



2014 Broward County Commission Candidate Questionnaire

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Also, please include a photo when you return this questionnaire by email.

1. If you're a challenger in this race, why are you running and what makes you qualified? If you're an incumbent, why do you deserve re-election?

I held this position from 2006-2010. I want to return to the Broward County Commission to address the issues that have not been addressed since 2010.

2. Have you ever been arrested or involved in a criminal proceeding or civil suit? Have you ever filed bankruptcy or have been foreclosed upon? If so, please explain.

No.

3. Name the three key issues facing Broward County that need immediate and sustained attention.

A. **Job Creation and Retention.** Without question, the number one issue facing Broward County residents is the lack of good jobs. I served on the Board of Directors of the Broward/Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance for four years, as the Broward County Commission's appointee. As such, I gained extensive experience in the mechanics of attracting employers to Broward County. Additionally, I have knowledge regarding the problems with Broward County's business incentive ordinances which have

made it more difficult for Broward County to compete with other counties to attract (and retain) businesses. While some progress has been made to revise our ordinances, we can and should do more. As I did when I was Broward County Mayor in 2010, after my election I will request that the County Administrator, Bertha Henry, convene a workshop between the Broward County Commission, the Greater Ft. Lauderdale Alliance, and business leaders to discuss additional methods for attracting and retaining businesses.

B. Fast-tracking Previously Approved Capital Projects and New Projects. There is nothing more frustrating than to observe major capital projects (most of which the Broward County Commission approved while I was serving) languishing. The construction of the much needed Broward County courthouse that I championed is one obvious example; the beach renourishment project is another. These projects create much needed jobs. The Convention Center Hotel needs to finally come to fruition, as well. After my election, I will request that that the County Administrator, Bertha Henry, convene a workshop to discuss the status of all previously approved major capital projects and I will to ask her to suggest how each project can be expedited. Moreover, I will ask the County Administrator to provide a monthly update to the entire Broward County Commission during her "County Administrator's Report."

C. Long Term Transportation Needs. This is one area in which we have failed as a Commission. Now is the time to discuss and establish a dedicated funding source for our future transportation needs e.g. light rail/consumer rail/dedicated rapid bus lanes. Broward County is too auto-centric. Broward will have 29% more residents by 2035, if we do nothing, the level of service for most of our roads by 2035 will be an "F".

It's time again for leadership. While I was on the Broward County Commission from 2006-2010, we finally passed a plan to expand the southern runway at the Fort Lauderdale/Hollywood International Airport, after more than 20 years of trying. We finally passed a plan to build a much needed new courthouse, after years of ignoring the issue. We can solve our future transportation needs, but only if we make the solution a priority of the Commission.

4. How might we grow Broward's economy and diversify its job base?

See Answer to Question 3 A. The Broward Alliance has commissioned a study in furtherance of diversifying of economy. We should make this a priority. While we should not neglect the tourism or marine industries (our two largest), we should diversify.

5. Given the growth in property values, should Broward lower its tax rate, either this year or next?

Based on my experience, my initial reaction is to lower the millage rate to bring in the same amount of revenue as the previous year. I would force the County Administrator, Bertha Henry, to

justify any proposed increase. By doing so, from 2006-2010 my colleagues and I were able to decrease Broward's annual budget by \$400,000,000.00.

6. Should Broward fight to keep its hotel bed tax at 5 percent?

Yes. It should not be raised unless and until the increased penny has the support of the tourism industry. From 2006 to 2010, I reviewed the Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention and Visitors Bureau's budget. The 5 cents was sufficient to service the debt on the BB&T Center, fund tourism, and fund beach renourishment.

7. Do you support the Florida Panthers request for more bed tax dollars?

No. Furthermore, the loan to the Panthers for \$7,700,000.00 and the grant of \$4,200,000.00 was a mistake.

8. What are the challenges facing Broward with beach renourishment?

Funding and oversight. We must be diligent with the County's bed tax money. We must lobby Tallahassee and Washington DC aggressively for new dollars and re-payment of earlier funds spend by Broward. Giving bed tax money to the Panthers and renegotiating the contract to give more profit to the Panthers and less to Broward County was and is ludicrous.

9. What would you do to address traffic congestion in Broward?

See answer to question 3C. As I stated earlier, this is one area where we have failed as a Commission. Now is the time to discuss and establish a dedicated funding source for our future transportation needs e.g. light rail/consumer rail/dedicated rapid bus lanes. Broward County is too auto-centric. Our roadways are built out. If we continue to ignore this issue, the level of service for most of our roads by 2035 will be an "F". The 40 year traffic light synchronization project will help somewhat as we convert from digital to fiber optics, but that won't be fully implemented countywide until 2020.

10. Would you be willing to let voters decide whether to raise taxes for public transportation?

Yes. I will always support the voters' right to make these types of decisions. However, any such initiative must be combined with support from the business community, which must advocate for its passage.

11. Do you see any improvements that could be made in the contracts with public employee unions? Please explain.

I haven't any real concerns with these contracts. However, I would require labor peace provisions.

12. What works well on the county commission, and what could work better?

For the most part, the Broward County Commission operates cohesively. However, with so many big egos, there are personality conflicts between members from time to time. I made it my goal as a Commissioner and especially as Vice Mayor and then Mayor to defuse these situations. With the removal of County Commissioners from the selection process, more policy decisions are being made by staff that should be made by the elected commissioners. I would advocate for a greater role for Commissions in the procurement process.

13. Describe the tension between the county and its cities, and what might be done to improve relations.

The Broward County Commission needs to understand compromise. When cities sue Broward County as often as they recently have, something is wrong.

14. How would you describe the performance of the county administrator?

Acceptable.

15. How do you see the role of lobbyists at county center?

I see their roles as important. They provide valuable information as advocates for their clients, and they provide valuable information as to their competitors' weaknesses or county staff biases.

16. Does Broward need a county mayor?

As the former Mayor of Broward County, absolutely. One of the weaknesses of Broward County government is the lack of a Mayor elected county-wide. While on the Commission, only Broward County Commissioner Lois Wexler and I voted to put a "countywide elected mayor" charter amendment on the November 2010 ballot. With the Mayor position changing yearly (and the Mayor being selected by the Commission, as opposed to by the voters), there is no continuity and most people can't even name Broward's Mayor. With a countywide elected Mayor, there would be at least one individual representing all 1.8 million residents, and not just 1/9th of Broward County. And he or she would be the "face" of Broward.

17. How hands-on should commissioners be in the workings of the airport, the seaport and the administration of county government?

Very. They are the elected leaders, not unelected county staff.

18. How should Broward balance the funding requests of the sheriff's office with competing needs?

We need to recognize that law enforcement is one of the primary responsibilities of Broward County Commissioners. This is a priority for me.

19. What can be done to resolve the waste resource recovery dispute?

We can compromise. This "it's all mine" approach isn't working.

20. What more can Broward do to address the challenge of homelessness?

This is a severe challenge. We need to work closely with the cities who are experiencing this problem first hand. Ft. Lauderdale Mayor Jack Seiler may have a different view of what needs to be done than, say, Wilton Manors Mayor Gary Resnick. We should work closely with the School Board and other taxing entities, as well as provide funding to 211 and other organizations. Lastly, we must recognize that mental illness is often associated with homelessness and seek to provide additional support for the mental healthcare providers.

21. How would you balance the tensions between developers and neighborhood associations?

By balancing the needs of both. I voted to approve most development that came before me, but not before making sure that every reasonable concession was made by the developers to make the project acceptable to the neighborhood where the project was being built.

22. Do you support the creation of an ethics commission in Broward?

As the Mayor of Broward County in 2010, I voted for the Broward County Ethics Commission's proposed Ethic's Code (which contained the establishment of the Inspector General). I voted against efforts to water it down, as well. That said, I am concerned with the additional costs to the taxpayers. I would need an additional briefing on this as to its proposed benefits versus its additional costs.

23. How could Broward have a stronger voice in Tallahassee?

We have some of the best lobbyists working for Broward County protecting our interests, but that isn't enough. County Commissioners need to build relationships with elected officials in Tallahassee. As a county commissioner I did exactly that by working with Republicans as well as Democrats. I worked closely with District 4's Florida State Senator Jeff Atwater and Florida House Member Ellyn Bogdanoff.

24. What has prepared you to be a county commissioner?

My former experience as a County Commissioner from 2006-2010; my service as the Vice Mayor in 2008-2009; and my service as Mayor in 2009-2010. I was also an assistant city attorney for Plantation for years which helped prepare me.

25. Why should voters choose you over your opponent?

I have a track record of consensus building that has served Broward County well. During my tenure on the County Commission, I was able to form coalitions to finally extend the southern runway at the Fort Lauderdale/Hollywood International Airport; to build a greatly needed, scaled-down courthouse; and to expand Port Everglades for the post-panamax ships that will come to Broward County.

The current commissioner, with his partisan views and personal attacks on his colleagues, has irritated the majority of his colleagues to the point where he has become ineffective. This is evident in their rejection of his proposed redistricting plan and their rejection of him for Vice Mayor. Respectfully, you cannot properly represent district 4 if you can't get four votes to support your agenda. I applaud him for his service; I just believe I can, and I will, do a better job.