

Morrow:

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bring energy and passion to work for Morrow County. It is important that we vote, by May 17. Your votes are important. Your vote for me won't be taken for granted and I am thankful for your vote to reelect Melissa Lindsay.

Jeff Wenholz, 53, business owner

What is the county's most pressing need or issue?

One of the most pressing issues for Morrow County is the break down in the relationships between county commissioners, county employees and other entities the commissioners work with, such as cities and the Port of Morrow.

The first step to repair the relationships with the county employees is to treat them fairly and with respect for being the professionals they are and let them do their jobs without interference from the commissioners. The county has seen a complete turnover of non-elected department leaders during the last six years. To repair relationships with cities and the port, I would listen to their concerns and work collaboratively with them for a mutually beneficial outcome for all. This may require compromise by all parties. In these instances, the county commissioners are dealing either directly with fellow elected commissioners, councilors or their appointed representatives.

So, these people need to be treated respectfully and as equals. These relationships should not be viewed as a "County vs..." mentality but one where everyone works for the betterment of the citizens of Morrow County. After all, we are all there representing and serving the residents of Morrow County.

List and discuss your top three goals if you are to be elected.

My top goal is the improvement of relationships as discussed earlier. The next priority is to continue to promote and encourage responsible economic growth and development in all of Morrow County. The growth the county has seen has brought a lot of good family wage jobs, a diversification of industry and an increased tax base which has benefited all of Morrow County. When it comes to economic development, the commissioner's role is to set policy that promotes economic growth and development while at the same time looking out for the interests of the residents and existing businesses. The next goal is to promote fiscal responsibility. Currently, the county has a large unfunded pension obligation which was a carry over from when the county did not have the revenue it has had the last few years. With the increase in

property tax revenue, Strategic investment program money and enterprise zone money now is the time to fund this obligation instead of continuing to "kick the can down the road." The increase in SIP and enterprise zone money should also be used to tackle infrastructure projects such as roads and bridges that general fund tax dollars can not be used for.

These should be taken care of first instead of adding new personnel or programs. First priority should be taking care of what we already have.

Position 3 candidates

Mike McNamee, business operator

What is the county's most pressing need or issue?

A commissioner's duties are to; approve ordinances (county laws); adopt the county budget; setting standards for the use of county property; overseeing the operation of county departments with appointed department heads; and being the spokesman of the citizens. There currently appears to be a tendency to micro-manage departments heads and employees, which has caused a turnover in county employees. In my opinion we are to support and advise the department heads. My approach to this issue is to diligently keep the current qualified administrators; hire qualified people at a competitive wage, support them, monitor their performance, and let them do the jobs.

List and discuss your top three goals if you are to be elected.

My top goals if elected would be to meet and be available to as many Morrow County residents as possible, in as many locations as possible, not just in my home area of Irrigon, I plan to represent the entire county. We must get together, to become a county unit, to strive to overcome the north-south division for the betterment of the entire county. I would strive to build a cohesiveness with the other two commissioners so that each could bring our own ideas to the table which certainly will not always match, but through mutual respect strive to come to a tolerable solution to the issue at hand.

The infrastructure needs attention as our county continues to grow, roads for transporting our goods, housing needs, water sustainability, and to continue to work with the other entities in the county regarding these issues.

Gus Peterson, 26, wheat farmer

What is the county's most pressing need or issue?

I see the most pressing needs for Morrow County to be twofold and interrelated: The world is changing quickly, and we as a county are divided. Because of the rapid changes that have

occurred in technology, our society is changing with it, this change can be good or bad, but it is far more likely to be change for good if we face the future with open eyes and careful planning together. Which leads to the second interrelated issue. Morrow County is divided and wastes energy and resources fighting with itself. If we wish to create a future where we are not taken advantage of, but rather take advantage of the opportunities that come with change, we must work together.

My plan to address this is to work with the communities and partners in this county to ensure that we are creating a long term plan that benefits the whole of Morrow County. We have an abundance of resources and advantages in this county, managed wisely they can be used to ensure that Morrow County is better for everyone.

A specific example would be to set up zoning and funding opportunities using current renewable energy projects to allow for solar panels to be installed on residents homes, with grant money lowering the cost. We do not have to be a county where change benefits a few lucky landowners, that is a policy choice, and as a commissioner, I will work to ensure that county policies benefit us all.

List and discuss your top three goals if you are to be elected.

My top three goals if elected are housing, economic growth and education. I will discuss these separately, but they are interrelated and to a certain degree inseparable.

As mentioned, I grew up on a farm in Morrow County.

As far as I am concerned, it was an ideal place to grow up, and I came back largely because of the rural lifestyle. Because of this, I want to do my part to ensure that others who want that lifestyle can have it in Morrow County. There is plenty of room in Morrow County for growth, and if we plan wisely for it, we can ensure that our communities are places that our young people wish to return to.

If we are to have young people stay in Morrow County, if we are to have a place we are proud to call home, the reality is economic growth is necessary. Being in support of growth does not mean that I support uncontrolled growth, but rather I want to ensure that we live in a place that is rich with opportunity. The potential areas for growth in Morrow County go beyond just concentrating in the Port, though it is absolutely important, and with vision and leadership we can make Morrow County whatever we wish it to be.

The control that the board of commissioners has over education is limited, I want to make that clear right out of the gate, I will make no promises that I cannot keep. The board of commissioners can play a role however in creating opportunities, we need schools that prepare our young people not only for college but also for entering the workforce after high school. We can work with schools and local businesses to create the kinds of opportunities that change kids' lives. College isn't for everyone, and our education system should work for everyone.

We as a county are truly blessed, but with that bless-

ing comes responsibility. I hope to have your vote this May 17 as a commissioner you can trust as a steward over these resources. Let's grow together.

David Sykes, 72, newspaper owner

What is the county's most pressing need or issue?

Morrow County has a diverse, growing economy, including renewable energy production, agriculture and industry, which is a positive thing as it provides good, above average wage jobs. We are experiencing tremendous industrial growth in the north part of the county and, along with this progress, comes growing pains. County government must do its part to ensure this growth is done responsibly, with good planning, proper construction and proper operation of these new and expanding businesses. I support a strong, diversified economy and the jobs not only for ourselves, but for our young people, so they can stay, find jobs and one day call Morrow County home. As a newspaper reporter I have attended and written hundreds of articles about county government as well as the Columbia River Enterprise Zone. I know the workings of our county government very well and if elected I will bring this knowledge with me on the very first day on the job.

Another current need is the county must work hard to attract and retain a good work force, which will

provide the best possible government services to its citizens. We need to ensure we are paying competitive wages but also fostering a work environment that encourages employees to care about their jobs and give their best for the county. We can have the best buildings, computers and equipment, but without a decent work force we will not have the best county government possible.

List and discuss your top three goals if you are to be elected.

Goal No. 1 — Encourage good relations between the people in all regions of the county. We have different economies, demographics and needs across the county. People will have differing opinions and strong discussions over county government, but I believe if we respect each other's needs and intentions, we can work out those differences. I have lived and built businesses in Morrow County during the past 42 years, during which I have made contacts and relationships in all regions and cities of the county. I will work hard to understand and represent these areas.

Goal No. 2 — Promote openness so the citizens can see what their county government is doing and why it is being done. To accomplish this, I plan on staying in contact with people all across the county, ensuring their concerns and opinions are heard and considered, during the decision making process of their elected representatives.

Goal No. 3 — Make sure the county taxpayers' dollars are being spent prudently while providing the best services possible to the citizens of Morrow County.



Sykes



Wenholz



McNamee

HIV isn't just a big city issue.

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