Candidates Respond to Important Questions Impacting Local Businesses

The Findlay•Hancock County Chamber of Commerce Advisory Board invited the candidates running for local offices in the Findlay and Hancock County community to respond to a questionnaire in order for you, the business community, to vote pro-business on November 5, 2019. Learn why the candidates chose to run and their top priorities should they be elected.

Questionnaire participants representing:

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<th>Mayor</th>
<th>Delaware Township Trustee, and Fiscal Officer</th>
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<td>Findlay City Council Member-At-Large</td>
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<td>Blanchard Township Fiscal Officer</td>
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Note: Candidates running for Arcadia Village Council, Vanlue Village Mayor, and Vanlue Board of Education did not respond to this invitation.

Candidates for the above mentioned positions were asked to respond, up to 175 words, to each question below. Those responses are listed exactly as they were received, and those that exceeded the required word count are stopped at 175 words.

**Mayor**

**Q. What are the motivating factors in your decision to run for public office?**

**Chad Benschoter (Candidate):** I am in a unique position. I am a Findlay blue collar worker, a home-owner, a card carrying union member, and the owner of a small business, that is part of the Findlay chamber of commerce. Given that I have these wide range of vantage points. I am able to view Findlay in a very robust way. This gives me the perspective to see what it is that Findlay does well, and in what ways Findlay desperately needs to improve. With this unique perspective. I believe, I am uniquely qualified, to begin to correct our failings, maintaining our successes, and protecting the things that make our community desirable.

**Christina Muryn (Incumbent):** The first motivating factor is my love for Findlay and my desire for others to feel the same. The second is my desire to continue the work our team has accomplished over the previous months while I have been serving as Mayor. We need to continue to have leadership within our local government that works to ensure that Findlay has strong relationships with County, State, and National government along with the private sector, nonprofits, and citizens. It is essential that we work together to solve problems and set egos aside for the greater good. Additionally, I see areas for improvement that I believe I have the appropriate skills to address. These include but are not limited to communication and strategic planning. I am a process focused individual who believes in planning for everything before it happens and that effectively communicating specific situations, goals, and vision allows us to better sell our community both near and far.
Q. Should you win in November, what are your priorities and how do you recommend we address them as a community?

**Chad Benschoter (Candidate):** My main priority would be to give members of our community a bigger voice in local policy. Then actually follow through on the issues that our community cares about most. Issues that have been points of concern for many years. Like improving downtown parking, mitigate flooding, develop affordable housing, end arbitrary gentrification laws, address the growing drug epidemic, crack down on human trafficking, modernize our infrastructure, create a direct line of communication to the Mayor’s office, and promote the small business community. I will address these kind of issues by listening to our community, making well thought out plans, and then enacting those plans.

**Christina Muryn (Incumbent):** There are five main issues that I believe we need to continue to address. They are: flooding, workforce, housing, the opioid crisis, and infrastructure. Each of these issues are a unique and complicated issue, however, they each impact the other in some way. I believe that as Mayor I am best able to address these issues by holding the various coalitions, nonprofits, and government entities to timelines, budget, and asking questions to ensure we are communicating effectively with each other. Additionally, I believe a strategic plan for infrastructure, land use, safety service, and educational resources will ensure we have a comprehensive plan for what we want our community to look like 1, 5, 10 and 20 years from now.

Q. How would you promote the area's continued growth while remaining mindful of the needs of the community?

**Chad Benschoter (Candidate):** There are many ways we can promote continued growth in Findlay. The biggest and most important, for a stable future, would be to put a focus on the small business community. Having resources that startups and existing businesses can leverage to grow. Incubator, Accelerator, and Co-Working Spaces in Findlay, akin to Chicago's 1871, would foster the creativity and development of Findlay's local entrepreneurs. Obviously with all growth comes growing pains. Currently ours have manifested in the form of a shortage of affordable housing. Working with developers to create affordable housing is of the utmost importance.

**Christina Muryn (Incumbent):** I believe it is vital that our community has a comprehensive strategic plan that incorporates the identified areas of focus around food security, transportation, housing, and workforce. As we continue to attract new businesses or work with current organizations to expand, we need to understand how that impacts the community as a whole. For example, the tight housing market has driven up housing costs straining budgets which can jeopardize food security and transportation. As Mayor, it is my job to ensure strong communication with our various constituencies as well as to advocate for our community with other government, nonprofit, and business organizations. We cannot operate in silos. By building strong relationships across the community we will be able to tackle the toughest issues together.

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**Findlay City Council Member-At-Large**

Q. What are the motivating factors in your decision to run for public office?

**Grant C. Russel (Incumbent):** My motivation has not changed since I first ran for office: a desire to serve my community. I work hard to remain responsive to citizens; I respond directly to every citizen who contacts me. I am not motivated by headlines or a desire to seek higher office. I prefer to work person-to-person, and get results.

**Tom Shindledecker (Incumbent):** In January, 2020 there will be at least four, possibly five, first-term members on the 10-member City Council; a dynamic mayor with less than a year in office; and a new Council president, albeit one with three terms as a ward councilman. While new personalities and fresh ideas are welcome, so is experience, knowledge of previous as well as ongoing projects and issues. I believe I bring to the table an ability to discern public viewpoints as well as a willingness to go against the grain at times, when it appears an unpopular decision is the right one. In those instances I pride myself in offering reasoned solutions, always including thoughtful alternatives to make a difficult problem workable.
Jeff Wobser (Incumbent): I am running for my third two-year term for an At-Large seat on the Findlay City Council. I was born and raised in Findlay. After moving back in 2001 I wanted to find a way to give back to the city that had given me many opportunities. Serving the city through city council is one way that I can give back to the city. Findlay is a great city that continues to thrive due to the great people that live and work here. My goal is to make sure that Findlay stays on a solid financial path.

Q. Should you win in November, what are your priorities and how do you recommend we address them as a community?

Grant C. Russel (Incumbent): This answer has also not changed. The city must continue to: • Provide well-maintained infrastructure – roads, alleys, parks, water and sewer systems. • Provide quality, cost effective safety services – police, fire and courts. The City actively measures its performance and is starting to benchmark its performance against other cities as we strive to continuously improve. The City leverages its strong financial position to get the most work done at the lowest cost like we are on Blanchard Avenue, getting the street repaved for cents on the dollar by using grant funding to pay for safety improvements as part of the repaving. We must continue to collaborate with the private sector, completing infrastructure projects at significant cost savings when such opportunities arise. Flood mitigation work along the Blanchard River presents exciting opportunities to connect Riverside, Civitan, Anchor, Swale and Rawson parks. The City, in cooperation with the county and other local organizations, must be purposeful and proactive to develop these areas to their fullest potential.

Tom Shindledecker (Incumbent): First of all, a continued effort to alleviate flooding issues throughout the city and county. The benching project holds great promise, but even more ideas need to be explored. Finding a way to convince the railroad to upgrade the bridge west of Cory Street is essential to that effort as well as vigorous lobbying for state and federal funds to ease the local burden. I also believe detailed investigation into the future of land acquired in flood plain areas, removal of even more buildings and eyesores is essential. Those properties and the riverfront will likely be a focal point of downtown Findlay in years to come, but we must know what we can and what we cannot do in those venues. Keeping a watchful on finances during times of economic uncertainty is also vital.

Jeff Wobser (Incumbent): The initial priorities I am going to work on are changes that the city council and the administration need make to shore up the cities finances. Those priorities would include expanding the rainy-day fund to a minimum of 3 months versus the current two months. Also, putting into place a “Restricted Replace and Improvement” fund for the Water Department. The state government dictates that the same type of fund be in place for the Sewage Department, and I believe we should do the same for the Water Department. Putting the fund in place will ensure that there are monies available for major upgrades or expansions in the future.

Q. How would you promote the area’s continued growth while remaining mindful of the needs of the community?

Grant C. Russel (Incumbent): The low unemployment rate is indicative of the success we enjoy. It is also the source of a major challenge we face: the need for skilled workers. This multifaceted problem demands, and is receiving, a community-wide response. The City has a role to play. The City must continue to invest in organizations like ‘Raise the Bar’ in our shared mission to develop a skilled workforce. Housing is also a challenge. The City must ensure our permitting processes are efficient and do not hinder developers’ efforts. We should extend infrastructure when feasible. We should encourage infill redevelopment of foreclosed properties and vacant lots. Workforce housing developments such as Crawford Street Station & Blanchard Street Station should be encouraged. For all the issues we face, cooperation will continue to be a vital component of any solution. Cooperation, the ‘Findlay Formula’, is what got Findlay to be ranked as the #1 Micropolitan community for five consecutive years; cooperation will lead Findlay to continued success.

Tom Shindledecker (Incumbent): Obviously, we have been on a roll during the past decade. The efforts of the Economic Development Department of the Forum have been outstanding. We are in a position for even more success. As of response to this questionnaire, another trip to Japan is on the horizon. With each successful venture the need for more housing at all economic levels, concern for the school system problems, more social services, etc. arise. What City Council can do best is provide a climate in which the private sector and the social services can respond to these needs. If a community is not progressing, it is not merely standing still, but is falling behind. We need to recognize that, carry that to the community and be sober and selective in what we wish to achieve.
Jeff Wobser (Incumbent): The city does need to continue to look at growth and change. If we are, we will be left behind in a world that changes faster and faster every day. The administration, in conjunction with City Council, must work with the Alliance so that there is significant communication between the three entities such that everyone knows what is happening. After completing the Strategic Plan for the city, it will be up to Council to make sure that the Administration and the Alliance are following the guidelines set in the Plan.

Candidates running for Findlay City Council Member-At-Large who did not respond to the questionnaire: Abigail Hefflinger

Blanchard Township Fiscal Officer

Q. What are the motivating factors in your decision to run for public office?

Wendy Chiow (Candidate): I feel that now is a great time to give back to my community. I was raised in Blanchard Township and we chose to raise our family in the same township. So being the Fiscal Officer would be a good fit for who I am. I would be the 4th generation of Powell’s to serve our township and it would be my honor to serve.

Mary K. Maag (Candidate): Our current fiscal officer is retiring and I feel that, with my experience with record keeping and past position in a law office, I can provide the township with a seamless transition of responsible fiscal accountability of township funds.

Bruce E. Ritter (Candidate): With the retirement of the long time fiscal office for the township, I felt it was the right time for me to give back to the township. Having lived in Blanchard Township almost my entire life and farming on both sides of the Blanchard River that splits the township, I am familiar with the entire area. I will also be able to utilize my 30 years of Accounting and Payroll experience gained while working at Marathon Petroleum Company.

Q. Should you win in November, what are your priorities and how do you recommend we address them as a community?

Wendy Chiow (Candidate): Being the Blanchard Township Fiscal Officer is a little unique compared to most political positions. I feel that my first priority would be to have a good understanding of the needs of the township and how we can meet those needs financial. Second would be making sure that our community would benefit from the different grants that are available to continue to improve our township. Another one of my top priorities would be the caring interaction with families during one of the most difficult times in their lives. I want to walk along side of them as they are selecting a cemetery lot for them or their loved ones. I want to show compassion and love in their time of need.

Mary K. Maag (Candidate): As our current fiscal officer has provided exemplary service to the township for many years, I would strive to continue that same service to our community.
Bruce E. Ritter (Candidate): My priority would be to have a smooth transition of the job responsibilities, clean audits with the Ohio Auditor of State and to assist the township trustees with their fiscal questions related to the budget.

Q. How would you promote the area’s continued growth while remaining mindful of the needs of the community?

Wendy Chiow (Candidate): As the Blanchard Township Fiscal Officer, I will need to make sure that I am being a good steward with the township’s finances. I want to make sure that I am researching and finding the best opportunities that will benefit our township. I want to be an advocate for our community to promote what our community has to offer when living and raising a family in this community. I truly feel that Blanchard Township is a great place to live and raise a family, so I would like to make sure that I can be a part of that growth.

Mary K. Maag (Candidate): I would welcome area residents to attend the township meetings and share any concerns or issue they feel need to be addressed.

Bruce E. Ritter (Candidate): I would work with the trustees to spend the tax monies collected and allocated to the township on projects and tasks that benefit the residents of the township.

Delaware Township Trustee

Q. What are the motivating factors in your decision to run for public office?

Austin J. Vanden Bosch (Candidate): I think that it is time that the younger generation gets into a position that makes decisions in the community, and I feel that I could fill that role. Also, I believe that it would be a good way for myself become more involved in the community.

Q. Should you win in November, what are your priorities and how do you recommend we address them as a community?

Austin J. Vanden Bosch (Candidate): One of my main priorities for the rural area of Delaware Township, is to keep safer roads in the winter to protect drivers when the conditions are unfavorable. I would also like to help address any problems that may be present, or occur in the future, that are in the means of a township trustee.
Q. How would you promote the area’s continued growth while remaining mindful of the needs of the community?

Austin J. Vanden Bosch (Candidate): To continue local growth, we should support local businesses and the local school. Both of which, contribute greatly to the small community that we live in and around. However, we should not look to grow to the point that it is impeding on the personal lives of community members in a negative way.

Candidates running for Delaware Township Trustee who did not respond to the questionnaire: John Beagle

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Q. What are the motivating factors in your decision to run for public office?

Roger P. Heyman (Incumbent): My motivation to rerun for public office was to continue serving the Township, saving the Township money and applying grants when available. I am an active member of Ohio Township Association and Hancock County Township Association. My Accomplishments as Fiscal Officer: Township records now on Ohio Online Checkbook through the Ohio Treasurer’s Office. Setup FREE Website for the Township (https://delawaretownshiphancockcountyohio.wordpress.com/) Clean financial audit in 2016 allowing the Township to have an Agreed Upon Procedures (AUP), which is cheaper than a financial audit. 2017/2018 AUP was completed with “No Exceptions” noted which allows for another AUP in 2019/2020 if the Fiscal Officer does not change. View audit report at http://ohioauditor.gov. $26,000 Road Sign Grant obtained allowing STOP Ahead signs to be put up to help protect our kids, residents, and visitors on days visibility is low so they know where stop signs are. $3,500 Cemetery Grant obtained to help with the costs of monument repairs. Increased the Township's interest earnings by 1300%. Experience Counts when Money Matters!

Abigail Walter (Candidate): I am interested in serving the community that I live and grew up in. With an accounting degree, I believe the fiscal officer is an area I can be productive in.

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Q. Should you win in November, what are your priorities and how do you recommend we address them as a community?

Roger P. Heyman (Incumbent): Should I win in November, the most important priorities are: Continue maintaining accurate records, and allowing for an AUP opposed to a more costly full audit. Ensure all money due to the Township is collected and bills are paid in a timely manner. Continue applying for grants. Inform Township residents of activity via the Website.

Abigail Walter (Candidate): In a small community with limited resources, being fiscally responsible is very important and I will help make sure the community spending is appropriate and responsible.
Q. How would you promote the area’s continued growth while remaining mindful of the needs of the community?

Roger P. Heyman (Incumbent): I will continue to apply for grants to help the community and keep the community updated through the Township website I set up. Sometimes new businesses can apply for grants to help them get started as well. I stay updated with the activities in the community and help with some of the activities going on. Last year we opened our home to the community for the Christmas Home Tour. As the current Fiscal Officer, I am always looking at ways to save the Township money so we can put more back into the community and into our roads in order to attract new businesses and growth.

Abigail Walter (Candidate): Sometimes in smaller communities growth can be difficult, but small communities do offer the closeness that is comfortable. I would make sure the decisions and spending make sense and don’t change the small town feel that people like. People in small communities want to know their tax dollars are being spent on things that will better the community. Responsible growth.

Mt. Blanchard Village Council

Q. What are the motivating factors in your decision to run for public office?

Carrie L. Vogel (Candidate): To be a voice for our community

Q. Should you win in November, what are your priorities and how do you recommend we address them as a community?

Carrie L. Vogel (Candidate): To help clean up our little town To see what we can do about the trash company on our Main street/state highway See if we can get rid of all the burn barrels in town Try to get the swimming pool moved to higher grounds

Q. How would you promote the area’s continued growth while remaining mindful of the needs of the community?

Carrie L. Vogel (Candidate): Try to see what can be done to bring back sports to our little town This would not just help out children have more to do but bring others to our town to enjoy the grocery store and the dairy bar.

Candidates running for Mt. Blanchard Village Council who did not respond to the questionnaire: James Mason III, Gary Porcello
Q. What are the motivating factors in your decision to run for public office?

**Jason Oman (Incumbent):** As a former graduate of Cory-Rawson Schools, the quality of education and programs that we offer our students are very important to me. I take pride in our school, and I have enjoyed working with the administration to help make some key changes in hopes of creating an improved learning atmosphere for our students. I value the input of the community, and strive to listen to all suggestions or concerns that arise, in hopes of providing the best school that our tax payer dollars can afford. I believe that one of my key strengths is the ability to listen to all members of the community, collect their ideas, and present an idea that would be good for the community as a whole. I also enjoy helping families when a need arises. I receive a sense of satisfaction knowing that I have helped guide a family in the right direction to get a problem solved in a timely manner.

**Stephanie Stauffer (Candidate):** I feel that some changes are needed in the CR BOE. The job of the BOE is to ensure that our local school has the best staff and resources available to each and every student. I intend to build relationships with the families, students, faculty and administration in the district and be the voice to ensure that the correct changes take place.

Q. Should you win in November, what are your priorities and how do you recommend we address them as a community?

**Jason Oman (Incumbent):** My number one priority is our students. As a member of the Cory-Rawson Board of Education the discussions that we have, and the decisions that we make, all impact our student body. It is our responsibility that the decisions we make will be in the students’ best interest. At all times we must ask ourselves, “What is best for our kids?” Our community values its future since our future lies with our children. As a community we must continue to work towards providing our students with the best education we can. This will help give them a jumpstart to a successful life.

**Stephanie Stauffer (Candidate):** My first priority is to learn why our district is losing students and families to other districts through open enrollment. The BOE needs to identify and correct the issues in order to retain the students and families in our district and find ways to bring back students who have left.

Q. How would you promote the area’s continued growth while remaining mindful of the needs of the community?

**Jason Oman (Incumbent):** The best way to promote continued growth in our school district is to be receptive of new ideas, and embrace strategic planning. As a school district we must be proactive with our planning in order to become a district that is cutting edge. By developing these new ideas, and planning proactively, we should minimize the amount of students open enrolling out of our district. One need that our community possesses is the desire for the best education that tax dollars can buy for the students. While this is and should be our goal, we must keep in mind that we do not have a bottomless checkbook. As a member of the Cory-Rawson Board of Education I pledge to be mindful of the tax dollars at hand by showing good stewardship of those tax dollars.

**Stephanie Stauffer (Candidate):** I will look at all of the internal and external factors when presented with areas of growth. I will not let my own personal views interfere when making a decision. I will do my best to represent and choose what is best for our district and community.

Candidates running for Cory-Rawson Board of Education who did not respond to the questionnaire: Michael Walters
The Chamber Encourages You to Review the Entire Ballot

Please be informed and carefully review all of the issues on the November 5 ballot for Hancock County. A complete list can be found at HancockBoardofElections.com. The Chamber is providing this list for informational purposes only.

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<th>Hancock County</th>
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<td><strong>Liberty Benton Local School District</strong></td>
<td><strong>Proposed School Income Tax (Renewal)</strong>&lt;br&gt;Shall an annual income tax 0.75% on the school district income of individuals and of estates be imposed by Liberty-Benton Local School District to renew an income tax expiring at the end of 2020, for 10 years, beginning January 1, 2021, for the purpose of current expenses?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Riverdale Local School District</strong></td>
<td><strong>Proposed School Income Tax (Renewal)</strong>&lt;br&gt;Shall an annual income tax of one percent (1%) on the school district income of individuals and of estates be imposed by the Riverdale Local School District to renew an income tax expiring at the end of 2020, for three (3) years, beginning January 1, 2021, for the purpose of current expenses?</td>
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<td><strong>Van Buren Local School District</strong></td>
<td><strong>Proposed School Income Tax</strong>&lt;br&gt;Shall an annual income tax of one percent (1%) on the school district income of individuals and of estates be imposed by the Van Buren Local School District, Hancock County, Ohio, for a period of five (5) years, beginning January 1, 2020, for the purpose of providing for current expenses of the school district?</td>
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<td><strong>Ada Public Library</strong></td>
<td><strong>Proposed Tax Levy (Additional)</strong>&lt;br&gt;An additional tax for the benefit of Ada Public Library for the purpose of current expenses at a rate not exceeding 1 mil for each one dollar of valuation, which amounts to $0.10 for each one hundred dollars of valuation, for 5 years, commencing in 2019, first due in calendar year 2020.</td>
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<td><strong>Appleseed Joint Ambulance District</strong></td>
<td><strong>Proposed Tax Levy (Replacement)</strong>&lt;br&gt;A replacement of a tax for the benefit of the Appleseed Joint Ambulance District of Hancock County, Ohio for the purpose of providing ambulance service, emergency medical service, or both at a rate not exceeding 0.6 mill for each one dollar of valuation, which amounts to six cents ($0.06) for each one hundred dollars of valuation, for a period of five (5) years, commencing in 2019, first due in the calendar year 2020.</td>
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<td><strong>Forest-Jackson Public Library</strong></td>
<td><strong>Proposed Tax Levy (Renewal)</strong>&lt;br&gt;A renewal of a tax for the benefit of the Forest-Jackson Public Library for the purpose of current expenses at a rate not exceeding 0.7 mill for each one dollar of valuation, which amounts to seven cents ($0.07), for each one hundred dollars of valuation, for a period of five (5) years, commencing in 2020, first due in calendar year 2021.</td>
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<td><strong>City of Fostoria</strong></td>
<td><strong>Proposed (Ordinance) Electric Aggregation</strong>&lt;br&gt;Shall the City of Fostoria have the authority to aggregate the retail electric loads located in the City, and for that purpose, and enter into service agreements to facilitate for those loads the sale and purchase of electricity, such aggregation to occur automatically except where any person elects to opt out?</td>
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<td><strong>Village of Jenera</strong></td>
<td><strong>Proposed Tax Levy (Replacement)</strong>&lt;br&gt;A replacement of a tax for the benefit of the Village of Jenera, Ohio, for the purpose of current expenses at a rate not exceeding four (4) mills for each one dollar of valuation which amounts to forty cents ($0.40) for each one hundred dollars of valuation, for five (5) years, commencing in 2019, first due in calendar year 2020.</td>
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9 VILLAGE OF MT. BLANCHARD

PROPOSED TAX LEVY (RENEWAL)
A renewal of a tax for the benefit of the Village of Mt. Blanchard for the purpose of current expenses at a rate not exceeding five (5) mills for each one dollar of valuation, which amounts to fifty cents ($0.50), for each one hundred dollars of valuation, for five (5) years, commencing in 2020, first due in calendar year 2021.

10 SPECIAL ELECTION BY PETITION

SPECIAL ELECTION BY PETITION
Local Liquor Option for Particular Location Question 1
Shall the sale of spirituous liquor be permitted by 15 Crimson Lane, L.L.C., an applicant for a D-3 liquor permit, who is engaged in the business of operating a wedding venue/event center at 4600 County Road 1, Ada (Orange Township), Ohio 45810 in this precinct?

11 SPECIAL ELECTION BY PETITION

SPECIAL ELECTION BY PETITION
Local Option Election on Sale of Wine and Mixed Beverages and Spirituous Liquor on Sunday for Particular User at Business Location within a Precinct, Question 2
Shall the sale of wine and mixed beverages and spirituous liquor be permitted for sale on Sunday between the hours of ten a.m. and midnight by 15 Crimson Lane, L.L.C., an applicant for a D-6 liquor permit, who is engaged in the business of operating a wedding venue/event center at 4600 County Road 1, Ada (Orange Township), Ohio 45810 in this precinct?

Make a difference for business! Vote November 5, 2019!