



DeKalb Strong Voter Guide

Assembled and Presented as a public service by:



The following are the answers to questionnaires that were sent to all candidates for public office in DeKalb County who are engaged in contested races.

The questionnaires are standardized to the degree that makes sense, but some questions were posed that are specific to the office for which the candidates are running.

Special Note on Commissioner District 7 race:

This office was vacated by Stan Watson. A special election will be held in November to fill the seat. The candidate qualification for the special election concluded on April 20, 2016. We sent the questionnaire to the list of qualified candidates for District 7 on April 21. Though the district 7 race will not be on the May 24 ballot, we present the responses of candidates for information purposes.

Along with the questionnaire candidates were informed of our timetable for responses:

4/18 - Questionnaires emailed to candidates

4/20 – Deadline reminder emailed to candidates

4/21 – Questionnaire emailed to District 7 candidates

4/25 – Deadline reminder emailed to candidates

4/26 – Deadline passed - Acknowledgement of receipt or of no receipt emailed to candidates

Some candidates did not respond to our requests. In most cases we were able to verify that the questionnaire was received by the candidate. There were rare cases in which attempted communications with a candidate's campaign organization were unsuccessful.

The candidates who did not respond are:

CEO:

Jack Lovelace

Joe Bembry

Tax Commissioner:

Stan Watson

District 4 County Commissioner:

Sharon Barnes Sutton

Willie Willis

District 6 County Commissioner:

Warren Mosby

Commissioner District 7:

Gregory Adams

Jerome Edmondson

Edward Patton

Randall Mangham

State Court:

Dax Lopez

Final Note....

DeKalb Strong neither endorses nor opposes any candidates for public office. We operate in the interest of our community in keeping with our mission: **“To promote transparent and effective government in DeKalb County by encouraging strong citizen engagement at neighborhood, county and legislative levels.”**

You may contact us via email at:

info@dekalbstrong.com

Join the discussion on our FaceBook page here:

www.facebook.com/groups/DeKalbStrong

Connie Stokes

Full Legal Name: Connie Stokes
 Date of Birth: 09/03/1953
 Years lived in DeKalb County: over 40 years
 Occupation & Employer: Real Estate Broker/Consultant

Campaign Web Site: www.conniestokes.com
 Campaign Office Telephone: 404-867-8021
 Campaign Office Email: connie@conniestokes.com

What public offices have you served in previously, including dates:

Senator: 1994 through 2004
 DeKalb County Commission: 2004 through 2010

Describe the training and experience that qualifies you for this office.

Job Creation Initiatives as State Senator and DeKalb Super District Commissioner, Small Business Ordinance for creating jobs, Budget Chair held the line on taxes, Quality of Life parks, sidewalks, greenspace. Foreclosure Task Force, Board member DeKalb Chamber of Commerce recruit and retain business to create jobs. Master's Degree in Public Management and Bachelors in Business.

What is the most important issue facing DeKalb County at this time? Please elaborate on how you plan to address it.

Keeping us safe is my top issue. My plan includes support for public safety personnel. An increase in pay and other benefits. To provide training and policies like I have done on domestic abuse prevention to protect seniors, and women and their children from domestic abuse. Crime prevention afterschool with parks and recreation, school system, homeowner's associations, faith based and other community organizations to coordinate funding/resources. Support more Crime prevention community engagement programs.

Where do you stand on structural reform of DeKalb government (e.g., elimination of the CEO form of government or other changes to the charter) and on a Charter Review Commission? What specific changes do you think should be made and why?

The conversation about changing the form of government stems from a lack of public trust. The public needs to feel they can trust those they elect. Reports and investigations have exposed many areas in need of change. The leadership values of a Stokes Administration would focus on treating the community as a partner on all levels with more information and no secrets. Starting with more transparency. Communicating and practicing strong values throughout the organization.

Where do you stand on new annexation and cityhood initiatives involving unincorporated DeKalb County?

Having been a senator for ten years we have to obey the laws passed, if a referendum passes by the People- It is the will of the people. The question is what should be the role of county government, where many models exist throughout the country. New cities have had an adverse impact on the county budget. As DeKalb County budget chair I have the experience to adjust to the impact of new cities.

Aside from the issues above, please list what you consider to be the most important challenges you see in DeKalb County and briefly describe what changes, if any, you would implement to address them.

Recruit, retain, and expand businesses. Creating jobs by collaborating and partnering with training entities. Continue experience in promoting small businesses for economic development. Opportunities for micro-business, policies that will make current businesses want to stay and expand. Having a business degree and being a business owner as well as the experience of serving on the board of directors of the DeKalb Chamber of Commerce, the world congress authority, and the film video and music commission.

How will voters' best distinguish between you and your opponents?

I have experience of governing and chairing the large and complex budget serving on the commission and working on all county issues and departments. I have the experience of working on creating job with incentives and ordinances to create jobs. I have experience and formal education with a Master's in Public Administration Degree in Public Management.

Mike Thurmond

Full Legal Name: Michael L. Thurmond

Date of Birth: 1/5/1953

Years lived in DeKalb County: 30

Occupation & Employer:

Attorney, Butler, Wooten, Cheeley & Peak, LLC

Campaign Web Site: www.electmikethurmond.com

Campaign Office Telephone: 678- 580 1510

Campaign Office Email: elect@electmikethurmond.com

What public offices have you served in previously, including dates:

Superintendent of DeKalb County School District, the third largest school district in Georgia 2013-2015;
Georgia Labor Commissioner - 1998- 2010;
Georgia Legislature - 1987 - 1992.

Describe the training and experience that qualifies you for this office.

- Graduate of Paine College with B.A. Degree, 1975
- Graduate University of South Carolina School of Law, Juris Doctorate Degree, 1978
- Graduate of the Political Executives Program, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University.

What is the most important issue facing DeKalb County at this time? Please elaborate on how you plan to address it.

(1) DeKalb desperately needs an experienced, proven leader who will rebuild trust between the county government and the citizens and residents of DeKalb County; and

(2) We must have a government that is transparent, honest and provides high quality taxpayer financed services.

Where do you stand on structural reform of DeKalb government (e.g., elimination of the CEO form of government or other changes to the charter) and on a Charter Review Commission? What specific changes do you think should be made and why?

I support the compromise hammered out by the DeKalb delegation, which established a Charter Review Commission to examine the entire charter including the CEO position. Any recommendations regarding changes or amendments to the Charter should follow a thorough review.

Where do you stand on new annexation and cityhood initiatives involving unincorporated DeKalb County?

Each annexation and/or petition for cityhood should be evaluated on its individual merits.

Aside from the issues above, please list what you consider to be the most important challenges you see in DeKalb County and briefly describe what changes, if any, you would implement to address them.

The greatest challenge facing DeKalb county is the racial, geographic and economic divide that has hindered progress and economic growth. As CEO I would work to open up the lines of communication, build bridges of cooperation and help to develop a holistic vision that embraces the hopes, dreams and aspirations of all DeKalb county citizens and residents.

How will voters' best distinguish between you and your opponents?

My most distinctive attribute is a proven record of accomplishment leading large public agencies confronted by crisis, controversy and seemingly intractable problems.

Steve Bradshaw

Full Legal Name: Stephen Ray Bradshaw

Date of Birth: April 10, 1063

Years lived in DeKalb County: 23 years

Occupation & Employer:

Business Development Manager most recently with Delta Global Staffing (Delta Airlines)

Campaign Web Site: www.votestevenbradshaw.com

Campaign Office Telephone: 404-218-0575

Campaign Office Email: votestevenbradshaw@yahoo.com

What public offices have you served in previously, including dates:

I have not held elected political office before. I think this will enable me to bring a fresh and independent perspective to the position that is needed.

Describe the training and experience that qualifies you for this office.

I bring a diverse set of professional experiences that will help me serve the citizens of District 4. As a private sector Business Development Manager, Adjunct Professor of Public Policy and United States Army Captain I bring discipline and decision making based on solid reasoning and sound judgment.

What is the most important issue facing DeKalb County at this time? Elaborate on how you plan to address it?

DeKalb County's story has been tainted by examples of corruption and incompetence. This story will not change until there is a leadership change, particularly in District 4. Therefore, integrity and ethics are the most important issues facing DeKalb County. The constituents of our district deserve a leader who will respect them and fight for their best interest. I am that leader. By my actions in office I will model the appropriate behavior.

Where do you stand on structural reform of DeKalb government and on a Charter Review Commission? What specific changes do you think should be made and why?

Construct matters. Therefore, I am in favor of a Charter Review Commission to look at the issue of our form of government in a thoughtful and methodical way. I would defer to the work of such a commission rather than suggesting any specific changes at this time myself. However, it must be clearly stated that far more important than any particular organization's structure is the competence and character of the people in office.

Where do you stand on new annexation and cityhood initiatives involving unincorporated DeKalb County?

I would propose a moratorium on any new annexations or new cities for a period of two years. We need time to fully assess the fiscal impact of those actions that have already taken place. Additionally, we need time to determine if a new slate on county leaders can restore the public's trust and deliver county services in an efficient, professional and financially responsible manner.

DeKalb County and briefly describe what changes, if any, you would implement to address them.

We are on the verge of a crisis in our police and fire departments around the issues of retention and turnover. Therefore, I fully support all of the pay and benefit request they have been proposed by the Fraternal Order of Police and the International Association of Fire Fighters. Public safety is any government's primary responsibility. Those who protect us should feel that they are respected, appreciated and protected by county leaders. I will be one of those leaders.

How will voters' best distinguish between you and your opponents?

Responsiveness. If you call me I will return your call. If you send me an email I will respond. But, you do not have to take my word for it. Just talk with anyone who has tested me. This is what you can expect when I am your County Commissioner.

Lance Lawyer Hammonds

Full Legal Name: Lance Lawyer Hammonds

Date of Birth: 09/17/1954

Years lived in DeKalb County: 31

Occupation & Employer:

Chemical Sales - NorFalco LLC

Campaign Web Site: www.hammonds4dekalbcommissioner.com

Campaign Office Telephone: 678-802-9008

Campaign Office Email: lhammonds4commissioner@gmail.com

What public offices have you served in previously, including dates:

None - This is my first run for public office

Describe the training and experience that qualifies you for this office.

40 years of successful management experience with some of the largest fortune 500 corporations in the world. I have proven analytical, business development and interpersonal skills that has created positive change and growth in organizations. My spiritual gift is the ability to get diverse groups to work together.

What is the most important issue facing DeKalb County at this time? Elaborate on how you plan to address it?

I believe the most important issue facing DeKalb County is restoring the trust in county government. We do this by changing the culture of ethics by implementing policies that actually change habits. We do this with ethics training and working with the CEO to ensure ethics compliance is a priority to senior department administrators.

Where do you stand on structural reform of DeKalb government and on a Charter Review Commission? What specific changes do you think should be made and why?

I believe the Charter Review Commission is a good idea and will allow a detailed review of our county government. Ultimately how our government functions is more of an issue of the people we elect versus the actual structure. We start the process of electing better officials is by actively engaging residents in their government and developing a sense of ownership of their county government.

Where do you stand on new annexation and cityhood initiatives involving unincorporated DeKalb County?

I believe DeKalb residents have the right to vote to determine their form of government. The same as the residents of Dunwoody, Brookhaven and Tucker. As a Board of Commissioners we need to be prepared to provide the highest level of services to all the residents of DeKalb.

Aside from the issues above, please list what you consider to be the most important challenges you see in DeKalb County and briefly describe what changes, if any, you would implement to address them.

Economic Development that results in the restoration of Memorial Drive corridor and other commercial areas in the 4th District. We do this by seeking economic development that is a Win-Win for business and residents. The success of this effort can be measured by the in the number of jobs created, business that reflect the desire and needs of the residents and how effectively the county works with business owners works to locate in DeKalb.

How will voters' best distinguish between you and your opponents?

What distinguishes me from my opponents is the amount of hands on community service I have over the 31 years in DeKalb County. I served on the DeKalb School District Community Liaison to select the current superintendent, currently Chair of the DeKalb Public Safety and Judicial Facilities Authority, served two terms as 1st Vice President of the DeKalb NAACP, served as President of DeKalb Co. Alpha Phi Alpha, Fraternity Inc. I have experience serving DeKalb.

Kathie Gannon

Full Legal Name: Kathryn Gannon

Date of Birth: 2/25/49

Years lived in DeKalb County: 44 years

Occupation & Employer:

Social Work Program Development, Retired. Founder of GA CASA

What public offices have you served in previously, including dates:

I have served as DeKalb County Commissioner, Super District 6, since 2005. Previous appointed offices were on the DeKalb County Community Council (2 years) and DeKalb County Planning Commission (4 years).

Describe the training and experience that qualifies you for this office.

My record of 11 years representing you. We are a team with accomplishments in sustainability, economic development, senior services. I promote an open and inclusive decision-making process and a positive agenda where your voice is at the table to focus on essential services, neighborhood protection, jobs. Also my Social Work experience is about problem solving.

What is the most important issue facing DeKalb County at this time? Elaborate on how you plan to address it?

Eroded trust of its citizens coupled with lack of a unified vision to move all of DeKalb forward. The divisiveness created in this leadership vacuum impacts the County's ability to provide effective services; has fueled the movement for cities with the associated loss of revenue and negatively impacts our economic development efforts and job creation. I am already addressing a new governing blueprint that boosts accountability, transparency and responsiveness, in partnership with you.

Where do you stand on structural reform of DeKalb government and on a Charter Review Commission? What specific changes do you think should be made and why?

I believe a Charter Review Commission comprised of DeKalb citizens and supplemented with professional advice and facilitation is the correct next step to reform DeKalb County government. I have proposed an authorizing resolution to the BOC, given the lack of action by our legislature. It should be DeKalb citizens that review the current government structure, consider the positives, negatives and alternative forms and recommend changes that bring about a more efficient and effective government.

Where do you stand on new annexation and cityhood initiatives involving unincorporated DeKalb County?

Given the flawed procedure in our state and the problems in our County these initiatives are not going away. That said there are many citizens north, central and south that want to help fix DeKalb; to stop the divisive rhetoric that inflates separation and meet face-to-face to genuinely seek answers beyond the usual political back and forth. Citizens I have convened under the umbrella of Blueprint to Redefine DeKalb continue to prove this point.

Aside from the issues above, please list what you consider to be the most important challenges you see in DeKalb County and briefly describe what changes, if any, you would implement to address them.

Public safety, neighborhood protections, essential services delivered effectively and job creation. These are interconnected and require a joint vision between your government and you to make them a priority. We cannot continue to make decisions behind closed doors; reducing our budget to pet projects for those who vote a certain way; not enforcing our codes. Government is a partnership. Transparency and Accountability have to be at the heart of who you elect.

How will voters' best distinguish between you and your opponents?

I have a track record of over 11 years of service to you that is out there for all to see. Your vote is a choice and a choice is based on values. If you google my opponent you will see only negative news stories, revealing unexplained thousands of dollars of county funds – your money – funneled his way. My values are clear and are a cornerstone of my 11 years of service to you.

Harold Dennis

Full Legal Name: Harold Dennis

Date of Birth: May 21 1971

Years lived in DeKalb County: 44

Occupation & Employer:

Former DeKalb Sheriffs Reserve Lieutenant

Campaign Web Site: harolddennisforsheriff.com

Campaign Office Telephone: 404-590-6269

Campaign Office Email: hdennisforsheriff@gmail.com

What public offices have you served in previously, including dates:

None

Describe the pertinent education, training and experience that qualify you for this office.

Graduated from Clayton County police academy, DUI certified, radar operator certified, and a former reserve Lieutenant.

What is your opinion on efforts to close the gun show loophole, Internet gun sales, and campus carry / guns everywhere legislation?

I hold the constitution of the United States to my hart, that everyone has the right to bear arms. But my job as the sheriff is to uphold the law, and enforce the laws that are on the books, if the police needs firearms training so do the students they plan on carrying weapons on campus.

What is your opinion regarding DeKalb's adhering to or rejecting Federal detainer requests for undocumented individuals?

My opinion is whatever the laws regarding federal detainers, an undocumented individuals is what I will enforce.

Where do you stand on new annexation and cityhood initiatives involving unincorporated DeKalb County? What effect do you believe these movements have on public safety?

If the citizens in the DeKalb County feel that cityhood is best for them and they vote in, them I am happy for them. It has a big affect on DeKalb Police, because it shrinks your territory, but as for the sheriff we have state wide arrest powers.

Aside from the issues above, what do you consider to be the most important challenges for the DeKalb County Sheriff, and describe what changes, if any, you would implement to address them.

Pay raises for the deputies and retaining good staff. By taking \$100,000 pay cut to give the deputies a raise and working alongside the deputies to show great leadership, by working in the field, the courts, and in the jail intake area.

How will voters' best distinguish between you and your opponents?

By the person who has the heart and the compassion for the people.

Geraldine A Champion

Full Legal Name: Geraldine Champion
 Date of Birth: 6/24/1940
 Years lived in DeKalb County: 50 years
 Occupation & Employer:
 Retired - Law Enforcement

Campaign Web Site: www.championforsheriffdekalb.com
Campaign Office Telephone: 770 987-1006
Campaign Office Email: chamgeral@comcast.net

What public offices have you served in previously, including dates:

None

Describe the pertinent education, training and experience that qualify you for this office.

Associate/BA degree in Criminal Justice, & military intelligence training 17 years in U.S. Army Reserves, Chief Interrogator; 26 years in law enforcement - 10 years as a Detective.

What is your opinion on efforts to close the gun show loophole, Internet gun sales, and campus carry / guns everywhere legislation?{(

I support the Second Amendment; however dozens of Americans will be murdered, hundreds of others will be shot, and nearly 1,000 will be robbed or assaulted with a gun - today. I am in support of criminal background checks of anyone purchasing a gun. Against the sell of sawed-off shotguns, silencers, very high-caliber firearms, grenades, Military-style assault weapons, etc this will lead to fewer firearm deaths I do not support guns on campus, but a more secure police protection for our young people

What is your opinion regarding DeKalb's adhering to or rejecting Federal detainer requests for undocumented individuals?

Under the Tenth Amendment, immigration officials may not order state and local officials to imprison suspected aliens subject to removal at the request of the federal government. It can also be very costly to honor these request, if so, I will not honor this request. I will have a strong policy of notifying ICE when a foreign-born person is brought to the jail on a warrant or probable cause charge.

Where do you stand on new annexation and cityhood initiatives involving unincorporated DeKalb County? What effect do you believe these movements have on public safety?

The responsibilities of the Sheriff's Department is Countywide. I don't see any negative effect on these types of moves. That is why it is so very important that the police department sheriff's department work in a highly collaborative manner. Once cityhood is approved - will meet with officials and the community to ensure them of our continued services.

Aside from the issues above, what do you consider to be the most important challenges for the DeKalb County Sheriff, and describe what changes, if any, you would implement to address them.

I believe that as a new sheriff to this department building the trust of the employees and ensuring them that I will do everything to help them be the best that they can be and work towards improving their work environment of fairness and respect. - I will have an open-door policy, there will be transparency and all must understand the importance of integrity and accountability.

How will voters' best distinguish between you and your opponents?

- I will be completely transparent – taxpayers will know how their taxpayer dollars will be spent with an “annual” report that is made available to the public.
- I will work to improve the morale of all employees – give the employees raises.
- I will meet with the community on a regular basis to give them updates as to what is going on at this department and listen to their concerns.

Ted Golden

Full Legal Name: Theodore Roosevelt Golden III

Date of Birth: August 5, 1959

Years lived in DeKalb County: 25

Occupation & Employer:

Special Agent, U.S. Department of Justice, Drug Enforcement Administration (retired)

Campaign Web Site: www.tedgoldenforsheriff.com

Campaign Office Telephone: 770-559-0339

Campaign Office Email: ted4sheriff@gmail.com

What public offices have you served in previously, including dates:

None

Describe the pertinent education, training and experience that qualify you for this office.

I have BA and MA in Criminal Justice from the University of Memphis. I bring 34 years of law enforcement experience, which includes 28-years with DEA, 3 years as a Memphis Police Officer. I am proficient at conducting narcotics investigations, a skilled manager of people, resources, budgets, information systems, communications and media/public relations. I had the unique responsibility of developing and implementing these skills over the past 20 years while serving the entire Atlanta Field Division which is comprised of 21 cities in the states of GA, TN, NC and SC.

What is your opinion on efforts to close the gun show loophole, Internet gun sales, and campus carry / guns everywhere legislation?

I support sensible legislation that will place the same requirements on gun shows and internet sales of guns as is required for gun stores. I am not in favor of legislation that would allow college students to carry guns on campus. I support a citizen's right to bear arms, however, I do feel that there should be a mandatory training and gun safety training especially when the citizen has had no formal training.

What is your opinion regarding DeKalb's adhering to or rejecting Federal detainer requests for undocumented individuals?

I am in support of DeKalb County adhering to the Federal detainer requests for undocumented individuals. Having served as federal law enforcement agent for 28 years, I have encountered instances where undocumented individuals have been involved in criminal activity and granted bond despite having no legitimate employment or relationships with their community. It is imperative the law enforcement organization in this country cooperate fully with other federal, state and local agencies.

Where do you stand on new annexation and cityhood initiatives involving unincorporated DeKalb County? What effect do you believe these movements have on public safety?

Groups and organization that are seeking to annex or to create new cities in DeKalb County should be allowed to put their request forward to the voters where it is required. It is the decision of the new city whether or not create their own police department or continue to utilize the services of DeKalb County Police Department. The DeKalb County Sheriff Office still maintains law enforcement jurisdiction within the entire geographical area of DeKalb County and under my leadership as the Sheriff will develop collaborative efforts to support the other local agencies.

Aside from the issues above, what do you consider to be the most important challenges for the DeKalb County Sheriff, and describe what changes, if any, you would implement to address them.

The DeKalb County Sheriff's Office continues to endure many challenges that have tarnished its reputation and tainted its credibility. The primary tasks of the new Sheriff of DeKalb County will be rebuild the public trust, to implement new policies and procedures to raise the standards of employees and to the safety and security employees, inmates and citizens.

How will voters' best distinguish between you and your opponents?

I am the only candidate that has local and federal law enforcement experience. I have a BA and MA in Criminal Justice. In addition to serving this community as a law enforcement officer, I am a successful father and community volunteer and youth advocate. I retired in 2014 and have continued to engage activities in the community. I am actively involved with the DeKalb County Police Department South Precinct Community Outreach Committee and co-organizer of Conversations with Cops which fosters communications between police and high school students

Kyle Keith Jones

Full Legal Name: Kyle Jones

Date of Birth: 12

Years lived in DeKalb County: Over 20 years

Occupation & Employer:

Retired DeKalb Law Enforcement Officer, with the last position held as a Deputy Sheriff Lieutenant

Campaign Web Site: <http://www.votekylejones.com>

Campaign Office Telephone: 404.375.5394

Campaign Office Email: info@votekylejones.com

What public offices have you served in previously, including dates:

I have not held a public office position.

Describe the pertinent education, training and experience that qualify you for this office.

I served DeKalb County government for over 20 years in the following capacities: DeKalb County Police Department (DKPD) master officer and Special Investigator, DKPD Sergeant, Fraud and Financial Crimes Unit Commander, Internal Affairs Unit supervisor; DeKalb County Deputy Sheriff, Sergeant, Jail Lieutenant and Administrative Aide to the Sheriff. B.A. in Criminal Justice.

What is your opinion on efforts to close the gun show loophole, Internet gun sales, and campus carry / guns everywhere legislation?

I oppose the gun show/internet gun sales loophole. A background check must be required to purchase a firearm at any location. Felons, terrorist, mental patients, and all who are prohibited must be stopped. The identity of the purchaser must be confirmed.

I oppose HB859 that could allow a 21 year old to carry a concealed gun on campus. A college student lack the maturity level to make that split second decision to shoot.

What is your opinion regarding DeKalb's adhering to or rejecting Federal detainer requests for undocumented individuals?

A ICE detainer request is a violation of the 4th Amendment and DeKalb County will not hold individuals after they have been cleared for release. All subjects arrested shall hold the same right as every citizen in DeKalb. The detainer is considered an arrest without probable cause. We will not discourage immigrants to fear calling 911 because they fear a family member may be deported. HB87 states that no one shall be denied bond or release

Where do you stand on new annexation and cityhood initiatives involving unincorporated DeKalb County? What effect do you believe these movements have on public safety?

The affect the annexations will have on public safety, the cities would have created their own police departments to respond to their community law enforcement needs. As cities continue to annex and cdevelop Dek Pole Dept will continue to get smaller. Money is reduced from the DeKalb Police department and shrink which will decrease the services and increase the response time

Aside from the issues above, what do you consider to be the most important challenges for the DeKalb County Sheriff, and describe what changes, if any, you would implement to address them.

To offer proven leadership and experience and to deliver the creative solutions that residents demand and deserve. To help make DeKalb County great by preventing and reducing crime and achieve the best quality of life for all people by working to bring businesses that will provide challenging and well-paying jobs.

How will voters' best distinguish between you and your opponents?

I will work diligently to educate the community in the expectations they should have of the Sheriff's Office and the expectations the Sheriff Office has of the community. Community partnerships and engagement of the community in solving problems enhance law enforcement officials in fostering better economic development, better education in our schools, increased property values due to the decrease in crime in the area, more opportunities for jobs to come to the county, and an overall improvement in the quality of life.

Jeffrey L. Mann

Full Legal Name: Jeffrey L. Mann
 Date of Birth: 07/27
 Years lived in DeKalb County: 24
 Occupation & Employer: Sheriff of DeKalb County

Campaign Web Site: www.votejeffmann.com
 Campaign Office Telephone: (404) 246-3700
 Campaign Office Email: mann4sheriff@gmail.com

What public offices have you served in previously, including dates:

I currently serve as Sheriff of DeKalb County - March 2014 to present

Describe the pertinent education, training and experience that qualify you for this office.

As the current Sheriff we have made progress maintaining a Triple Crown Accreditation, working to reduce recidivism and making sure our office is run in a fiscally responsible manner. It is imperative that the citizens of DeKalb County continue to move our Sheriff's Office in the right direction. Education & Certifications: P.O.S.T certified in 2006; J.D., University of Michigan Law School; B.A., University of Illinois

What is your opinion on efforts to close the gun show loophole, Internet gun sales, and campus carry / guns everywhere legislation?

I support the efforts to close the gun show loophole and internet gun sales because as a law enforcement official it is critical that guns are only in the hands of people where a thorough background check is conducted. I am not in support of the campus carry legislation. I oppose allowing students, many of which are in the maturation process, to carry guns in an educational environment. Students should not have to be preoccupied with who is carrying a weapon in a learning environment.

What is your opinion regarding DeKalb's adhering to or rejecting Federal detainer requests for undocumented individuals?

I will not hold anyone beyond the time of an authorized release. The Department of Homeland Security amended its detainer policy in 2014 providing a request for notification process in lieu of the detainer process except in very limited circumstances where the charge is egregious. Whether it is a request for notification process or a request for detainer, federal courts have held it unconstitutional to detain someone absent a judicial warrant or other sufficient probable cause.

Where do you stand on new annexation and cityhood initiatives involving unincorporated DeKalb County? What effect do you believe these movements have on public safety?

Annexation and incorporation efforts have no effect on the Sheriff's Office responsibilities. The Sheriff's Office is constitutionally mandated to service the entire county and its citizens. Our responsibility remains constant to maintain the Jail, provide security for judges and courthouses, serve criminal warrants regardless of annexation and incorporation.

Aside from the issues above, what do you consider to be the most important challenges for the DeKalb County Sheriff, and describe what changes, if any, you would implement to address them.

Keeping communities safe is the number one challenge. I've demonstrated my commitment to making sure that our communities are safe no matter what zip code you live in. One of the things we have started is tracking gang activity through an intelligence database that is viewable by other law enforcement agencies. I work with community partners, like churches and non-profit organizations, providing education to the public. Finally, we work swiftly to bring law breakers and especially violent offenders to justice.

How will voters' best distinguish between you and your opponents?

EXPERIENCE. I directly managed the day-to-day operations of the Sheriff's Office, including its \$78 million annual budget and 860 budgeted staff. The Sheriff of DeKalb County is an executive level position and it is critical to have experienced and steady leadership in order to fully grasp and effectively manage the functions of the office. Here's some of our accomplishments, for more visit www.votejeffmann.com: Installed body cameras; Arrested 90% of murder suspects (2015); Apprehended 80% of other violent offenders (2015); Issued hundreds of citations for illegally passing school buses; Championed inmate GED program.

Michael Williams

Full Legal Name: Michael Williams
 Date of Birth: November 24, 1960
 Years lived in DeKalb County: 28 Years
 Occupation & Employer:

Investigator in the DeKalb County's District Attorney's Office
 Retired Atlanta Police Department Investigator

Campaign Web Site: www.Williams4Sheriff2016.com
 Campaign Office Telephone: 404-934-8249
 Campaign Office Email: michaelwilliams558@gmail.com

What public offices have you served in previously, including dates:

None

Describe the pertinent education, training and experience that qualify you for this office.

B.S. Degree in Criminal Justice Administration - University of Central Missouri 1983. Veteran of the United States Air Force. Twenty-eight (28) year Law Enforcement Veteran. I retired from the Atlanta Police Department after serving over 20 years. Currently serving as an Investigator for the DeKalb County District Attorney's Office.

What is your opinion on efforts to close the gun show loophole, Internet gun sales, and campus carry / guns everywhere legislation?

I firmly believe in our second amendment right to bear arms. However, I believe loopholes should be closed for the sale of guns at gun shows, gun sales over the internet, as well as personal gun sales. The criteria for gun sales should be the same. I also oppose the campus carry/guns everywhere legislation. As Sheriff, I will continue in the efforts to close these loopholes.

What is your opinion regarding DeKalb's adhering to or rejecting Federal detainer requests for undocumented individuals?

I believe the current DeKalb County Sheriff's Office Jail Policy is correct. To hold undocumented individuals longer based on detainers or Federal Request(s) can or may violate their constitutional rights. I believe their detention should be based on warrants or probable cause.

Where do you stand on new annexation and cityhood initiatives involving unincorporated DeKalb County? What effect do you believe these movements have on public safety?

Citizens of DeKalb County should have the right to vote on cityhood, and annexation should be viable and thoroughly vetted. One possible effect that can take place when new cities are formed is the loss of experienced sworn DeKalb County Officers. Experienced officers may seek employment elsewhere. The Sheriff's Office has to cover the entire county regardless of city. It is important that the Sheriff's Office become actively engaged in performing Law Enforcement duties.

Aside from the issues above, what do you consider to be the most important challenges for the DeKalb County Sheriff, and describe what changes, if any, you would implement to address them.

The most important challenges facing the DeKalb County Sheriff are employee retention, and inmate safety/conditions. As Sheriff, I will be a Leader that leads by example. I will fight for higher pay for all employees. I will increase training opportunities for all employees. I will create an office that will be a career and not a job. I will modify and eliminate any policy or program that brings a negative reflection to the Sheriff's Office.

How will voters' best distinguish between you and your opponents?

My vision is clear. I will be transparent in setting the conditions for a safe and secure community where every DeKalb County citizen can prosper. I am a crime fighter, a Public Servant that will serve DeKalb County with Integrity, Honesty, and Truthfulness. Together, WE can restore the pride and image of DeKalb County. As Sheriff, I will be actively involved in the community, and find alternatives to incarceration to keep the jail population manageable.

Irvin J. Johnson

Full Legal Name: Irvin J. Johnson
 Date of Birth: 2/15/51
 Years lived in DeKalb County: 20
 Occupation & Employer: Tax Commissioner

Campaign Web Site: www.irvinfordekalb.com
 Campaign Office Telephone: 404-382-8890
 Campaign Office Email: irvinj42@gmail.com

What public offices have you served in previously, including dates:

No previous public office held

Describe the pertinent education, training and experience that qualify you for this office:

M.A., Education, B.A., Liberal Arts

16th year of Tax Administration experience, training and knowledge in multiple department within tax office (motor vehicle tag/titling, property tax payment/collection, delinquent collection/tax sales, tax administration statutes, policy and procedures.

30 years-Management experience in small/medium power transformer & tire industries as a manufacturing, training, quality systems/processes, ISO 9000 certification process

Public service/customer service

Describe the duties and responsibilities of the office of Tax Commissioner. How does the job of Tax Commissioner impact the ordinary citizens of DeKalb County?

Faithfully discharge the duties of tax commissioner as receiver and distributor of tax revenues.

Prepare tax digest for preparation of tax bills to cover cost of operations for county, schools and other municipalities.

Receive, qualify and process property tax exemptions according to statutes.

Act as tag agent in the titling, registration of motor vehicle and collection of title ad valorem taxes.

Operate in an efficient and effective manner within the approved budget in an ethical and transparent fashion.

Provide the best public service possible given the resources and manpower available.

Where do you stand on structural reform of DeKalb government and on a Charter Review Commission?

What specific changes do you think should be made and why?

The tax commissioner has no legislative authority to affect the form of type of government the citizens may prefer. Personally, the character of an elected official is significantly more important than form of government.

Where do you stand on new annexation and cityhood initiatives involving unincorporated DeKalb County?

The duties of the tax commissioner are not altered by annexation or cityhood efforts. The geographical boundaries of DeKalb are not changed in anyway. Who ends up on the tax bills, mill rates, services are not statutory requirements for a tax office. Personally, citizens should be able to determine their form of government and annexation should follow current law.

What do you consider to be the most important challenges of the next Tax Commissioner, and what changes, if any, you would implement to address them?

Providing the best service in contentious political environment where tax assessment, and values are growing.

Operating effective/efficiently with limited resources and raising cost of supplies, materials and services

Maintaining/enhancing technological advances in a collaborative way with external resource restraints

Attracting and retaining staff in a competitive environment

How will voters best distinguish between you and your opponents?

My experience, skills and knowledge is more valuable and relevant.

My unique qualifications are applicable now and no "on the job" is required for continued success in the administration of Georgia tax laws.

I'm currently part of the team which has performed ethical, honestly and transparently the last 15 years under two previous tax commissioner

My predecessor has enthusiastically endorsed me to succeed her given my former position as Chief Deputy Tax Commissioner since 2007.

Susannah Scott

Full Legal Name: Susannah Elizabeth Scott

Date of Birth: 02/25/1972

Years lived in DeKalb County: 44

Occupation & Employer:

Attorney; Iron Mountain Intellectual Property Management, Inc.

Campaign Web Site: <http://www.scottfordekalb.com>

Campaign Office Telephone: (678) 871-7373

Campaign Office Email: Susannah@ScottForDeKalb.com

What public offices have you served in previously, including dates:

I have not held any previous public offices.

Describe the pertinent education, training and experience that qualify you for this office.

My law degrees and knowledge give me the ability to understand and adhere to regulations; experience in negotiations will help me lead with win-win endings in mind.

Experience as community leader has informed my skills in problem-solving, budgeting, mediation, continuous improvement, and leading teams to work for the best organizational outcomes.

Describe the duties and responsibilities of the office of Tax Commissioner. How does the job of Tax Commissioner impact the ordinary citizens of DeKalb County?

The Tax Commissioner creates an annual tax digest, collects property tax, & distributes revenues to the State, County, School system, & cities. As Georgia tag agent, the Commissioner collects vehicle taxes & maintains title & registration records. Home & vehicle owners have at least one contact with the Tax Commissioner each year, & should expect & receive effective, efficient, & friendly service.

Where do you stand on structural reform of DeKalb government and on a Charter Review Commission?

What specific changes do you think should be made and why?

As a constitutional officer, the office of Tax Commissioner is separate from County government. As a private citizen, I believe that the issue of structural reform should be studied carefully prior to making changes, in order to ensure that the consequences of such changes are seriously contemplated prior to going into effect.

Where do you stand on new annexation and cityhood initiatives involving unincorporated DeKalb County?

Annexation and cityhood initiatives affect the work of the Tax Commissioner, and may affect staffing requirements. As with structural reform, I personally believe that annexation and cityhood initiatives should be carefully contemplated by our leaders and citizens. We need to ascertain the motive for these initiatives and determine if the end result will actually improve our local communities.

What do you consider to be the most important challenges of the next Tax Commissioner, and what changes, if any, you would implement to address them?

The most important challenges for the next Tax Commissioner are improving accessibility for taxpayers; keeping current with constantly evolving technology, tax laws, and public needs; and motivating county employees to provide excellent service to DeKalb County citizens.

How will voters' best distinguish between you and your opponents?

Dedicated to public service, I am a creative problem-solver and innovator, skilled at working with others as a servant leader. As an elected official, I pledge to fulfill my role honestly and fairly, with the best interests of my constituents in mind. My priority as Tax Commissioner will be giving DeKalb County citizens the best service possible.

Roderick Bridges

Full Legal Name: Roderick Keith Bridges
 Name as it Appears on the Ballot: Roderick Bridges
 Date of Birth: April 6, 1967
 Years lived in DeKalb County: 18 years
 Occupation & Employer:
 Attorney/former DeKalb County Judge

Campaign Web Site: www.yourjudgebridges.com
 Campaign Office Telephone: 770-299-4950
 Campaign Office Email: bridges@yourjudgebridges.com

What public offices have you served in previously, including dates:

State Court Judge(by designation),	DeKalb County State Court	various dates
Associate Judge,	DeKalb County Recorder's Court	2010-2015
Pro-Hac Judge,	DeKalb County Recorder's Court	2002-2010

Describe the pertinent education, training and experience that qualify you for this office.

For over 13 years, I have served the citizens of DeKalb County as traffic/state court judge. In addition to my judicial experience, I have worked as a criminal/civil attorney for over 10 years, handling numerous cases in State, Superior and Federal Court.

Juris Doctorate from Saint Louis University School of Law.
 Masters of Public Health from Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, New Orleans.
 Bachelor of Science Degree in Chemistry from Xavier University of New Orleans.

What do you perceive to be the greatest obstacle to justice in our court system?

During my judicial career, I've seen a growing number of apathetic judges. These judges, preside over cases without any compassion or care for the individuals appearing before them. These judges are more politicians than judges, seeking favoritism with certain groups while marginalizing others. They fail to serve the community in a fair and impartial manner. They fail to deliver justice to all. This judicial apathy erodes public trust in the courts. This is the greatest obstacle to justice.

What do you believe to be the root causes for the high numbers of juvenile offenders? What changes can the court system make to reduce these numbers?

Education or lack thereof is the root cause. There is a pipeline from our educational system to the penal system. The lack of education has left many of our young people with opportunities, except a life of crime. As judge I created programs to ensure individuals had at least a GED or the basic skills to obtain a job. Programs like dress for success or resume writing classes are crucial to this effort. These programs are the same programs I instituted in 2004 with my non-profit organization, Positive Peering, that mentors youth.

What have been the most effective methods for improving court procedures and efficiency? What other methods would you suggest?

The utilization of technology has been the most effective method of improving court procedures. During my 13 years judicial career, I was instrumental in the development and implementation several of the Court's technology improvements. I had an integral role in the development and implementation of the Court's current Case Management system ("CMS"). The CMS reduces errors, increases efficiency, and creates a paperless, environmentally friendly system. This improvement reduces costs and saves taxpayers money while improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the court.

Aside from the issues above, what are the pressing issues facing the DeKalb State Court and how would you address them?

Alternative sentencing and mental health court are the rehabilitation components that are been missing from the State Court. Many of the issues that we see in court such as violence, substance abuse, and mental health issues, we also see in the community. Simply sentencing individuals without addressing the underlying issues perpetuates the problem. As your judge, I will create community-based programs that address the underlying issues and create productive citizens that can make a positive contribution to the community.

How will voters' best distinguish between you and your opponents?

Experience and commitment to improving the judicial system distinguish me from my opponent. As a judge for over 13 years, I created programs to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the court while ensuring everyone was treated with dignity and respect. These programs reduced recidivism, educated defendants and saved taxpayers millions of dollars. In addition, I created programs that bridge the gap between the community and the courthouse. As your next State Court judge, I will continue to ensure a fair and impartial court that citizens can trust.

Donna Coleman-Stribling

Full Legal Name: Donna Coleman-Stribling
 Date of Birth: February 12, 1974
 Years lived in DeKalb County: 36
 Occupation & Employer:

Campaign Web Site: www.DonnaforDeKalb.com
 Campaign Office Telephone: 678.827.3474
 Campaign Office Email: Donna@Donnafordekalb.com

Deputy Chief Assistant District Attorney, DeKalb County District Attorney's Office

What public offices have you served in previously, including dates:

I have never held an elected or appointed public office.

Describe the pertinent education, training and experience that qualify you for this office.

My extensive trial and management experience qualifies me for the position of Solicitor-General. Since graduating from Emory Law School in 1999, I have successfully prosecuted felony and misdemeanor crimes in both DeKalb and Fulton County. I presently serve as a supervisor in the DeKalb District Attorney's Office and I have previously developed my organizational, and administrative skills in a small firm overseeing budget and managing personnel.

As Solicitor General of DeKalb County, what you would do to address graft, corruption, and lack of transparency among higher-level county elected officials and departments?

As an elected official, I will first combat the lack of transparency and corruption issues by leading my office by example. I will serve the county with integrity, manage the office in a fiscally responsible manner and be responsive to the taxpayers concerns. I will be the leader that follows the laws I seek to enforce.

What role can the office of Solicitor General play in both crime prevention and victim assistance?

The Solicitor-General can play a substantial role in crime prevention and victim assistance. Since the crimes prosecuted by the Solicitor's Office are considered quality of life crimes, lower level offenses, the Solicitor has the first chance to correct behavior of first time offenders with alternative resolutions and programs developed to combat recidivism to hopefully prevent low level offenses from escalating. Additionally, the Solicitor can develop new programs to encourage non-profits and businesses to provide resources and assistance to domestic violence victims, elder abuse victims and parents charged with educational neglect.

What do you think is the most effective way to deal with individuals involved with the opiate epidemic?

I believe that many of the drug abuse crimes including opiate abuse can be handled with rehabilitative measures. The drug court established in DeKalb county has successfully matriculated drug users and provided resources for many of these individuals. I believe we should partner with all community stakeholders including the medical community to derive a method for attacking this problem.

Aside from the issues above, what are the pressing issues facing the Solicitor General's office and how would you address them?

There are a number of issues that I will address in the Solicitor's Office including the initiative to break the cycle of domestic violence, reduce educational neglect in our schools and increasing awareness through education of elder abuse in our community. Additionally, I want to work closely with the mental health court to see how we can best serve the population of defendants with mental health concerns.

How will voters' best distinguish between you and your opponents?(400 characters, approx. 75 words))

As a trial attorney for 16 years, I have considerable more experience trying complex cases and responding to the daily needs of attorneys and judges. As a prosecutor and supervisor I have a full understanding of where to dedicate resources, time and personnel because I do the work every day and I see the results of the policies put in place. I am not a policy maker, I'm an effective policy maker, who leads by action.

Nicole Marchand Golden

Full Legal Name: Nicole Marchand Golden

Date of Birth: November 11, 1978

Years lived in DeKalb County: 16 years

Occupation & Employer:

Chief Assistant District Attorney, DeKalb County District Attorney's Office

Campaign Web Site: NicoleforSolicitor.com

Campaign Office Telephone: 404-922-2897

Campaign Office Email: NicoleforSolicitor@gmail.com

What public offices have you served in previously, including dates:

Acting Solicitor-General, September-December 2010

Describe the pertinent education, training and experience that qualify you for this office.

Emory Law School, 2003

DeKalb Assistant Solicitor-General 2003-2004

DeKalb Assistant District Attorney 2005-2007

DeKalb Chief Assistant Solicitor-General 2007-2010

DeKalb Acting Solicitor-General Sep-Dec 2010

DeKalb Chief Assistant District Attorney - 2011-current

My experience both in the courtroom and leading an administrative office has prepared me to serve as DeKalb Solicitor-General my first day in office.

As Solicitor General of DeKalb County, what you would do to address graft, corruption, and lack of transparency among higher-level county elected officials and departments?

The Solicitor-General does not prosecute corruption cases. That is the role of the District Attorney's Office. Nevertheless, I would follow all laws and county policies with regards to the administration of my office and budget, and would be transparent and compliant with any open records requests served on my office.

What role can the office of Solicitor General play in both crime prevention and victim assistance?

To become effective in crime prevention the Solicitor-General should be an active partner in the community, including working with local churches, schools, civic organizations, and neighborhoods to discourage young people, our largest number of new offenders, from criminal behavior. Also, providing assistance and resources to victims of crime through victim-witness advocates is a top priority for me as well as partnering with the DeKalb Family Protection Center to provide one-stop services to all victims.

What do you think is the most effective way to deal with individuals involved with the opiate epidemic?

The DeKalb County Drug Court has been in existence for 20 years and is extremely successful in rehabilitating addicts and preventing recidivism. I am a proponent of accountability programs like this one that help people turn their lives around while preventing future crime and decreasing high incarceration rates. When prosecuting those who distribute opiates I think judges should have discretion in sentencing since mandatory minimum sentences have not been effective in preventing future crime.

Aside from the issues above, what are the pressing issues facing the Solicitor General's office and how would you address them?

I believe the Solicitor-General is responsible for aggressively prosecuting domestic violence and quality of life crimes. I also feel it is important to do everything possible to stop the progression from lower-level misdemeanor crime to felonies. I believe this can be accomplished through accountability and treatment courts that have been effective in rehabilitating drug and alcohol addicts, and have also been successful in reconditioning young, non-violent offenders to become productive, employed citizens, thereby, preventing recidivism.

How will voters best distinguish between you and your opponents?

Unlike my opponent I have experience working in a Solicitor's Office and have experience running a large prosecutor's office. As Chief Assistant Solicitor-General I was second-in-command managing a budget of over \$6 million dollars and 75 employees including 25 attorneys, and have also served as Acting Solicitor-General for several months. In these roles I have been instrumental in establishing office policy, making tough decisions on big cases, and working within the community to prevent crime.

Sherry Boston

Full Legal Name: Sherry Boston
 Date of Birth: September 24, 1974
 Years lived in DeKalb County: 12 years
 Occupation & Employer:
 DeKalb County Solicitor-General

Campaign Web Site: www.sherryboston.com
 Campaign Office Telephone: 678-856-1266
 Campaign Office Email: boston4da@gmail.com

What public offices have you served in previously, including dates:

I am currently the DeKalb County Solicitor-General and have served in that role since January 2011. Previously I served as Dunwoody Municipal Court Judge (2010-2011) Associate Magistrate Judge for DeKalb County (2010) and Judge Pro Hac Vice in DeKalb Records Court (2007-2010).

Describe the pertinent education, training and experience that qualify you for this office.

As a former judge, defense attorney and current Solicitor-General, I have worked in every facet of the criminal justice system for 17 years. I have handled thousands of criminal cases, from minor traffic to major felonies. I have created diversion programs to help youthful offenders all while prosecuting violent offenders.

As head prosecutor of DeKalb County, what you would do to address graft, corruption, and lack of transparency among higher-level county elected officials and departments?

Currently we have a DA whose integrity is questionable as evidenced by his county P-card abuse and admissions of violating state campaign finance laws. We must have a DA who leads by example and that is what I have done for the last 5 years as Solicitor-General operating at the highest level of integrity. Once we have a DA that the people can believe in, can we be effective in rooting out corruption and misconduct.

As District Attorney, how would you deal with a fatal use of force by the local law enforcement?

I believe that the changes suggested in HB 941 will resolve many of the inherent problems within the grand jury system for police officer involved shootings. It is important for the public to feel there is a transparent process in place to investigate these cases. HB 941 is the right temper for truth and justice seeking that I believe will enable both the public and law enforcement to feel that the process is fair and transparent.

What do you think is the most effective way to deal with individuals involved with the opiate epidemic?

Over the past two decades, as the prevalence of chronic pain and health care costs have exploded, an opioid epidemic with adverse consequences has escalated. As DA I will fight this epidemic on two fronts. First, we must continue to support drug accountability courts to help drug users become addition free. And finally it is necessary to remain tough on the prosecution of pill mills that illegally and irresponsibly contribute to the prescription drug problem.

Aside from the issues above, what are the pressing issues facing the District Attorney's office and how would you address it them?

My additional goals are to coordinate a fiscal & budget review and expand community prosecution. Five years ago, I inherited an Office that was in need of reform. I know firsthand what it takes to implement change. It is important in the first quarter, to not make sweeping change but first carefully evaluate the programs in place, create a strategic plan, collaborate with partners and personnel on tasks at hand and then formulate an implementation plan.

How will voters' best distinguish between you and your opponents?

The ethical issues that have plagued the incumbent make it impossible for him to lead this County in a new direction. Further, what makes me better suited for this position is my collaborative style of management and partnership. I believe involving stakeholders is the key to success of any project. I believe that my success the last 5 years as Solicitor is primarily predicated on this type of fiscal management and honest transparent leadership style.

Robert D James

Full Legal Name: Robert D. James, Jr
 Date of Birth: 06-10-1972
 Years lived in DeKalb County: GA
 Occupation & Employer:
 DeKalb County District Attorney

Campaign Web Site: www.VoteRobertJames.com
 Campaign Office Telephone: 678.395.5675
 Campaign Office Email: RobertJamesForDA@gmail.com

What public offices have you served in previously, including dates:

I have served DeKalb County as the Solicitor General from 2007 to 2010 and have continued to serve as the District Attorney since 2010.

Describe the pertinent education, training and experience that qualify you for this office.

I received my Juris Doctorate from Georgia State University. I was a special child abuse prosecutor and handled countless child murder, rape, and molestation cases. I have served as the former Solicitor General. I am the current District Attorney of Dekalb County.

As head prosecutor of DeKalb County, what you would do to address graft, corruption, and lack of transparency among higher-level county elected officials and departments?

As District Attorney, I created Dekalb's first public integrity unit which has resulted in the conviction of over 40 government officials and employees. I also initiated a grand jury review of Dekalb government which led to changes in the procurement code and ethics board.

As District Attorney, how would you deal with a fatal use of force by the local law enforcement?

I am the only prosecutor in Georgia since 2010 to have indicted a police officer for murder. I also started a citizen review panel through the Dekalb County grand jury, which reviews all officer involved shootings in Dekalb County and makes a public recommendation.

What do you think is the most effective way to deal with individuals involved with the opiate epidemic?

I don't believe you can treat a public health issue with a criminal justice solution. Our office is a partner in the Dekalb Drug Court program where individuals participate in appropriate treatment and therapy to address their drug addiction.

Aside from the issues above, what are the pressing issues facing the District Attorney's office and how would you address it them?

Human trafficking, gangs, and mass incarceration are issues plaguing Dekalb County. I created Dekalb's first human trafficking unit and convicted 41 traffickers. I have doubled the size of our gang unit and prosecuted more gang members than any District Attorney. I also created Jobs Not Jail and give youthful offenders jobs and education as an alternative to jail.

How will voters' best distinguish between you and your opponents?

Dekalb's murder rate is one of the worst in Georgia. I am the only candidate with any experience handling murder cases. Dekalb has a gang problem and I am the only candidate with experience handling gang cases. Dekalb has had public integrity issues, and I am the only candidate who has any experience handling public integrity cases.

Stephone Johnson

Full Legal Name: Stephone Johnson
 Date of Birth: 02/13/1975
 Years lived in DeKalb County: 12 years
 Occupation & Employer: Attorney - City of Atlanta

Campaign Web Site: www.stephonejohnsonforjudge.com
 Campaign Office Telephone: 678-895-7418
 Campaign Office Email: sjohn4015@yahoo.com

What public offices have you served in previously, including dates:

N/A

Describe the pertinent education, training and experience that qualify you for this office.

As a Senior Assistant Solicitor with the City of Atlanta Solicitor's Office I handled thousands of cases. I worked for the Fulton County Solicitor's Office where I prosecuted cases on the State Court level and opened a general practice firm that handled criminal, civil, and family law cases throughout Georgia. My experience has prepared me and it will enable me to not only make the tough decisions but to make the right decisions.

What do you perceive to be the greatest obstacle to justice in our court system?

The greatest obstacle to justice in our system is getting the decision right and eliminating outside interference. When it comes to the criminal justice system getting it wrong can have dire consequences for all involved. DeKalb County needs a judge who is firm but fair, patient and understanding and not afraid to make the tough and correct calls. The rulings I make will be justly warranted decisions ensuring the safety of all citizens.

What do you believe to be the root causes for the high numbers of juvenile offenders? What changes can the court system make to reduce these numbers?

The root causes of juvenile offenders center around the lack parental involvement and the lack of job opportunities that are available to them. The lack of opportunity can come from a parent abusing drugs which can jump start the child's life of crime. Courts can assist by taking a strong approach to drug courts and family law issues as a whole.

What have been the most effective methods for improving court procedures and efficiency? What other methods would you suggest?

Case management is a problem created by the Judge. The problem is simple to fix do the job that you were elected to do. Case backlog begins when the court continues to reset and push back cases in which a demand for a jury trial was made. Anyone elected to serve as a judge should embrace the idea of hearing cases and eliminating any and all case backlog. Once you reach the point of pushing cases off and creating a backlog of cases it's time to walk away and usher in a new generation of judges who are willing to get the job done.

Aside from the issues above, what are the pressing issues facing the DeKalb Superior Court? Please explain how to best address them?

DeKalb County needs a judge who shows the qualities of fairness, patience, open-mindedness, courtesy, firmness, understanding, compassion and humility. As an attorney, community volunteer, and parent, I have always worked to consistently put these qualities on display. I pledge to bring these same principles to the bench every day. Sometimes tough decisions need to be made to protect the citizens of DeKalb County and I'm here to usher in the needed change.

How will voters' best distinguish between you and your opponent?

My training and experience has prepared me and it will enable me to not only make the tough decisions but to make the right decisions. Time and time again my opponent has made the wrong decision ranging from giving low bonds to suspected murders only to have them commit murders or threaten to kill the witnesses or victim's family members while out on bond to letting convicted arm robbers turn themselves in a week after being convicted only to have them take 10 children hostage to giving child molesters probation and avoiding jury trials.

Clarence “Chuck” Seeliger

Full Legal Name: Clarence Fenton Seeliger
 Date of Birth: 11/23/1940
 Years lived in DeKalb County: 49 years
 Occupation & Employer:
 Superior Court Judge DeKalb County Government

Campaign Web Site: www.reelectseeligeragain.com
 Campaign Office Telephone: 404-373-8827
 Campaign Office Email: seeligeragain@yahoo.com

What public offices have you served in previously, including dates:

Judge, State Court of DeKalb County 1981-1984

Describe the pertinent education, training and experience that qualify you for this office.

As a DeKalb County judge for 35 years, I've gained a diverse knowledge of the law by presiding over criminal, civil, and domestic cases. Many of these cases involve important issues, such as, civil rights and domestic violence. This experience has trained me well.

Judge, Superior Court of DeKalb County, 1985- present;

Judge, State Court of DeKalb County, 1981-1984;

Private Practice, 1970-1979;

Emory University Law School, J.D. 1970

What do you perceive to be the greatest obstacle to justice in our court system?

Funding. Many people who appear before the court are indigent. Additional funding is needed in many cases – criminal and family law, especially when experts are needed for psychological testing, drug testing, and guardian ad litem appointments.

What do you believe to be the root causes for the high numbers of juvenile offenders? What changes can the court system make to reduce these numbers?

Juveniles are still developing mentally, physically, and emotionally. They are still forming their identities, and are easily influenced. Presently the juvenile court and the superior court offer counseling and deferred sentencing; however, early intervention programs supporting guidance and education for juveniles in needed communities to deter gang membership, drug dealing, and other crimes could potentially reduce the number of juvenile offenders.

What have been the most effective methods for improving court procedures and efficiency? What other methods would you suggest?

Courts, including DeKalb County, are presently moving forward with e-filing and new technological systems that will make it easier for the courts to manage caseloads and improve efficiency. Certainly, additional programs outside the court system to guide and help families before issues arise to a level that a court is needed would also lower caseloads and improve efficiency.

Aside from the issues above, what are the pressing issues facing the DeKalb Superior Court? Please explain how to best address them?

The most pressing issue is as I described above - indigence. We must continue our efforts to make sure that all parties are represented in our courts, and justice for all is achieved.

How will voters' best distinguish between you and your opponent?

The greatest difference is my 35 years of experience on the bench. In 1981, I led the way in integrating DeKalb Courts, and have been recognized many times for my constant efforts to reduce domestic violence. I've earned a reputation as tough, compassionate and fair – all across DeKalb County – precisely the type of Judge DeKalb County continues to need. Justice for all is not just a motto; it is my belief – a rule that should guide all judges in their duties.

Diane Daniels Adoma

Full Legal Name: Diane Daniels Adoma

Date of Birth: November 15

Years lived in DeKalb County: 8

Occupation & Employer:

Business owner - family owns all H&R Blocks in Rockdale County GA - Adoma & Assoc dba H&R Block

What public offices have you served in previously, including dates:

None

Describe the training and experience that qualifies you for this office.

My strengths and skills are negotiating and building bridges and coalitions working with both political parties to bring awareness to economic development, consumer behavior and organizational restructuring in partnership with chambers and nonprofit organizations. Recently wrote dissertation on the challenges of businesses in Georgia and is knowledgeable in leadership in energy and environmental design.

What is the most important issue facing DeKalb County at this time? Elaborate on how you plan to address it?

Economic development. Improving trust will encourage good governance and discourage corruption. Encouraging accountability and transparency and engaging the people is the role of a true public servant. Restoring trust helps our public safety workers and my interpersonal skills will be instrumental in negotiating and sitting down any person to discuss how we achieve a better reputation and will contribute to a good flow of capital from future stakeholders and future businesses to create quality jobs.

Where do you stand on structural reform of DeKalb government and on a Charter Review Commission? What specific changes do you think should be made and why?

Still investigating SB421. Canvassed some residents and it appears the district is split on this issue. I believe in democracy and if the people vote for the Charter we should respect their voice. This commission would repeal any conflicting existing laws. Today, we have three bodies of government and it aligns with the federal government.

Where do you stand on new annexation and cityhood initiatives involving unincorporated DeKalb County?

It is on the ballot as a referendum in November for the people to vote. Let the people decide. Good governance will listen to the people and continue to educate and inform about the pros and cons. This may be best done through a more robust outreach district wide campaign.

Aside from the issues above, please list what you consider to be the most important challenges you see in DeKalb County and briefly describe what changes, if any, you would implement to address them.

Enhancing Marta in DeKalb with more rail; light or heavy, increasing public safety and providing them with adequate state of art equipment, retaining businesses, protecting "Green Space", building external partnerships to assist the schools with mentoring and test preparation, zoning for housing for domestic violence victims and senior housing. This will be implemented by working with presenting the case to the existing board of commissioners for a vote.

How will voters' best distinguish between you and your opponents?

I am a candidate with community and business experience and is ready to go on first day of the job. I have a business module for a stronger economically sustainable DeKalb County and will seek support from other board members by focusing on similarities rather than differences. My diverse background spans from single parent, GED to PhD with a strong desire to serve my community. Without a vision the people perish. I have a vision for a better DeKalb.

George Chidi

Full Legal Name: George A. Chidi, Jr.
 Date of Birth: 03/31/1973
 Years lived in DeKalb County: 10
 Occupation & Employer:
 Social Impact Director, Atlanta Downtown Improvement District

What public offices have you served in previously, including dates:

Pine Lake City Council, Jan-Jun 2012, Jan 2014-April 2016

Describe the training and experience that qualifies you for this office.

I am the only candidate with municipal leadership experience; the policy making for police, planning and zoning, parks, stormwater, budgeting and other oversight asked of a county commissioner. I have covered county and municipal government regularly over a 20-year journalism career. I also hold an MBA from Georgia Tech.

What is the most important issue facing DeKalb County at this time? Elaborate on how you plan to address it?

DeKalb County government has an integrity problem. We've been mired in scandal for years. Businesses and residents vote with their feet, despite strong regional growth around metro Atlanta. Bad governance drives away good people. Solving this problem starts with leaders we can trust. Scrubbing DeKalb's books, followed by institutional reforms to permitting and contracting will heal our reputation.

Where do you stand on structural reform of DeKalb government and on a Charter Review Commission? What specific changes do you think should be made and why?

No form of government works well without good people leading it. But concentrated power in one role – the CEO – adds structural risk. I favor a change to a professional county manager system with a commission chairman elected county-wide, and I strongly favor a charter review commission – something that should be done in regular 10-year intervals during redistricting.

Where do you stand on new annexation and cityhood initiatives involving unincorporated DeKalb County?

Cities making small annexations as natural extensions of city services makes sense. Annexations leaving islands of unincorporated property should be discouraged.

Incorporation creates a political threat to be answered with great county services, open communication and honest government. But shared identity matters more in places like Tucker than any tax analysis or economic development issue.

Aside from the issues above, please list what you consider to be the most important challenges you see in DeKalb County and briefly describe what changes, if any, you would implement to address them.

South DeKalb never truly recovered from the recession. Most homes are still underwater on mortgages. Every one of those mortgages is a crisis. We can help by addressing our infrastructure issues, starting with proper oversight of a \$1.35 billion sewer overhaul and 400 miles of roads that need repaving, solving the riddle of astronomical – and erroneous – water bills, and streamlining permits.

How will voters' best distinguish between you and your opponents?

My strong public advocacy for reform separates me from other candidates. I am a recognizable and credible agent for accountability, widely known to the public as an anticorruption activist, and I have a track record of public service to back up my public commentary. Electing me would be the clearest, most visible signal to the public that change has come.

Faye Coffield

Full Legal Name: Faye Ann Coffield

Date of Birth: 29 April 1950

Years lived in DeKalb County: 36 continuous homeowner since 1997

Occupation & Employer:

Retired Police Atlanta PD Sergeant; Owner and Operation of Private Investigation agency.

What public offices have you served in previously, including dates:

None

Describe the training and experience that qualifies you for this office.

I have been actively and continuously involved in community, civil and human rights since 1968. I worked for Congresswoman McKinney and have worked for other elected officials. Recently, I was one of 100 people called to the White House to discuss means of implementing community relations and other programs relating to police community relations. I have worked locally, nationally and internationally. I have a proven commitment and verifiable record of results in community, civil and human rights - locally, nationally and internationally.

What is the most important issue facing DeKalb County at this time? Elaborate on how you plan to address it?

The serious perceptions by the public of corruption and lack of concern for the needs of DeKalb citizens, especially in the 7th District. There are also concerns about the lack of positive long term growth and development within the 7th District. I will address this by first asking for a complete audit of DeKalb funds. Secondly I will work locally, nationally and internationally to bring quality growth and development to the 7th District. I will also develop an Open Door process where no 7th District citizen will be more than 2 people from contacting me and that contact will be within 24 hours. I will also hold 2 monthly meetings, one at night, so citizens can express directly to me their concerns.

Where do you stand on structural reform of DeKalb government and on a Charter Review Commission? What specific changes do you think should be made and why?

There is no problem with the structure of government in DeKalb County. The problem lays within those who hold elected positions and/or high level appointed positions and fail to work for the best interest of the public. DeKalb Board of Commission meetings must return to night hours so the majority of the people can be heard. There must be a return by elected and public officials to working for the best interests of the citizen and not that of friends and the wealthy and powerful. Whenever possible the voices of the people must be the voice elected officials listen to and follow.

Where do you stand on new annexation and cityhood initiatives involving unincorporated DeKalb County?

In certain instances I am opposed to cityhood because I do not believe those areas have the long term capacity to provide the needed services to their communities. If a proposed city cannot provide its own police, fire and municipal court system, I am opposed to it. I also believe any area wishing to become a city should reimburse county tax payers for the infrastructure items they take such as fire stations, parks and the like.

Aside from the issues above, please list what you consider to be the most important challenges you see in DeKalb County and briefly describe what changes, if any, you would implement to address them.

The most challenging issues facing DeKalb County is creative thinking by its elected officials. We cannot continue to look to the same businesses and people for development. We must broaden our reach and look at development and growth nationally and internationally. This has worked very well for the City of Atlanta. We must do all we can to bring businesses that will create not just jobs but careers. Secondly, there is an issue of public safety. We must do all in our power to hire and maintain quality officers. No matter how great a police or fire department and its leadership are, they cannot effectively work with inadequate manpower and resources.

How will voters' best distinguish between you and your opponents?

I am about resolving issues not rehrtroric. I have been active in attempts to make DeKalb a better place for over 35 years. I am willing to put my record with regard to human, civil and community rights against anyone. I have gotten results and I will work hard for the District. I will be talking about issues and how to create positive change. I am willing to speak truth to power without hesitation. I have a verifiable record in DeKalb County, the nation and internationally.

Rita Robinzine

Full Legal Name: Reti Robinzine

Date of Birth: 07/08/1967

Years lived in DeKalb County: 38

Occupation & Employer:

Teacher/DeKalb County School District

What public offices have you served in previously, including dates:

I have not served, but have run for State School Superintendent and State Representative in the past.

Describe the training and experience that qualifies you for this office.

Problem solving, planning, impacting policy making, as well as serving on my Home Owner's Association Board are just some of what qualifies me for this office.

What is the most important issue facing DeKalb County at this time? Elaborate on how you plan to address it?

Although corruption and ethics violations are broadly discussed with DeKalb County government, but building consensus is most important because it forces the commission to vote for issues that are important to the county as a whole instead of the regions that they represent. This will help to restore trust to local government.

Where do you stand on structural reform of DeKalb government and on a Charter Review Commission? What specific changes do you think should be made and why?

Structural reform for DeKalb government should be left to the residents of DeKalb to decide. A Charter Review Commission that will study and get public input about different forms of government that may be more suitable than the current one is acceptable.

Where do you stand on new annexation and cityhood initiatives involving unincorporated DeKalb County?

Cityhood initiatives and new annexations cause a double layer of government and unnecessary increase in taxes.

Aside from the issues above, please list what you consider to be the most important challenges you see in DeKalb County and briefly describe what changes, if any, you would implement to address them.

Retaining and creating more businesses, keeping safety personnel, and restoring trust to government are the most important challenges. The commission could give incentives to attract and keep businesses, increase pay for firefighters and police officers, and create procedures that involve more oversight when handling county money.

How will voters' best distinguish between you and your opponents?

Living and working in DeKalb County distinguishes me from my other opponents. I have lived in DeKalb for 30 plus years, graduated from DeKalb County Schools and have been employed as a DeKalb County teacher for almost 27 years. I have witnessed and experienced changes in DeKalb and have a first-hand account of how to make it even better.

John E. Tolbert Jr.

Full Legal Name: John Edward Tolbert Jr.
 Date of Birth: 12-30-1969
 Years lived in DeKalb County: 15
 Occupation & Employer:
 Dealer Relationship Manager - General Motors

What public offices have you served in previously, including dates:

N/A

Describe the training and experience that qualifies you for this office.

A proven 25-year track record in Corporate America including majoring in Banking/Finance at Morehouse College and earning a Master of Business Administration .

What is the most important issue facing DeKalb County at this time? Elaborate on how you plan to address it?

The most important issue is the crime rate. Will analyze the hard crime data and statistics to identify opportunities to get additional funding and create plans which will attack the most volatile crimes committed.... focus target areas will get the most attention at 1st.

Where do you stand on structural reform of DeKalb government and on a Charter Review Commission? What specific changes do you think should be made and why?

Any reform that conforms to true Democratic governing whereby true representation is fair and equitable....I stand behind. Recently, Senate Bill 378 died in the General Assembly. The Charter Review Commission should work along side the Board of Education to develop plans jointly for change.

Where do you stand on new annexation and cityhood initiatives involving unincorporated DeKalb County?

Too broad of an issue....I'm open to discuss both the pro's and con's of annexation and how the Board of Commissioners could assist to solve complex issues with a purpose of keeping Dekalb County strong and financially relevant. Would have to know the impact of cityhood initiatives involving unincorporate Dekalb County.

Aside from the issues above, please list what you consider to be the most important challenges you see in DeKalb County and briefly describe what changes, if any, you would implement to address them.

Bringing new businesses and industries to Dekalb...especially South Dekalb to bolster job growth. This increases tax revenues to strengthen existing or newly created programs to assist the county.

How will voters' best distinguish between you and your opponents?

I will be distinguished by not being attached to any special interest or prior political connections and having a business background which will show a pattern of results through use of analytics and selling techniques. I have battled Dekalb County for change. Dekalb needs real and reliable representation.....new refreshing leadership.