

2010 RAVEN SOCIETY CANDIDATE POSITION SURVEY

Please feel free to attach as many pages as are necessary to include your complete answers.

1. Name: **Mike Walker**
Address: **244 Hesse Creek Rd.**
Walland, TN 37886

Email: **commissionerwalker@gmail.com**
2. Website:
3. For which office are you running?
County Commissioner, District 8 Seat B
4. What is your professional background and current occupation?
DENSO International America - NA HRIS - Oracle HRMS Specialist
5. Please list high school(s) attended and any higher education with degrees earned, if any.
Heritage High School - 1982 University of Phoenix - AAIT, Associate of Information Technology - 2008
6. List professional, governmental, community service or other relevant organizational affiliations you have maintained within the past 10 years. List approximate dates of service.
Blount County Commission, District 4 Seat A - 1990 - 1997 Tennessee State Legislature, Representative District 8 - 1998 Blount County Commission, District 8 Seat B - 2002 - Present (Currently running for re-election)
7. Please comment on how your own background and skills would assist you as an officeholder.
My experience gives me a understanding of the operations of Government and the need to generate consensus among others who are elected to the County Commission. It also gives me a unique understanding of the need for public participation in the governmental process. It has taught me to be respectful of others regardless of their opinion or believe and to not only listen, but hear what is being said. My Professional experience reminds me of the need for Government to operate within the established budget and also not to get caught up in idle discussion that would have no benefit to the citizens of Blount

County and of the 8th Commission District.

8. The Raven Society Mission Statement is at the top of this page. Do you support this mission? Why or why not? If elected, what will you do in support of this mission?

I will support the mission of protecting the rural, natural, and historic qualities as directed by the citizens I am elected to represent. In many cases the direction that is chosen or received can go contrary to a given district and it becomes necessary to make these known through the correct lines of communication.

9. What do you see as the three most critical issues facing Blount County? Being as specific as possible, please tell us how you will address each of these issues.

Budget/Funding - We must prioritize the needs of Blount County and restructure the county budget accordingly. This may result in ending certain services that are indentified by the citizens of Blount County as not being needed, or less important. This will not be an easy or quick task, but it is one we must perform. Planning - I feel there is a need to divide planning into 2 separate responsibilities. 1 to do planning, 1 to do enforcement. These 2 areas should cross very rarely. Enforcement in no way should ever make request to alter or change policy or procedures as it relates to the plan in place. Planning should focus on planning and this planning should be specific in nature to achieve the directives that are identified from the citizens of Blount County. Diversifying Industry - I feel we need to encourage the Industrial Development Board to develop a formula for the tax incentive programs that are in place and offered through the IDB to insure it begins to create a diversified base of business in Blount County. This will not be easy as historically we have focused on "bringing jobs" instead of developing a diversified business base that would give long term support to the tax base of Blount County.

10. Rapid development in Blount County has implications for the County budget, as well as for our air and water quality, scenic heritage and community character. If elected, what principles would guide your decisions regarding growth and development?

Currently on the County Commission we are not supposed to propose a expenditure without a revenue source. I would propose something similar to development for Blount County. When development is proposed have a funding method proposed for service expansions need

for the development. For too long we have used the saying "the tax base it brings will pay for the service expansions needed", this is not true. The tax base is directed at service support (maintenance and paying for other reoccurring expenses). When the tax base is expected to pay for new installation it places the funding in the red for ongoing maintenance and reoccurring expenses. The tax base is calculated to pay for maintenance and reoccurring expenses not new expansions.

11. Do you support the extension of the Pellissippi Parkway (PPE) from Old Knoxville Highway (SR 33) to US 321?

a.

b. Please explain *why* you support or oppose the extension, including any statistics or studies you may know of which support your opinion.

Until such time as a question is place before the County Commission and input is received directed at that question I could not answer. I will say this, just in general conversation with many from within the 8th district, people seem to be pretty evenly divided at a rate of approximately 52% for and 48% against.

12. If the PPE is eventually built, how will you address the development pressures this potential new road will bring, including impacts on Blount County's secondary roads, schools, public services, air and water quality?

The proposed routes for the PPE, should it be completed, has already been published to my understanding. Blount County Planning should be addressing these very questions today and have a plan in place before the PPE is started and especially before it is completed.

13. Which, if any, of the proposals presented by the Growth Management Advisory Committee (GMAC) would you recommend using to raise funds to purchase and preserve green space in the rural parts of the county?

Voluntary donations via a check box on property tax payments License plate purchases (it would take 1000, to be purchases in order to do this)

14. If elected, please describe how you would incorporate the Five Guiding Policies of the county's Policies Plan into your own decision-making process.

Review each recommendation of the planning commission to see how it aligns with the 5 Guiding Policies. Should it fall outside of the policies adopted by the planning commission vote "NO". Guiding Policy 1: The rural, small town and natural character of the county should be preserved. Guiding Policy 2: Land use and development should be

managed and regulated in order to preserve the quality of our growing county. Guiding Policy 3: The guiding policy in any government actions in relation to the use and development of land should be to limit regulations to specific public health, safety and welfare objectives balanced with responsible freedom in the use of land. Guiding Policy 4: County roads should be improved and maintained to a level consistent with present development and expected future development. Guiding Policy 5: Growth and development should be appropriately matched with provision of adequate infrastructure such as utilities, roads and schools.

15. What is your vision for Blount County in 20 years?