

Commissioner Brian Lockhart

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1. What is your vision for Cecil County in the next five years? Is your vision possible to achieve?

Continue to enforce the Comp. Plan as written by the citizens of Cecil County. Yes. This vision is possible, but changes will happen along the way.

2. The long needed water and sewer utility service for the Route 40 corridor is a vision of the Comprehensive Plan. How do you propose to fund and install this along with other utilities (broadband, etc) to encourage new commercial, industrial development along the corridor?

Privatization is the key for Route 40 to succeed. We will see this happen after the court case.

3. 3. What action do you believe is required by the county to attract new business to locate in Cecil County and encourage the present businesses to remain here, therefore, providing employment to professional, skilled, and non-skilled labor?

Treat businesses new and old like customers not as an inconvenience.

4. Since mathematics and science are required elements of education for future professional employment, how would you empower (incentivize) our education system to encourage children going into those fields?

Continue to fund schools at their maint. of effort. Board of Education needs to encourage.

5. What can you see the Board of County Commissioners, you in particular, doing to encourage and keep the property tax rate as low as possible and still provide services that the citizenry requires?

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Cecil County Board of Realtors Candidate Questionnaire – 2010

Tari Moore

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1. What is your vision for Cecil County in the next five years? Is your vision possible to achieve?

One of the most important things our County leaders should be doing is creating a strategic plan. Many of the challenges facing us today are the same challenges that were facing Cecil County decades ago. We can no longer sit back and let things happen – we have a responsibility to create a plan and a “blueprint” for our future. A plan for what we think Cecil County should look like not only in 5 years – but in 20 and 30 years as well.

Since our challenges don’t start or stop at our geographical and political boundaries, I believe this planning process should include far more than elected County Commissioners – our solutions should include bringing all of our partners together. Every real estate salesperson has experienced how the success of your settlement can depend on your ability to bring all of the pieces of the transaction together for your client. The same is true for planning for our future.

I see our Realtor community playing an important part in that process. Even in my short time as a real estate salesperson, I witnessed many of the diverse challenges the people in our county experience with the day-to-day issues of water and sewer, etc. I consider the expertise of our local Realtors a key factor in understanding issues and finding solutions.

Is this possible to achieve? Absolutely. As difficult as it has been for our community to weather the impact of the economic downturn, it has also given us some much needed “breathing space” and an opportunity to determine our priorities and plan how to achieve them. If elected, I’m committed to working with my fellow Commissioners and our community’s leaders to make this happen.

2. The long needed water and sewer utility service for the Route 40 corridor is a vision of the Comprehensive Plan. How do you propose to fund and install this along with other utilities (broadband, etc.) to encourage new commercial, industrial development along the corridor?

Slowly, Cecil County has been moving toward the implementation of infrastructure in the growth corridor. We still have some key challenges – moving past the lawsuit against the County for the sale of assets to Artesian, finalizing the contract with the town of Port Deposit for sewer connection to Seneca Point Waste Water Treatment Plant, connecting the systems all along the growth corridor, etc. We have accomplished much – but there is still much left to complete.

The point of funding being a key issue is extremely relevant. Especially in these difficult economic times, local government is faced with declining revenues and additional expectations from the State of Maryland to take on previously state-funded programs. Even if infrastructure is deemed the highest priority, somehow Commissioners must balance that priority with the ability of people to pay for it.

One of the ways that can be done is through partnerships – whether that be public/private partnerships or public/public partnerships. Our elected officials need to work closely with the state and federal governments to make sure Cecil County’s needs are visible and that we are given every possible consideration for funding. As one of the last rural areas between Baltimore and Philadelphia, and with the anticipated growth that will come to Cecil County because of BRAC, I think we will see a demand for commercial/industrial space – and I see opportunities there for partnerships with private business to help fund some of those needs as well.

One other point- I also think an important priority is for us to decide what we want new development to look like – and then create incentives to encourage that kind of development. Do we want single-family or multi-family housing – or a combination of both? Do we want walk-able communities with nearby shopping and amenities? What’s our priority for parks, trails, and open space? How does all that fit in with our priority of bringing more business to Cecil County, and our priority of maintaining our wonderful quality of life?

3. What action do you believe is required by the county to attract new business to locate in Cecil County and encourage the present businesses to remain here, therefore, providing employment to professional, skilled, and non-skilled labor?

I believe a combination of factors is necessary to attract new business and encourage present businesses in Cecil County. Adequate infrastructure is obviously a key factor, but having an educated workforce to meet employer’s needs is also critical. With education, it’s not just higher education opportunities, it’s also providing technical training for those who choose the trade and labor industry as opposed to college.

We should also be constantly reviewing to see if government is creating barriers to current or future businesses, and looking for ways to remove those barriers. My experience as the former Executive Director of the Cecil County Chamber of Commerce and my work with the Economic Development Commission has given me a unique perspective on the needs and priorities of our business community.

4. Since mathematics and science are required elements of education for future professional employment, how would you empower (incentivize) our education system to encourage children going into those fields?

Our public school system has been working hard to identify future needs for professional employment, and already has plans in place for a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) Academy. CCPS has also been working with Cecil College in planning and designing curriculum to meet anticipated future needs. It’s important to

point out these future jobs will also require security clearances, necessitating “good choices” while in school.

As a member of CCPS’s Business & Education Partnership Advisory Council, part of our main focus has been to partner businesses with our educational system. It results in excellent two-way communication– businesses have direct communication with school officials about their needs as employers, and they also have a direct positive influence as mentors in the classroom.

Cecil College has been very proactive in pursuing partnerships with four-year universities. These partnerships allow our citizens to complete college credits at Cecil College (at a very reasonable price), and then transfer into a four-year university.

In many ways, it’s all about raising the bar of expectation for our families and students. In this day and age, not having a high school diploma severely limits job opportunities at the very minimum. As a community, we should encourage and prioritize education and educational opportunities.

5. What can you see the Board of County Commissioners, you in particular, doing to encourage and keep the property tax rate as low as possible and still provide services that the citizenry requires?

The answer to this lies in a combination of elements from all of the questions above. With adequate infrastructure in the growth corridor, an educated workforce, and a focus on removing barriers to business growth - we have all the elements in place to attract new business that will help lessen the tax burden on individual property owners, and provide much needed jobs.

No one likes paying taxes, but we all want excellent services! It is imperative that the County uses good business principles in all they do. I’m committed to work hard every day to eliminate waste and encourage efficiencies. My extensive experience and education in budgets (both in business and in government) gives me an understanding of where - and when - to cut. My experience in building excellent working relationships has taught me how to be a good listener, and how to solve problems.

These are challenging times – but I am not discouraged by that...rather, I am encouraged by the opportunity to make a positive difference for Cecil County. Thank you.

Candidate Carl Roberts

- 1. What is your vision for Cecil County in the next five years? Is your vision possible to achieve?*

Over the next five years, I envision Cecil County as the ideal location that businesses consider for startup, expansion and relocation in this region... the Heart of the Technology Corridor. Current businesses are valued and encouraged to modernize and expand due to the climate created that is responsive and supportive to their needs. This vision can be accomplished by the completion of a strategic plan that includes a schedule to complete the infrastructure within the growth corridor through collaboration between municipalities, the private sector and county government. This is certainly possible to achieve.

Included in this comprehensive strategic plan are the areas outside the growth corridor. The priority is to plan and sustain, with infrastructure, residential communities that are attractive and appealing to current and future residents. New residential development, as well as the review and modernization of current residential developments, needs to be included in this planned community concept. Preservation of farmlands and protection of our waterways is a priority.

Expenses required to live, work and thrive in Cecil County must be realistic and adequate to provide the services necessary as Cecil County moves forward in the 21st Century.

- 2. The long needed water and sewer utility service for the Route 40 corridor is a vision of the Comprehensive Plan. How do you propose to fund and install this along with the other utilities to encourage new commercial, industrial development along the corridor?*

It is critically important that a strategic plan be developed collaboratively that identifies the components and the priorities associated with the installation of infrastructure along Route 40. Water, wastewater, natural gas, high-speed internet access, mass transportation/rail service, roads and intersection improvements are all elements within the plan.

This planning must include all partners. The process must be transparent and the plan reviewed continuously to ensure that it focuses on the priorities necessary to achieve the desired outcome. Municipalities, county government, state government, citizens and representatives of the private sector are included in this planning.

Once completed, a funding or business plan is attached. No potential funding alternative should be dismissed without consideration. In addition what does not work today may in fact be possible down the road. Bonds, pay go, incentive tax programs and private investment all play a part in funding the installation of infrastructure components.

Funding of the plan is a priority included in the operating and capital budget proposals adopted each year, clearly identifying the Route 40 infrastructure.

- 3. What action do you believe is required by the county to attract new businesses to locate in Cecil County and encourage the present businesses to remain here, therefore, providing employment to professional, skilled and non-skilled labor?*

Businesses are important and a critical component of the strategic plan to achieve the quality of life sought for all Cecil County citizens. Creating a strategic plan that addresses businesses interest and needs will go a long way in convincing current businesses to stay and expand and new businesses to choose Cecil County. Taxes and other fees associated with businesses must

be assessed in relation to the impact and revenue provided through the products or services delivered and the workforce contributions such as income or piggyback taxes.

The future requires a knowledgeable and skilled workforce. By enhancing educational and training opportunities for professional, skilled and non-skilled labor, Cecil County creates an environment rich in opportunities for future business needs.

County commissioners must be advocates and ambassadors for the county and actively participate in marketing and recruitment programs to retain and seek new businesses. Routine communications with established businesses opens dialogue, furthers understanding and encourages collaboration.

4. Since mathematics and science are required elements of education for future professional employment, how would you empower our education system to encourage children going into those fields?

Currently the Cecil County Public Schools and Cecil College provide excellent programs in the area of math and science. Dr. Pannill and I collaborated four years ago to partner in a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) program that recruited students entering the ninth grade and put them on a plan that included concentrations of math and science. These students attend Cecil College during their junior and senior years and earn as many as 18 college credits. The program is available in all five high schools and is heavily subscribed by students who are excited about the careers associated with STEM.

BRAC presents Cecil County with an economic development opportunity that will not occur again anytime soon. Availability of workers with expertise in the areas of math and science are critically important to our ability to attract BRAC related businesses and to fulfill their workforce needs with Cecil County citizens.

Workforce preparedness is an important infrastructure component. The success of STEM and other workforce training programs through Cecil County's school system, Cecil College and other training institutes delivers an educated and prepared workforce. Continuing education programs for students and employees is critical to keep our workforce prepared for the County's future economic growth opportunities.

5. What can you see the Board of County Commissioners, you in particular, doing to encourage and keep the property tax rate as low as possible and still provide services that the citizenry requires?

Property tax revenue currently provides 61% of the overall revenue in the Cecil County operating budget. The current method of maintaining the property tax rate is to reduce and even eliminate services to lower expenses.

As a commissioner, I would work to grow other revenue streams to reduce the heavy reliance on property tax revenue. Business and job growth is a proven means to increase revenue.

As a commissioner, I would require ongoing reviews and assessments of current programs and expenditures included in the Cecil County Budget. This ensures that those provided are necessary to the citizens of Cecil County and that they are operating efficiently.

It is essential that we spend our dollars on the priorities and strategies that will pay dividends back to the county. Investing in our future reduces the demand to raise piggyback or property taxes and reinvests in the vision.

We must all work together to give Cecil County the best opportunity for success as the challenges of our world are put before us.

It can be done. It must be done. Working with others, I can make it happen.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your questions. Please contact me if I can provide further clarification or information regarding my candidacy for the County Commissioner representing District 4.

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