The candidates that are elected for Owensboro City Commission must make every effort to strive towards a team approach with our issues, a citizen with a pothole in their street does not care about a far reaching project in Frankfort, and rightly so. A citizen with a drug dealer next door doesn't care much about somebody else's pothole, and rightly so. Every citizen has different needs to be addressed. To meet our community's total needs you have to balance your time on issues. Some time with the Street Department; some time with Owensboro Police Department; some time in Frankfort or Washington. Working together, spreading our workload will give this community its brightest future.

BILL DECHMAN:

I believe internal matters are primary. It is difficult to effectively address external issues such as economic development without first having sound infrastructure and a relatively safe community.

JOHN FROEHLICH:

Mr. Froehlich did not respond to this question.

RON PAYNE:

As an elected official I would focus primarily on external matters related to community progress while fulfilling my oversight role in regards to internal city government. The City of Owensboro operates under the City Manager form and day-to-day operations are the responsibility of the city manger. The City Commission sets policy and direction primarily through the adoption of a budget which is then implemented by the city manager and city staff. My primary focus would be working with the community to establish a direction and vision for our community.

BILLY POGUE:

I feel that my primary focus should be on internal government matter, such as sewers, streets, police and fire, etc. The whole existence of city government is to provide basic municipal services to our community. We must not forget why we are here, but not to neglect external matters as the importance of work force development and such. There will have to be a balance between what the city needs and what the city wants. I will make it my focus to maintain a high level of services and an affordable cost of living, then move toward the things we all would love to have.

DAVID SMITH:

My primary focus initially will be internal. We must make the city more efficiently use the tax dollars it has in order to be prepared for the future and for opportunities to invest in our city. After setting that process in motion, I believe commissioners should concentrate on external matters and let the professional staff handle internal affairs (with the proper amount of public and elected official oversight). I believe the city commissioners can have a great impact by getting out and advocating those issues that are important to the community, not only on Frederica Street, but also on Capitol Avenue in Frankfort and Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington. I would like to see elected officials in city and county government take more leadership roles in seeing projects like centralizing 911 through and not letting them get side tracked. Outside of dealing with citizen-initiated concerns, I would foresee spending about 25% of my time on internal issues and 75% on external issues.

ROGER STEWART:

I believe that both internal and external functions of government are extremely important. However, if our city does not prosper when dealing with the external functions we will not be able to fund internal functions. With better paying jobs brought about by successful external government comes more taxes for better services. Over the last several years we have seen our city government provide talk with very few actions when it comes to allowing our city to progress and that will change if I am elected City Commissioner.

JAMES R. WOOD:

Citizens more readily notice deficiencies in matters which you term "internal" than they do in matters which you have labeled "external." Citizens will much more readily call to complain about potholes than they will on some lack of focus on workforce development. However, if jobs start to leave, citizens will eventually let you know about it and with great passion. An elected official's primary obligation is, as I have suggested above, to ensure that all basic municipal services are provided, and provided in an efficient and cost-effective manner. However, an elected official cannot neglect matters relating to "community progress." You balance your time by ensuring that all of it gets done, regardless of the amount of time it takes. As the elected official, you are directing the City's staff in the accomplishment of much of it. Nonetheless, that "directing" can consume an extraordinary amount of time.