



VOTER REPORT

Candidates Respond to Important Questions Impacting Local Businesses

March 19, 2024: Primary Election
Hancock County Commissioner

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

Q. What were the primary motivations and driving factors that led you to decide to run for public office?



Holly Frische: I have been engaged in city and county government for more than 20 years. In 2014 I was elected to Findlay City Council. Running for Hancock County Commissioner is a natural transition and an opportunity to be a voice for the entire county, in the same way I have been as Councilwoman.



Jeffrey L. Hunker: Over 10 years ago when I first became a public office holder as a Liberty Twp. Trustee I believed that I could make a positive impact as a leader. Changes and improvements needed to occur in our volunteer fire department. In time, by persuading my fellow trustees to concur, we hired a 3rd Party non-biased consultant to evaluate our whole fire department. It produced what we needed. Consequently changes and improvements occurred. As I anticipate a role as a Hancock County Commissioner I approach it the same way seeing opportunities for improvement. I approach this race with a unique perspective being the only candidate who has worked with the county commissioners and other county officials on topics including economic development opportunities, water and sewer issues outside city limits, subdivision regulations, annexation discussions, land uses including solar and wind, petition ditch maintenance and many more topics. I have the knowledge and experience it takes to do the job effectively and I have a passion to serve my county as a proven leader.



Jeff Wobser: My reason for running for public office is the same today as it was in 2015 when I first ran and was elected to Findlay City Council. I want to serve the community that, as a child, gave me the opportunities to grow and excel as an adult. My main goal as an elected official is to keep our county a great place to live, work, and raise a family. That seems easy, but it requires constant vigilance and a set of conservative core values that guide my decisions.

Q. What are your priorities or concerns for your community?



Holly Frische: As a country, we continue to see drastic changes to our core values as Americans. As a community, we must not lose what makes Hancock County special. To do this we all have to be rowing in the same direction. I understand the balance between the city and county working together to bring high paying jobs while, at the same time, preserving our townships. Public safety is a top priority for me. Over the years I have worked to improve Block Watch, served on Findlay/Hancock County Crime Prevention Board, supported the Citizens Sheriff Academy Alumni Association and our emergency responders, including most recently the development of the S.T.R.I.C.T Center to provide training for our first responders. Soon many important decisions are going to have to be made regarding our jail. These will be tough conversations and I look forward to working with the new sheriff, fellow commissioners, and the public to make sure we implement the right plan to serve our county's needs for the next 30 plus years.



Jeffrey L. Hunker: Priority #1 is to have the County and City of Findlay improve their working relationship. The county commissioners' authority has to be respected but respect is not given it is earned. This relationship improvement will take time and much effort. The county commissioners need to be the first to know about issues that they have to vote on, not the last to find out as has occurred in some instances. Another concern is ongoing infrastructure needs starting with buildings. We are still renting office space for some offices since the flood of 2007. In addition to this our jail is past what many say is the life expectancy of a jail. Although I am a fiscal conservative I realize that our low sales tax rate creates many challenges for the county since it is depended upon so heavily in the budget. Funding of infrastructure, not just a jail but all, is and will continue to be challenging. Finally, I will do all I can to keep Hancock Co. a safe place to live and work.

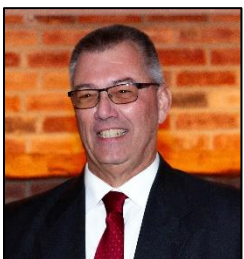


Jeff Wobser: Several projects are currently on the horizon from the County Commissioner's perspective. The recycling program is a service that the county has provided for many years. It is due for review and transformation. Commissioner Bateson is currently working on this project, but it is multifaceted in scope and needs to be vetted carefully. I am not sure it will be resolved this year, and it could fall to the new Board of Commissioners to make a decision. The second major project is the county jail. The current jail does not meet current requirements. So, a new solution needs to be exhaustively vetted and executed. This project will be expensive and has ramifications for nearly every part of our county government. The jail project will require a high level of management from the commissioners so that the taxpayers are treated fairly. Beyond these two major projects, my main priority is ensuring taxpayer dollars are spent as efficiently as possible.

Q. What steps will you take to actively listen to the concerns and perspectives of all community members, including those with differing opinions?



Holly Frische: I have always been active in our community, identifying needs and working to find solutions. I am known for keeping the people informed through my social media Facebook page "Findlay Hot Topics with Holly Frische" where I share facts and information important to the community; and by encouraging their participation in their government. I have attended meetings on wind, solar, annexation, school safety, planning & zoning, and many others topics to learn how the public feels about things happening in their community. When specific concerns have been raised, I have taken the time to go to the neighborhood and talk one-on-one with those involved to get a better understanding of the situation. This is who I am, and I will continue to do the same as Commissioner.



Jeffrey L. Hunker: I will do my best to make myself available to all who have concerns in whatever manner necessary. I am open to all suggestions and definitely don't intend to be one of those individuals who won't answer their phone. This is exactly what my campaign slogan "A Voice for ALL residents of Hancock County" is all about. I have been out knocking on doors and listening to people as they voice their concerns. I have noticed that many don't know what the county commissioners do. This allows for the opportunity to educate. I don't have all the answers but being available to listen and share is what it is all about. I encourage people of different opinions to come to me and share. I may be considered old school when talking about this topic but I truly believe in face to face communication whenever possible and not hiding behind social media platforms. Maybe through good conversation they can educate me on a topic of concern and change my mind.



Jeff Wobser: My cell phone number has always been listed on the city council website, and I will continue to do that as a county commissioner. I invite people who are concerned about a topic or have constructive ideas to contact me in the manner that they are most comfortable with, be it by phone, email, or personal meeting. Although the County Commissioner job is technically a part-time job, I am committing to working it full-time and to be available to anyone for discussion.

Q. How do you plan to engage with local businesses to understand their concerns and gather input when making decisions that may impact them?



Holly Frische: Growing up and working in Hancock County I have had the opportunity to get to know and work with many local businesses over the years. As an elected official I have always had an open-door policy when working with the public and will continue to do so. If there are projects being discussed that may have direct impact on a local business, I will reach out to them to listen to their concerns and help find a solution. We must remember that the success of the businesses who have made Hancock County their home is important to our community's success, and equally important to the residents and families who work there.



Jeffrey L. Hunker: I have been fortunate enough to be appointed and currently serving on Regional Planning made up of a cross-section of city and county representatives. My experience on Regional Planning will continue to be beneficial as it relates to our role in community planning which at times specifically impacts economic development initiatives. Obviously, as Commissioner my role would expand to hopefully serving within the various Chamber Boards directly with business members who volunteer their time to strengthen economic development at all levels. Finally, we know staffing continues to be a challenge for employers but would welcome having quarterly meetings with Large, Mid-size and Small business to listen to how County Government can better support their concerns.



Jeff Wobser: During conversations with current and past commissioners, I asked them what they thought were the critical aspects of being an effective commissioner. The answers boiled down to one thing. Management. Management of people, projects, and relationships. These are qualities that I learned in my 32 years with Marathon Petroleum Company and as the Head Coach of the Findlay High School Swimming team. I will make it a point to build relationships with our current business base and be involved in recruiting new businesses into the county. Building solid relationships with these businesses, large and small, opens the door for conversation and feedback going both directions. Without relationships, you leave yourself open to miscommunication.

Q. What specific strategies and initiatives would you champion to effectively increase engagement and communication with the people you represent and/or protect, ensuring their voices and concerns are heard and addressed?



Holly Frische: As commissioner I will continue to engage the public by being available to answer the phone, provide clear communication, utilize social media, and have open meetings. Over the next few years, we will need to address the future of our jail and make a determination as to whether we build new or maintain our current downtown location. Currently, there is concern about what changes will be made to our county recycling program and whether we will keep Litter Landing on Sandusky, subcontract the collection to a 3rd party or do a combination of both. We are now in the final phases of flood mitigation and there are a few pieces, such as the Norfolk Southern Bridge and the Eagle Creek Flood Basin, where funding is still being sought. These are some of the projects that will be vitally important to Hancock County's future and will need the community's input and support.



Jeffrey L. Hunker: My strategy will continue to be a professional who has always been comfortable engaging with others in honest and open dialogue. Though this term may be thrown around, good leaders naturally engage and collaborate with others. I have worked from a local trustee position dealing with constituent issues and also have dealt with issues from fellow elected township officials as President of the Hancock Co. Twp. Assn. In addition to these I have faced issues dealing with community planning opportunities that come before Hancock Regional Planning Commission which range from zoning compliance to issues that literally impact neighborhoods. It is important to listen and work towards building a consensus, but decisions must be made at the end of the day that ultimately are in the best interest of our community as a whole.



Jeff Wobser: As mentioned above, I will make myself available to anyone who would like to have a discussion. I appreciate input from citizens who both agree and disagree with me. Also, as a commissioner, I will be actively involved with many different boards of service providers in the county. In attending those meetings, I will have the opportunity to hear from people with needs specific to that organization. Attending those meetings is critical for the understanding of our community's needs.

The full slate of [candidates running for Hancock County Commissioner](#) include: Holly Frische, Jeff Hunker, Jeff Wobser, and Joshua Shaferly.

The Chamber Encourages You to Review the Entire Ballot

Please be informed and carefully review all of the issues on the March 19th ballot for Hancock County. A complete list (and ballot text) can be found at HancockBoardofElections.com.

Local Issues

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| Issue 1 : Arcadia LSD | Renewal of 2.5 mills for the purpose of avoiding an operating deficit for 4 years |
| Issue 2 : Arcadia LSD | Annual income tax of 1% for 5 years for the purpose of current operating expenses |
| Issue 3 : Bluffton EVSD | Renewal 3.541 Mills for 5 years for the purpose of avoiding an operating deficit |
| Issue 4 : Riverdale LSD | Additional 2.0 Mills for the purpose of general permanent improvements for a continuing period of time |
| Issue 5 : Hancock County Board of Developmental Disabilities | Renewal 2.50 Mills for the purpose of providing for the operation of community programs and services authorized by county boards of developmental disabilities, for the acquisition, construction, renovation financing, maintenance, and operation of developmental disabilities facilities for 5 years |
| Issue 6 : Hancock Park District | Replacement 0.8 Mill for the purpose of maintaining, improving, developing and promoting the Hancock Park System, conserving natural resources, acquiring additional parks and developing new recreational facilities as the Hancock Park District Board of Park Commissioners deems appropriate, and enabling the Hancock Park District to support parks and recreational facilities owned or operated by townships, villages, and cities located throughout Hancock County for 8 years |