

County candidates weigh in on issues

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budget. The Fair is doing very well, though, with lots of volunteers.



Terry Luttrell

On April 27 is the ORPET Grand Opening with 50 jobs and there are projects at Port Westward. I see the light at the end of the tunnel with these. We have to learn to get by with less, but jobs and county dollars tax base helps.

Preheim – That’s a hard one. Number one, in any government is that there are ways. A lot of people have given me ideas, like a quarterly contest for an idea that saves the most money. I don’t think I or the county commissioners can know as much about any job as the ones doing the work. This year’s budget problem is driven by payroll, but I think those people can be the solution with ideas to save money. We’re not bankrupt so, overall, it’s not as bad as things can be.

2. Should county commissioners continue to assist department heads or should they hire middle managers?

Fisher – People suggest we should have a county manager. I’m neutral on that. It’s up to the

county residents, but that would probably cost more in salaries.

Luttrell – Can’t see where we could have more people, due to the budget. I think county commissioners should be able, with department supervisors, to handle it. If the job isn’t getting done, you have to figure out how to get it done.

Preheim – I don’t know, it’s something I’d consider. We do have managers, like the budget officer and all department heads are, hopefully, managers. I think the top executive should be in charge of those people, but I’ve seen it work well both ways at the city level.

3. What do you consider to be the commissioners’ duties and responsibilities?

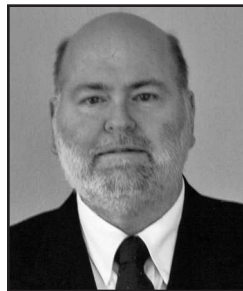


Earl Fisher

Fisher – County commissioners have a variety of duties; we administer the \$40 million that comes through the county and includes money for road funds, the sheriff’s office, and health funds. We also handle land use issues, such as what you can and can’t do with your land. We pass statutes and ordinances that impact people’s lives (like dog ordinances). I don’t deal with the war in Afghanistan or the federal deficit. I do deal with

whether your neighbor’s dog is barking all night or whether a road gets fixed. Those are things we deal with that affect real people every day.

Luttrell – Basically they oversee the entire business of the county; staffing, roads, repairs, anything to do with the courthouse and the upkeep of the county. It’s a pretty broad responsibility, but with the right people in there, I don’t think there should be a problem.



Brady Preheim

Preheim – Our number one duty is public safety. The county sheriff and that department is in pretty bad shape, with a \$1 million shortfall in a \$4 million budget. That’s a huge cut and I don’t know that that’s the place the county should be cutting, at least as drastically as that. Second, to balance the budget as required by state law. Third, oversee and be the representative of the people in the county and listen to them. I’ve been to several county commissioner meetings and they have acted like people who attend are a bother. It’s almost painful to see. I understand there are times when their hands are tied and it’s frustrating for them as well, but the fact of the matter is they are the chief executives

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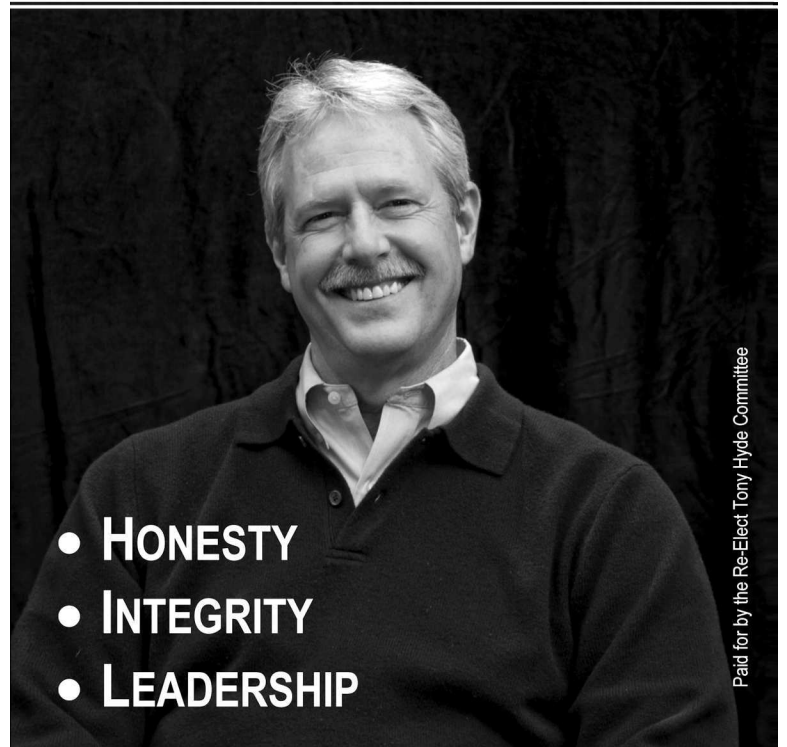
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