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**Responses to Questions for 2010 County Commissioner Candidates  
(We continued receiving responses well after the debate -  
last updated Oct 12, 2010)**

The Citizens for the Preservation of Pleasant Valley was created, in part, out of a frustration that elected officials and bureaucrats ignored this part of the County. We are a 501 (c) 3 organization interested in providing education and forums for citizens in the area on topics of interest.

All county commissioner candidates who filed by the deadline received a questionnaire with the following ten questions. In addition, they also received an invitation to attend our Meet the Candidate's Night on July 21, 2010. Only minor editing changes were made to accommodate for space, the words provided are their own.

***Question 1: Name the top three challenges facing Washington County government and briefly state how you can help.***

**Kristin Aleshire:** The most pressing issue facing this County and virtually every community across the Country is employment. There are several initiatives that will serve to address this issue, including keeping public projects moving forward, promoting our industry cores like the Airport, Hopewell, Hospital, and COPT. A second large item that will need attention is the adequate provision of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services. As this system has changed significantly over time, we must work to develop a master Plan to ensure its sustainable future. The last item that we should provide some greater focus on is preservation of our natural resources. While this category is varied, it should include a plan for better stewardship of our cultural and historical attributes, disposal of solid waste, protection of forested areas and waterways, and promotion of our agricultural economies.

**Terry Baker:** Three of the Top challenges facing Washington County Government over the next three years. Helping with the creation of jobs that will pay better than average wages: The commissioners will need to work with our local and State economic development to offer some job creation tax credits as well as some help with permit and infrastructure fees. The cost, rules, and regulations to do business in the State of Maryland are not very business friendly.

We need to work with the small businesses in Washington County to provide some help/relief and incentives for them! Small businesses are responsible for creating more stable and better paying jobs than the much larger businesses.

Taxes: With more and more fiscal responsibility being mandated from the state of Maryland back to our counties, the commissioners will have to be accountable more now than ever with the citizen's tax dollars. For me, these new mandates will have to be accomplished with no tax increase on real estate or income tax. The commissioners need to help working citizens and families keep more of the money they earn.

Education: We need to continue funding education at the state mandated maintenance of effort level, which is cost per pupil. A quality education is the cornerstone of every successful American.

**Ruth Anne Callahan:** Job creation and retention: My job as a commissioner will be to encourage innovative and effective communication between businesses and the county economic development folks. I will build relationships with organizations throughout the state such as the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development to advocate for our county. Agriculture is an important piece of the job puzzle so I will advocate for locally grown food.

Preservation of services and infrastructure in a fiscally challenging recession: A balanced budget will be a formidable challenge in next few years. The desire by the state to transfer responsibility for teacher pensions to the counties will significantly increase the budget. As a commissioner I will work with the legislators in the state assembly for equitable solutions/alternatives.

Management of growth: The tax base of the county needs to increase at a pace to adequately support improvement of infrastructure and public services. I will work to create a balanced approach that protects our rural assets and facilitates the needs of developers.

**Jeff Cline** : Funding existing services with looming budget cuts from the State of MD, Job creation, Job attraction. Living within your means as a government entity, spending less, limiting borrowing and not allowing government to grow will be essential to continue to fund county obligations as revenues decline. More effective and efficient use of our services to encourage savings will be necessary.

Washington County's unemployment as of this writing is higher than the State average by almost 2% points. Straddled with the State of MD's high corporate tax rate, high income tax rate, MDE, EPA and other regulatory legislation, Washington County must be proactive and offer local incentives to create jobs for already established businesses as well as to attract industry to locate in our county. Targeting acceptable businesses through appropriate zoning to streamline the approval process will permit Washington County to be competitive in recruiting new business. Once again, remember that the State of Maryland is not business friendly and Washington County is tasked with overcoming obstacles that are not in their control.

**Charlie Henson:** What I feel the top three challenges facing Washington County government and how I can help are as follows: A: The Economy: Directly related to the Building industry in the county. The way to help is to promote the construction trade with incentives reducing the costs to build. B: Property Tax: Base property tax on actual value of property not the assessed value. Lower property tax. C: Outsiders: Manage for the people of Washington County and not track builders moving in for short term gain and then leave. This keeps things in our county for our people.

**Joe Lane:** 1. The county has many roads and schools that are overcrowded. The Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) must be enforced. The current commissioner regularly exempt new development from the APFO. This causes overcrowding of schools and roads. The redistricting of our schools is an entirely avoidable consequence of ignoring the APFO. If the APFO were enforced, these problems would stop getting worse.

2. The county must end the practice of subsidizing new development. These subsidies take two forms. First, the excise tax, (charged to developers to pay for required infrastructure) does not cover the cost of the schools and roads. This pushes the cost onto the taxpayer. Second, the current commissioners regularly propose building new roads and sewers to encourage development. We should not spend money on new roads while the ones we already have continue to deteriorate.

3. Preserve the largest sector of our local economy (agriculture). Washington County is within a short distance of several major population centers. A major trend within the food industry is toward local and fresh foods. Our proximity to these population centers gives our producers a competitive advantage

when moving product to market. The EDC should redeploy some of its resources to market Washington County as an agricultural producer. They could also attract producers, processors and distributors and help them exploit this advantage.

**Bill McKinley:** 1. As I talk with citizens around the county it is evident that the economy/jobs is the most pressing concern. Whereas Washington County with its location and highway system should be an ideal location for businesses it is often overlooked because of state mandated restrictions and cost. We need to look seriously at incentives for new and existing businesses and encourage our delegates to work on this issue with our state government. The County Commissioners will need to work aggressively with the Economic Development Commission to make sure that everything is being done to attract good jobs to this county.

2. The road system in and around the new hospital, Robinwood and HCC area is woefully inadequate and we need to take the best plan available and get to work. Much has been said about this problem and now is the time to act.

3. Washington County is an area of great natural beauty and heritage. I think one of the biggest issues will be developing our county economically with new businesses, construction and roadways while maintaining the open space, natural beauty and heritage that 'is' Washington County. This may seem like a conflict of interest and is. But with a strong desire for these two entities to co-exist, I believe, proper zoning can be mandated to mitigate this problem.

**John C. Munson :** County Debt, Roads, and rising fees: \*County debt causes much concern because it could cause the commissioners to raise the property tax and maybe even county income tax. The answer to the debt is to stop all of the spending for a couple of years and pay the debt off. Then get on a pay as you go budget. This would save 6-7 million dollars a year in debt interest. \*County roads are in need of repairs, especially the back roads of the county. People that are living on these roads deserve better because they do pay taxes and get nothing to show for their tax. \*Rising fees could and most likely will cause some people to lose their homes. Each county department needs to look at their department to find out where they can cut expenses and/ or employees in order to not raise fees.

**Kevin Simmers:** 1. *Jobs/Economic development:* I will work very closely with the employment sector that employs more Americans than any other: "SMALL BUSINESS." I will be talking to businesses who are struggling and find out what incentives would work best for them. I will regularly meet with Tim Troxell and his staff at Economic Development, and the local Chamber of Commerce. I will regularly meet with other entities that offer services to employers and the unemployed, such as DBED, The One Stop Job Service, The Western MD Consortium and local colleges and trade schools. 2.) Emergency services. We no longer have enough volunteers to continue to staff our fire and rescue service with volunteers. This must be addressed. 3.) The division of services between Washington County and City of Hagerstown.

**Nick Vindivich :** A. I believe the biggest challenge facing Washington County Government is balancing the upcoming budgets for years to come. I feel that it is time to work on how the County can save money at the same time exploring ways to become innovative in attracting higher paying jobs to our community. B. Secondly, I feel that the County Government needs to be more proactive in providing input from outside entities such as municipal governments, industry leaders, and concerned citizens to listen, evaluate and make hard decisions to better our county. C. Furthermore, I feel that the County needs to be on the fore front for emerging industries such as wind and solar technologies, hi-tech manufacturing, pharmaceutical , and other Green business to jump start our job market for years to come.

**Robin Wivell :** Economic Growth. With the economy continuing to face recovery challenges, we must work closely with State and local officials to entice existing and new businesses to continue to invest in

Washington County. We can also work closely with our institutions of higher learning to create an attractive work force, with HCC and their incubator program as a perfect example.

**Budget Challenges/Fiscal Constraints.** Due to the economy, the County will continue to face budget challenges. It is important for the County to live within its means and not raise taxes on its citizens. We must also lobby state officials to discontinue balancing their budgets on the backs of localities, which has been done recently with the elimination of Highway User Revenues, and Project Open Space money. We will continually have to scrutinize the budget, differentiating needs from wants, and funding only the essential operations of government. Also, the County must continue to control its borrowing so that debt service does not become an increasing percentage of the budget.

**Adequacy of Infrastructure, especially Education .** It goes without saying that we must continue to improve upon the progress that has been made in educating our residents. The continuing expansion of USMH in downtown Hagerstown with additional course offerings, the recent strides that have been made by Kaplan University, and the growth of HCC are all fine examples of improvements to our institutions of higher learning. At the elementary and secondary school level, we must continue to enhance the learning process through such programs as magnet schools, intervention, and individualized/specialized education that challenge the minds of the students and create a desire to learn.

***Question 2: With the Rt. 40 site so far away, the care of our local transfer stations are of concern.***

- a. Is it possible to have a bi-annual big stuff pick-up where refrigerators, TV's, etc. can be dropped off?***
- b. Are you aware of several issues citizens have concerning recycling at the Kaetzel Road transfer station? What can be done with recycling bins? It is our understanding that level of service from the recycling contractor is inadequate. Is this because of the volume of recycling materials, limits of the contract or the inadequate oversight of the contractor? What would you do to address these concerns?***

**Kristin Aleshire:** A. Yes, there are a number of municipalities that currently provide this type of service and this type of program could be implemented for some of our rural villages. As a past Council member for the City of Hagerstown, and Manager of a small town in Frederick County, I am very familiar with how to create this program.

B. Yes, and I continue to believe and seem to be the only Commissioner that is sincerely interested in implementation of a countywide curbside recycling program. While there will be additional costs to implement, the recyclebank program we considered would make it at minimum cost neutral to the ratepayer. This will save on the lifecycle of our landfill and on costs for postclosure and rate adjustments.

**Terry Baker:** Bulky item drop-off potential: Since the county does not directly collect municipal waste or recyclables, we have limited capabilities for event waste pick up and hauling such as would be required with a bulky waste day. We could consider including such an option as a bid alternative when the transfer station container or recycling box contracts come up for re-bid.

**Kaetzel Road recycling containers:** I have not been made aware of any particular issues related to the recycling boxes at Kaetzel Road transfer. Recycling boxes may fill up at different rates depending on time of year and other factors, and this may have contributed to an over flow situation. The transfer station attendant calls our office when a recycling box needs pulled, and we notify the recycling contractor. I would have the attendant to be as proactive as possible with actively monitoring the boxes and have the container pulled when full.

**Ruth Anne Callaham:** A. Yes, however, my review of an analysis of the cost and impact on county fiscal responsibilities will help me determine the feasibility of a ‘big stuff’ pickup offering.

B. Although I have visited the Kaetzel Road transfer station and talked with members of the county Solid Waste Department, the specific issues of the Kaetzel Rd. transfer station have not surfaced for me. However, I served on the City of Hagerstown’s Trash & Recycling Task Force (2009-2010) and live but a few blocks from a recycling drop off site. If the Kaetzel Road station is anytime like the Pennsylvania drop site – it is seriously abused by folks dropping non-recyclable trash.

During the Trash & Recycling Task Force I spoke several times to the contractor providing the recycling service. At the blog <http://ruthannecallaham.blogspot.com/> you will find a couple of postings of issues that came to the surface as a result of those conversations. Participation in the task force and the postings demonstrate I have already begun to address the concerns of the inadequate recycling process in our county. The conundrum is that because of the low cost of our landfill compared to that of many states, an efficient business model does not yet exist. We recycle because it is the right thing to do, yet a significant segment of the Washington County community does not want to spend tax dollars on the process.

**Jeff Cline:** Recycling will some day be an every day part of everyone’s life – no matter where you live in Washington County. I certainly would entertain the suggestion of a bi-annual “pick-up” of large items. My experience as a Town Councilman (Williamsport) reveals that many of these items often end up where they should not be and a program to address this added to the quality of life to the town.

In regards to the contractor based on your words, a review of the contract to ensure compliance seems to be needed and/or corrective actions taken to improve performance in the future.

**Charlie Henson:** With the Rt. 40 site so far away, it makes sense to me that this could and should be feasible. The City of Hagerstown has the same type of programs for fall leaf pick-up and the Christmas tree pick-up. At this point I am ignorant of the Kaetzel Road transfer station. If elected I would make it a priority to investigate this problem.

**Joe Lane:** I would support an annual bulk trash pickup. This should be a basic service provided to the residents of this county. I would need to look at the cost of doing this biannually. With the budget being as tight as it is, I would hope an annual pickup would suffice.

I support countywide curbside recycling. Landfill space is a limited and increasingly valuable commodity. It is unwise to fill it with recyclables. The life of the landfill was originally projected to be 80 years. I believe it is less than half this just a few years after opening.

**Bill McKinley:** Is it possible to have a bi-annual big stuff pick-up where refrigerators, TVs, etc. can be dropped off? Are you aware of several issues citizens have concerning recycling at the Kaetzel Rd transfer station? What can be done with recycling boxes? It is our understanding that level of service from the recycling contractor is inadequate. Is this because of the volume of recycling materials, limits of the contract or the inadequate oversight of the contractor? What would you do to address these concerns?

I’m not sure if this proposal has been made to the County Commissioners to date but it seems like a reasonable request that I would be willing to look into. There are other outlying areas. Are they receiving this service? This deserves consideration.

The first thing I would do would be to look at places where recycling is done adequately thus discovering the nature of the problem at Kaetzel. I would also examine the contractor’s contract to see if obligations are being fulfilled. In addition, I would make sure the contractor we hired has the ability to provide adequate service.

**John C. Munson :** It is possible to have big items such as refrigerator and television pick ups at the transfer stations on a bi-annual program. In fact, the solid waste department is looking into placing this in the contract next year with the contractor that wins the bid.

I am not aware of any problems at the recycling center on Kaetzel Road. I did speak to the Solid Waste Department and I was told they did not have any problems with the contractor but they are considering placing more recycling bins at Kaetzel Road station as well as other centers.

**Kevin Simmers:** Of course. We can team up with business who need this service, recycling advisory committees in the county, the Washington County Landfill leadership and local Recycling business leaders to develop a efficient way to do this.

There are several simple steps to resolving these issues: Assess the problem. Bring the citizens together with the leadership from the Landfill, as well as the advisory committee from the landfill and any other parties involved (contractors). Come up with possible solutions, and with each option evaluate the answers to these questions: Who will benefit, what will it cost, who benefits and who will absorb the cost of each. Implement the best plan with a timeline and specify who will do what!

**Nick Vindivich :** A. I honestly believe that this is a concern that should be taken of to help keep our environment safe and clean. B. I am sorry but I am not aware of the details in this situation and would like more time to study this issue.

**Robin Wivell :** The landfill operations are operated as an enterprise fund. Accordingly, if services were to be increased, there would have to be an additional revenue source to pay for the service. It is possible that this service could be offered, but there would likely need to be a charge for this service. This charge could potentially be less than the cost of travel to the landfill. Once elected, I am willing to direct landfill operations to analyze the various options.

These same concerns have been expressed at several of the transfer recycling stations. It seems to be one of communication and supervision where the individual(s) exercising oversight of the facility are not adequately notifying the collection company of the need for pick-ups. Unfortunately, current analysis has shown that curb-side recycling pickup is too costly and in some cases logistically impossible, as the County would spend approximately \$120 million to save \$12 million in landfill space. It might be noted that the Town of Ocean City just ceased their curb-side recycling program due to its exorbitant cost, and is now trucking their waste to the York County, PA waste-to-energy plant. We must continue to investigate lower cost options, as alternatives to landfilling solid waste.

**Question 3: This end of the county offers unique treasures with the Appalachian Trail, C&O Canal, Harpers Ferry National Park and local parks which encourage tourism and small local businesses.**

- a. *How do you see current zoning designations as they apply to the pressures of growth, tourism and environmental care in this area? Are the current conservation and preservation zoning rules adequate? Are there any changes you would make?*
- b. *Should County Request for Proposals (RFPs) and County contracts include language which requires, or at least gives preference to, contractors who minimize impacts on the surrounding community (such as aesthetic and environmental)?*

**Kristin Aleshire:** A. As the conservation and preservation zones have been improved to benefit these types of areas being referred to, I think what you are interested in and may better suit this area, would be an overlay zone similar to the PUD at COPT or the Airport, which would allow for a criteria of standards suited to this specific area and keep the underlying zones in place, while giving folks in the area affected an opportunity to shape their community.

B. I would contend that this already exists to a reasonable degree and evolves as standards evolve. I am not certain how you would write this into a specific contract that would be a set of standards

applicable to all contracts while maintaining a fair process of bidding. In addition, I would want the public to weigh in heavily on the affect it may have on cost escalation.

**Terry Baker**: Zoning designations: I am a property rights advocate and was not a fan of Down Zoning. Property owners were stripped of their development rights with no compensation. I would support a Transfer Development Rights (TDR) Committee to be established to see if TDR's could be of benefit to Rural Property Owners. RFP'S and County Contracts should state clearly what the aesthetic and environmental impacts are to be on the surrounding community if possible.

**Ruth Anne Callahan**: A. Reference: Washington County Zoning Ordinance Revision 16, run date March 11, 2010. I have talked to many people on both sides of the issue of zoning in preservation areas. For those whose retirement plans include sale of their land at the highest price possible the current zoning is prohibitive. For those who desire maximum preservation of the historic rural quality of the land the zoning is not restrictive enough. My opinion of adequacy is not as important as the stewardship of the government to listen to the people. To take individual requests under consideration and make the best decision possible at the time. That being said I am passionate about retaining the unique treasures of our county. Rather than state possible changes at this point, I promise to listen to those closest to the issues at the time a make a well reasoned change when necessary.

B. Simply stated the specifications of a government RFP must state the scope of the work, expectations of the completed project and timeframe. The expectation of minimal impact on the environment or a particular aesthetic quality can (must) be stated as a contract requirement. Fair and open competition protocol does not lend itself to preferences. One example is the project to restore the C&O canal path at big Slackwater. The aesthetic quality of the project is reconstruction of the historic aspects of the work. Minimal impact of the environment would include specifications to keep access path to a minimum width. Penalties might be assessed for failure to meet environmental specifications. And/or incentives offered for exceeding the required environmental and aesthetic constraints. As a project manager for the federal government I had the opportunity to write RFP specifications and review contractor proposals.

**Jeff Cline**: A. Tourism is often left out of the discussion of economic development for Washington County...it is a clean industry and less than 90 minutes from Washington County is over 5 million potential tourist. Tom Riford and the Washington county Visitors and Convention Bureau do an excellent job promoting Washington County but more could be done to attract the tourism dollar.

B. At least some consideration should be given to contracts that minimize the impact on communities in Washington County and many may already be mandated via State and Federal regulations.

**Charlie Henson**: Our County is truly blessed with many treasures. Protection of these assets is and always should remain a top priority in any governing office. Current conservation preservation and zoning rules appear to be working. Any concerns by our people should always be heard and addressed. Choosing contractors to perform county contracts is critical. Maintaining the integrity of our county with quality workmanship is vital in preserving our county.

**Joe Lane**: The current zoning designations (preservation, conservation etc.) are adequate. Perhaps some sort of incentive program could encourage good site location and screening when a home is built in these areas. Special exceptions, PUDs and other practices that ignore the character of an area should not be allowed.

The contract should require that impacts are minimized. This is standard practice in many places. I have long supported a cell phone tower policy that requires carriers to locate on existing structures. This would be beneficial to farmers with silos and churches with tall steeples. When this is not possible, a larger number of smaller towers should be required. These towers should be camouflaged in all cases.

**Bill McKinley**: A. I do believe that local zoning as of today is adequate in protecting the treasures of south county. However, I also believe that as population, tourism, etc. change so do zoning regulations need to be reviewed and updated. I think that the planning commission reviews zoning every 5 years. If that is correct then I also believe that a review may be appropriate at more frequent intervals

B. I think the county RFPs should include language which upholds mandates already in place and strongly encourages and gives consideration to contractors who minimize environmental and aesthetic impact. I also believe that if we know what environmental impact considerations we want, they should be specified in the contract.

**John C. Munson** : A. I don't know if the current conservation and preservation zone rules are adequate. I believe that if the county would require more land than they do now before building a home, it would help to protect the beauty of the area. I also believe that it could help to promote tourism just to see the beauty of southern Washington County.

B. Yes, the county should require the RFP's and county contracts to include language which requires contractors to minimize impacts on the surrounding community.

**Kevin Simmers**: A. Appalachian Trail, C&O Canal, Harpers Ferry National Park and local parks are priceless. If we infringe on the protection of these areas we can never change our minds and return to the way it is now. Fortunately the National Parks are federal and protected by federal laws. However, we need to ensure that the areas surrounding those parks are preserved. I will need to look into the specifics of local zoning laws and see if they are adequate. This needs to be re-addressed regularly, as development needs increase.

B. Of course they should. None of us wants our neighboring land to become an eyesore. If it is in the language of the RFP "preference" is not necessary. The contractor would simply follow the language of the RFP or have monies withheld.....if the language of the RFP is correct.

**Nick Vindivich**: A. I apologize but the County Planning Commission could not make me a copy of the current updated Zoning Map for the County until this Friday. I would like to answer this in person the meeting Wednesday night after further review.

B. Great Question-I believe if the County pushes for more Green Technology Business Enterprises that future RFPs should have clauses or addendums to promote these areas as well.

**Robin Wivell**: A. Obviously, the current environmental and preservation zoning of the rural areas preserve the amenities mentioned above. I believe strongly, however, in property rights, and further believe that if government is going to take certain property rights from an individual property owner, then that individual should receive just compensation for that taking. The County is currently looking at the rezoning of the Urban Growth Area, and it is possible that a Transfer of Development Rights program or similar program could be incorporated into this rezoning to compensate those in the rural areas that had their development rights taken from them.

B. Under State law, the County is required to accept the lowest responsible, responsive bidder. I am not sure that such a stipulation would be in accordance with the requirements of State law.

***Question 4: Most residents have an 834 or 432 telephone number and cannot contact the County without incurring long-distance charges. Is there a way to provide a toll-free telephone number to the county government office for residents?***

**Kristin Aleshire**: As a current Commissioner, honestly this is the first time I have heard this concern and will not wait for an election process to inquire, but rather will bring it immediately. I think as most folks

have cell phones the toll free number seems to fading with the payphone, but it should be available and certainly cannot cost that much.

**Terry Baker:** Yes the County should consider a toll free telephone number if the cost is reasonable.

**Ruth Anne Callaham:** Yes, however, as with most services an analysis of cost would be the leading indicator of feasibility.

**Jeff Cline:** Why not? I see that to be a reasonable request to investigate.

**Charlie Henson:** I Don't Know! But given the opportunity I am positive we can research the request.

**Joe Lane:** The County could easily provide an 800 number or negotiate with existing carriers to make these calls local.

**Bill McKinley:** Whether or not this has been a question in the past I do not know. As a commissioner I would be willing to examine what seems to be a doable project. An 800 number seems like a logical solution to solve this problem.

**John C. Munson:** Yes, the county could and should have an 800 number installed for all areas to contact the county government. The calls could go into one office and than the caller could be transferred to the proper office or person. All of the tax payers should be able to talk to their government without having to pay to call.

**Kevin Simmers:** The County Government's website lists 301-432-4752 as a toll free number for south county residents.

**Nick Vindivich:** I feel that rapid and constant communication between residents and County Government is important but I do not know what costs would be incurred because of a Toll Free number. I believe that most residents would have access to the internet or personal cell phones to effectively contact the appropriate authority.

**Robin Wivell :** Yes.

***Question 5: What would you do to help Washington County lead the way to sustainable energy solutions and new jobs as the current economy changes?***

**Kristin Aleshire:** As I continue to tell the Economic Development Commission, I believe that the sustainable energy industry will be as important to the next generation of job growth as the computer era was in the early 90s. To that end this Board has made several strides to promote these industries from waiving permits for energy saving home improvements to updating zoning allowances for solar and wind systems. In addition we have created economic incentives to attract "green" companies and have focused energy saving concepts into all new public projects.

**Terry Baker:** Establish a "Green Energy Initiatives" program with in appropriate divisions and departments .Division of Environmental management already has a "Green Energy" project approved. Landfill gas from 40 west landfill will generate electricity and greenhouse gas elimination credits. This will be created with current staff and workforce. I will not support a new County department with additional hires.

**Ruth Anne Callahan**: I would work with the economic development entities in the county and around the state to provide incentives to companies developing/marketing sustainable energy products. Those entities include but are not limited to Hagerstown Community College business incubator, Chambers of Commerce local & throughout the state, as well as economic development commissions.

**Jeff Cline** : I would definitely like to entertain and explore the options of solar energy where possible and also to offer local incentives for “green buildings” and energy saving solutions to encourage the development of such projects. Please review the answer to Question 1 in regards to jobs.

**Charlie Henson**: By making our county government user friendly. We can attract companies & business to locate here in the county. Thus bring needed job opportunities back to Washington County. Sustainable energy solutions are here. We need to educate ourselves in understanding the future.

**Joe Lane**: All new county buildings should be built to LEED standards. Though the initial cost may be more, the long-term operational savings will more than offset these costs. The county should retrofit existing buildings with energy efficiency upgrades. There are federal programs that could help offset these costs. These upgrades create jobs immediately and would also lead to long-term savings. Fuel mileage should be a major consideration for fleet vehicle purchases.

**Bill McKinley**: This is a very important global concern because the more we live unsustainably the closer we get to running out of natural resources vital to life. I think that as community leaders the county commissioners should promote effective recycling (effective meaning that resources are used over and over) reorganized living conditions, eco municipalities, sustainable agriculture and adjustments of individual lifestyles. In addition, commissioners need to stay abreast of the developing technologies in the areas of renewable energy and green technology.

When the current economy changes, our county must be ready with training programs and basic education that will enable our citizens to take over the jobs that will develop. We must be able to provide the environment services and incentives to convince the “the new jobs’ firms that Washington County is where they want to locate. The new STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) at HCC is a step in the right direction.

**John C. Munson**: There are companies that can set their plants at county solid waste facilities (dumps) that can burn incoming trash, including trash that is dug up from the dump and burned at 5000 degrees that will generate electric. This electric is then sold to the power companies. The contract with the power companies could have a provision that gives lower rates to the citizens of Washington County. If places of business were to receive a lower electric rate, they could sell things at a lower price, draw tourism to the area and in turn possibly be able to hire more employees.

**Kevin Simmers**: Meet regularly with our MD and US National elected officials to encourage tax incentives for designing, building and renovating. These tax incentives need to apply to the subcontractors as well as General Contractors. We are making a lot of progress in this area, but there still needs to be more incentive.....make it more cost effective for the individual and small business to go Green.

**Nick Vindivich**: I would push for the Economic Development Commission to aggressively market our County to emerging Energy Technology Companies to relocate, build or partner with existing industries to employ more of our qualified residents.

**Robin Wivell**: It might be possible to exempt such structures from property taxation and to provide other incentives to encourage such investment. Any such incentives, however, would be contingent upon budget constraints. Other alternatives, such as something as simple as road design, can go a long way to conserve energy.

***Question 6: In the current recession, public funding of essential social, health, and safety services is strained. How do you propose funding those services as resources decrease and needs increase?***

**Kristin Aleshire**: I believe that unlike other counties that are seeing significant budgetary issues, this County has positioned itself well through the “good times” to more ably absorb the current economic strain. We continue to receive positive bond rating reports, have reduced annual operating expenses and borrowing, and were able even this year to offer new tax reductions to seniors and other property owners. I believe the largest unknown is that regardless of how well we have managed our financial resources, if further State cuts persist, this will have a damaging impact on our ability to provide adequate services and would offer that things like transportation and education would suffer more noticeably than the other areas mentioned that have already been impacted.

**Terry Baker**: The county funding for these services can only be at a level that we can afford to pay for. Each entity needs to seek out and apply for every grant opportunity available to help with the financial resources these essential services will require.

**Ruth Anne Callaham**: The choices of where to place scarce resources is always difficult. Having worked as the executive director of a non-profit providing the basic need of food for eight years the funding issues are well known to me. It becomes a matter of establishing priorities and seeking innovative alternatives. My job as a commissioner will be to provide leadership bringing together county staff and non-profits to determine the needs and possible solutions. I am currently a participant in the Strategic Community Impact Plan effort guided by the Community Foundation of Washington County and the United Way. This very large group is on a two year timeline to identify the needs, possible causes and solutions with a high probability of success.

**Jeff Cline** : Effective and efficient use of existing County Services in all County Departments and to maintain government in a mind set of “living within its means” whether it be in a era of recession or in the days of growth by always being a steward of the peoples money.

**Charlie Henson**: We as a county CAN NOT spend what we don’t have. Priority of services to our people needs to be examined carefully and minimize waste of our financial resources.

**Joe Lane**: Ending the practice of subsidizing development would save several million dollars every year in misappropriated tax dollars. Our police, fire, rescue and social services are already stretched to the limit. It is increasingly difficult for these organizations to serve this new development. The practice of exempting developers from the APFO combined with the inadequate excise tax place new strain on these services without funding them. Combining some county and city services could derive some additional savings.

**Bill McKinley**: After examining the needs in these areas I would conduct careful screening and fiscal assessment of other county spending. It is possible that we could turn up dollars for the areas you mention if needed. This type of fiscal examination should be a routine exercise for county commissioners at all times. Also I would encourage the commissioners to pursue federal and state grants that would augment cost in these areas.

**John C. Munson** : I believe this question pertains to what the public wants the county to do. I believe that public hearings should be held in different parts of the county so that the public can tell the commissioners and their staff what they want. After all, it is the tax payers money that would be used.

**Kevin Simmers**: We, as private citizens and elected officials have to step up to the plate and be leaders on a daily basis. As County Commissioner I will work, as I do now as a City Police Sgt., with local churches, civic organizations, other non-profits, government funded and privately funded organizations. We all need to make a commitment, individually and as organizations to help those in need. Also, people who need services are not always aware of what's available to them. They don't know where to turn or who to ask for help. I will make 'getting the word out' a top priority.

**Nick Vindivich** : I think that collaboration with our State Delegates in Annapolis will help bridge the gap the Health Care Issue Challenges will be essential in solving funding and service needs .

**Robin Wivell** : The elected BOCC must continue to investigate ways to improve efficiencies, as was done recently with centralizations of some services including central booking, and the joint 911 system. Additional possibilities include consolidation of permits & inspections. We are not a wealthy County, and it is important to hold the line on spending, so citizens have more of their own disposable income. A manner in which to grow revenues without increasing taxes is through growth in the tax base through strong economic development program(s).

***Question 7: What does being a county commissioner mean to you?***

**Kristin Aleshire**: As in previous elections, I do not seek the endorsement of any individual, business, or organization, but certainly appreciate the support when offered. I do not take campaign contributions as my preference has always been that folks vote on me based on my ability to research the issues, weigh the information and make fair and knowledgeable decisions for the greater good of the County as a whole, not because of how much money I can spend. Washington County is my home, I take every aspect of public service very serious and while I do not punch a daily clock I work tirelessly around it for the betterment of this community that my friends, family, and future generations know and will come to enjoy.

**Terry Baker**: The citizens deserve to have someone in a position to listen to their concerns, ideas, and get the information to the correct county department and staff for answers and solutions. The citizens deserve to have a voice on all the issues facing Washington County.

**Ruth Anne Callaham**: For me to be a county commissioner is an opportunity to work for the citizens of our county. To ensure that we focus on a common vision. One in which all nine municipalities and each small community in between have a say in how we approach the future.

**Jeff Cline** : Questions 7 & 8 - Being a Washington County Commissioner means being a public servant....that you are there to serve...not just your community or political party – but to serve all the people of Washington County.

As a Commissioner you are there to be more than a once a week (every Tuesday) to show up and make decisions. You are there to make decisions timely and to take the heat...to be held accountable for your actions.

Governing Washington County is a full time job and as your Commissioner I will dedicate my day, my week...my term to be a full time Commissioner. As a real estate agent, I have the advantage of a flexible schedule and the ability to engage in County business, 7 days a week whether it is in the conference room on Washington Street or in a Joint Session Hall of the Legislative Body of the State of Maryland in Annapolis...I have the time to dedicate.

I was once told by a friend that anyone can change the world and to get started by changing the world in which you live. Whether it is community service, helping a neighbor or as elected official taking actions to better your community is a cause for which I am dedicated and ready to undertake.

For over 8 years as a realtor I have been in the kitchens/living rooms of many Washington County residents, whether they have been buying or selling a home. I have heard their fears and concerns and their desire to live near where they work...in beautiful Washington County. I have heard my clients express their anguish over the high cost of taxes, water/sewer and their expressions of how government officials are unattached and don't understand their plight. Every time a fee is enacted or a tax is implemented, that citizen must find a way to pay it and must sacrifice something to pay the bill. Often times, that citizen's paycheck is not "keeping up" with the charges and demands that government requires.

Prior to real estate, I was involved in advertising sales. Many of Washington County businesses are family owned...from the farmer...to the gas station owner...to the fitness center and they are struggling to compete...to exist as they battle corporate competitors. We need to keep our small locally owned businesses in our sights and understand that they may be small – but they are numerous and employ a significant portion of our residents.

As a County Commissioner, I will do more than listen...I will be an active listener...I will return your call and bring you an answer...it may not be the one you want to receive...but I will return your call and contact the necessary sources for a response.

**Charlie Henson:** What being a Washington County Commissioner means to me is being a responsible Washington Countyian representing "All People of the County" and gaining the respect of our people in the county by placing their concerns 1st and foremost.

**Joe Lane:** I believe in community service and being a county commissioner would allow me to apply my interests and knowledge to more effectively to benefit this community.

**Bill McKinley:** Being a county commissioner is a position that requires representation for the entirety of Washington County. It means that I would, with fellow commissioners, manage the resources of this county to the best advantage of all its citizens. More specifically, it means that I would promote education, public health and welfare, the economy and open space while being a part of wise planning for the future. Lastly and most importantly it means listening to the people and regarding their words as my first consideration.

**John C. Munson:** Being a county commissioner means that I am able to help all the citizens of the county with what ever problems they have involving the county.

**Kevin Simmers:** Serving the public.....individuals, businesses, non-profits. It means improving the way of life for Washington County citizens by good honest leadership.

**Nick Vindivich:** It gives me an opportunity to serve the County I love, cherish, and proud to call Home for over (40) forty years. I am also proud to be a son of Father who honorably publicly served for over (20) twenty years and would like to follow in his foot steps to lay a foundation for my children and grandchildren.

**Robin Wivell:** This is a very broad question; the answer of which could take several approaches. Basically, I would approach the job in a very humble manner, serve the people to the best of my ability, and search out the best solution to problems by using all available resources. Honesty, integrity, fairness, and the ability to make the right decision independent of special interests are all attributes that I would bring to the position.

***Question 8: Why do you want to become a county commissioner?***

**Kristin Aleshire:** As a current Commissioner for Washington County, this will be my second campaign for election to this County office. As a life-long resident of Washington County, I feel that as citizens it is our responsibility to actively participate in and contribute to the community in whichever form we find interest and feel are best suited to offer our respective talents in public service. For me, that role was early on and continues today to be local elected office, where hopefully I can diligently work to connect citizens, businesses and organizations with the services needed to create a thriving successful community.

**Terry Baker:** The citizens deserve to have someone in a position to listen to their concerns, ideas, and get the information to the correct county department and staff for answers and solutions. The citizens deserve to have a voice on all the issues facing Washington County.

**Ruth Anne Callaham:** My desire to become a county commissioner is anchored in the awesome vista of the valley as seen entering the county from the east. Each time I return home from 'down the road' I marvel at the gift we have been given. I have strong management skills and a frame of reference developed over years of visiting & working in communities in different states and countries. I believe that I can be a valuable asset in achieving our common vision.

**Joe Lane:** I believe I could bring a much-needed perspective to the commissioners. I have become increasingly frustrated as I watch the county commissioners, who are elected to serve everyone, serve only those with an economic interest in development. This pro developer bias leaves the needs of the larger community unmet.

**Bill McKinley:** Being a nearly lifelong resident of the county I have a genuine concern for the people and its resources. I am also concerned about our future and believe that wise planning is needed. I want to be a commissioner because my interest, abilities and background will allow me to serve in a very competent, able and fair manner.

**John C. Munson :** Again, as a county commissioner I am able to help the citizens of the county with any problems they may have with the county. I am also able to help control the budget in order to help keep all cost low and preventing the commissioners from raising property or county income tax. I believe the commissioners should listen to the public and do what the majority want.

**Kevin Simmers:** I want to improve our way of life in Washington County, and serve the citizens of the county, just as I have in the city for the past 22 years. As a lifelong resident and employee in Washington County I would like to use my skills to give back.

**Nick Vindivich :** I believe that I have the skills, character, and work ethic that would be a great asset for the residents of Washington County.

**Robin Wivell :** It is my belief that one must stand up for their beliefs and do what is right for their constituents. I believe that I will be an independent voice for the citizens of Washington County.

***Question 9: What background do you have to serve as a county commissioner?***

**Kristin Aleshire:** I have served in local government for more than decade, first as a town planner for Middletown and Myersville in Frederick County, while also serving two terms as councilmember for the City of Hagerstown. After that time, I became elected to the County Commissioners and have since worked in the private industry for a short period and then back to Myersville where I am currently the

Town Manager. As a public servant there is and has always been one mission statement that I have carried out these various duties, "Government can only be affective at meeting public expectation when it is goal oriented and task driven". If elected, I will continue to carry out this mission equally across all parts of the County as I have done for the past 4 years.

**Terry Baker:** Background to serve as a County Commissioner: Council Member Clear Spring 2002 – 2004; Asst. Mayor Clear Spring 2004 – 2006; Vice President Washington County Commissioner 2006 – 2010.

**Ruth Anne Callahan:** County commissioners need a broad knowledge of the county and clear understanding of how government can work in the best interest of the people. My knowledge of the county comes from over 30 years residency, in Smithsburg and Hagerstown. I have hiked the Appalachian Trail from Pennsylvania to Virginia. As a food banker I have delivered food throughout from Hancock to Boonsboro, the airport to Chestnut Grove. I know the beauty of the hills and valleys and the challenges of transportation for work and recreation. Understanding how government works comes from 23 years employment with the federal government and close to four years as an elected member of the Washington County Board of Education. I have provided governance to several local boards and commissions to include the Housing Authority of Washington County. I have an MBA and have been the Executive Director of a local non-profit for eight years.

**Jeff Cline :** 4 Years as an elected official (Town Councilman) for the town of Williamsport; 3 years as the Washington County Maryland Municipal League District Vice-President representing our 9 communities in Annapolis; 5 year member on the Washington County Water Quality Commission – Current Vice President; 3 year member of the Economic Development Commission as the representative for Washington County Municipalities; Member (2 years) of the Urban Growth Citizens Advisory Committee...our recommendations were issues to the BOCC in September of 2009; Business experience – 8 years as a REALTOR® with Roger Fairbourn Real Estat - 2008 Pen Mar Association Community Service Award – Graduate of 2008 Maryland Association of Realtors Leadership Academy.

**Charlie Henson:** Being a responsible person in government the "County Commissioner" requires a multitude of skills: Business minded- I have owned and operated my insurance business in Hagerstown for the past 35 years. Willingness to listen- my business has taught me the ability to listen to all people. Complaints, concerns, questions and just general conversation. Heritage- I grew up in Boonsboro and graduated from Boonsboro High School in 1971. I graduated from Hagerstown junior college in 1974 with a degree in business. I have raised my 3 children this county dealing with the Washington county school system. Now that my children are grown I am looking forward to raising my grandchildren in Washington County.

**Joe Lane:** I have been active in local politics for many years. I have a good understanding of local, state and federal regulations. I have a degree in mathematics and understand finance. I have worked with and volunteered for many citizens groups in this county. I have lived in Hancock as well as Smithsburg and understand the needs of these diverse communities and virtually every community in between.

**Bill McKinley:** I was an administrator in the public school system for many years. My last position with the WCPS was as Executive Director of Support Services. That job required oversight on my part of the school systems budget, facilities, transportation and food service. Also I acted as the liaison between the BOE, Superintendent and the Board of County Commissioners.

I have served on the county's Gaming Commission, serving as chairman; served on the United Way executive board and am currently the president of the HCC Hawk Booster Club. I have been involved in many activities in the county and am familiar and comfortable in leadership roles. My

educational background includes a Bachelor of Science degree from Middle Tennessee State University and a masters degree from Western Maryland College (now McDaniel University).

**John C. Munson:** My background for commissioner is that I served as a Postmaster for 9 years with control over a budget for a post office. I also have served as a Washington County commissioner from 2002-2006, helping to control cost, keeping the budget low and holding the line on all taxes.

**Kevin Simmers:** Being an elected official means leadership, for which there are many definitions. A leader needs to have the ability and willpower to convince people to willingly support a message that will improve their lives in Washington County. I have been doing that all of my life. I served as an MP in the US Air Force for 4 years, which included 1 year in South Korea. It also included guarding President George H.W. Bush. I have been with the Hagerstown City Police for 22 years. This included 6 years with the Narcotics Task Force, 1 year as a Detective and 8 years as Sgt. of the downtown squad. I recently completed the Leadership Washington County program, class of 2010, one of my greatest leadership experiences. I earned an Associate's degree from Hagerstown Community College. I say what I mean, I do what I say, and I get things done. I am a man of integrity.

**Nick Vindivich:** I have owned and operated businesses in Washington County for over (25) twenty-five years and have retained customers and some employees during the entire tenure. I have managed budgets, customer and employee relationships, set company mission statement, set and attained goals and visions for success of my company. I was awarded a Scholarship from the United States Military Academy (West Point) and learned, lived and still practice the Honor Code to this date.

**Robin Wivell:** My beliefs and high Christian morals provide me with attributes sometimes lacking in our elected officials. On a more personal note, I am a mother of four children. Accordingly, I have been a strong advocate for children and have served as PTA vice-presidents, home-room mother, and have served on the Washington County Public Schools Special Education Advisory Committee, including serving several years as chair of that Committee. I also serve as a member of my church's parish council. In addition to my current part-time employment, I am a continuing education student, and have completed approximately 117 credit hours toward a college degree.

***Question 10: Serving as a county commissioner is considered a part-time job. How much time per week do you plan on working for the citizens as a county commissioner? How do you see yourself spending that time? How much of your time will be spent learning about the issues and preparing for your work?***

**Kristin Aleshire:** I make myself available 24/7 via email, phone, letter, or stopping by home any evening or weekend. I attend roughly 3 meeting and functions per week in the evening and weekend hours. I make it a point to respond to my County emails within 24 hours and usually return phone calls within the same time. I have never turned away a person at my door or lent an ear as long as someone needed at any meeting or event I have attended. I make it a point to attend town meetings monthly, meet with all Fire and Rescue companies, PTAs and dozens of service organizations. In addition, I serve or attend more than a dozen regular boards and believe and have promoted getting citizens from all parts of the county on all of our boards. I consider myself on the clock every hour of the day.

**Terry Baker:** Serving as a County Commissioner, I will devote the time that it takes to work for and with the citizens to learn about the issues and preparing for the job.

**Ruth Anne Callaham:** Time management is a skill developed through years of balancing employment and volunteer opportunities. I believe this question is a reference to how dedicated I will be to representing you in the processes of county government. I will be very dedicated. Each week I will devote the time necessary to attend meetings and/or discussions to gain a clear understanding of the issues. Each week commissioners are provided a package of material to support staff recommendations. Not only will each briefing package be carefully reviewed but I will seek ancillary data from staff and community members as needed for clarification. Further I will encourage those preparing information for the Board of County commissioners to use a bottom line up front (BLUF) format. The BLUF concept enhances discussion and facilitates good decision making. I will work hard to always come to the table well informed and ready to make a decision when needed.

**Jeff Cline :** Our county is growing and the demands upon our commissioners are full time and I will be a full time commissioner. I have the time and the ability in my business career to schedule and to attend County Business affairs around my business endeavors.

In real estate, I am an advocate for my client, and as a County Commissioner, I will be the people's advocate. During my term as a town councilman, I was able to attend numerous functions during the day, including trips to Annapolis around my work schedule conducting the business of Williamsport. I intend to devote my time as a County Commissioner preparing for issues, attending meetings on a full time basis.

**Charlie Henson:** The number of hours per week dedicated to this position will be what ever it takes. I would predict talking to people in reference to county issues would be the most important part. Once again I will have to devote a lot of hours learning about the issues involving this county. But I am willing and ready.

**Joe Lane:** I will work as much as it takes to do the job well. Though this is considers a "part time" job, anyone who knows what is involved knows it will take a substantial amount of time to do the job properly.

I expect to work at least 30 hours per week and probably more. I would spend time at commissioner meetings and public hearings as well as sitting on a variety of committees just as the current commissioners do. Additionally, I would meet with citizens groups and individuals who would like my assistance.

I will spend as much time as is required to understand the issues and prepare myself. Fortunately, I have been active in this county for many years and have a good understanding of the issues and how to address them. In my experience, our county has a very competent staff in every department and I would utilize their knowledge on a regular basis.

**Bill McKinley:** Much of my time prior to the election is being used to learn about and prepare for the job as county commissioner. I have visited many county offices and asked many questions regarding county government and how it is impacting the citizens. The learning and preparing will be an on-going part of my term as a county commissioner.

In most cases commissioners hold full-time positions in addition to being a county commissioner. I am retired and will spend as much time as it takes to do an excellent job for our county. I do not believe that this position can be defined as full-time or part-time. I think there may be times when 60-80 hours may be required to get the job done correctly. I have the time and will approach the position with a "whatever it takes" attitude.

I see myself as spending much of that time talking with citizens, working with staff, researching and learning, attending meetings and planning and implementing.

**John C. Munson** : First of all, serving as a county commissioner is not a part time job as many may think. It takes at least 30 hours per week. You need to go to the county office every day in order to return any phone calls, answer emails, write letters, intermingle with staff and go around the county to different departments. Bottom line is that I will be working 25-40 hours per week. Then when I get home I may have phone calls that I need to complete. My home phone number is and will continue to be published. Each week when you receive the meeting agenda you need to study the issues and prepare for the meeting.

**Kevin Simmers**: I'll answer the last question first. Being a citizen of Washington County I have been learning about the issues of the county all of my life. I have accelerated that learning process since deciding to run for commissioner, and as a commissioner I will continue to spend as much time as I have to improve this county. As our economy and our culture changes the learning will never stop. I consider county commissioner a full time obligation. I WILL be accessible as county commissioner, just as I am accessible now. How will I spend my time: Using the most valuable communication skill I have: listening. Listening to individuals and business in the county. Meeting the appropriate individuals and groups to solve problems and improve life in the county.

**Nick Vindivich**: I believe that even though 15-25 hrs a week is considered Part-time, I will be mentally working Full Time on the issues set before the County Commissioners. I know that my Tuesdays will be a full day with Commissioner Meetings and evening obligations. I have the privilege to travel and meet with the residents of Washington County on a regular basis throughout the week since my business allows me that opportunity.

**Robin Wivell**: I will commit the time necessary to accomplish the tasks necessary to maintain and improve our quality of life. Obviously, it will require more time at the beginning of the term in order to become familiar with the many issues, and formulate solutions.