



New Hanover RLC Candidate Survey

-- County Board of Commissioners --

Economy and Taxes:

1. Do you support local individualized tax break or grants in order to incentivize specific companies to do business in New Hanover County? (Check all that apply)

☐ Tax breaks and grants

☒ Tax breaks only

☐ Grants only

☐ Other, Explain _____

2. Currently the county-wide sales tax rate is 2.25%. This is in addition to the state sales tax rate of 4.75%. Do you think this is the proper county-wide sales tax rate? (Check one)

☒ Yes, I would leave the county-wide sales tax rate unchanged

☐ No, I would increase the county-wide sales tax rate to _____

☐ No, I would decrease the county-wide sales tax rate to _____

☐ Other, Explain _____

3. The current county property tax rate is 47.5 cents per \$100 of property value. This is a 1.5 cent decrease over the 2020 county property tax rate. However, since assessed property values have risen dramatically over the last year, many property owners are now paying significantly more in property taxes. What would you do to the county property tax rate? (Check one)

☐ I would increase the property tax rate to _____

☐ I would decrease the property tax rate to _____

☐ I would leave the property tax rate unchanged

☒ Other, Explain SEE attached

4. The county has received the sum of \$ 1.2T from its sales of the New Hanover Regional Medical Center to Novant. How should those funds be used? (Check all that apply)

☐ Increase funding to public schools

- ☐ Send a tax refund or incentive check to the citizens of the county
- ☒ Build new roads, bridges, and other infrastructure
- ☒ Invest the funds and decrease county taxes
- ☐ Increase funding for public assistance programs
- ☐ Increase charitable grants to private non-profits in the county
- ☒ Increase funding for local business grants to spur economic growth
- ☐ Other, Explain _____

5. Sometimes bonds are necessary to back large county projects. What type of bonds do you espouse using? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ General Obligation Bonds
- ☐ Tax Increment Financing
- ☐ Certificates of Participation
- ☐ None
- ☒ Other, Explain *I will need to Research the types of bonds to provide a more definite answer.*

End of Section – If you wish to explain your positions for this section of the questionnaire in more detail, please attach additional page(s).

Personal Liberty:

6. What is your position on short term rental restrictions? (Check one)

- ☐ They make sense and are important in maintaining affordable housing in the area.
- ☒ They are an affront to personal property rights and should be banned within the county.
- ☐ The County should have no short-term rental restrictions, but municipalities should be allowed to implement them.
- ☐ Restrictions on corporate properties are ok, but not on personally owned property.
- ☐ Other, Explain _____

7. Currently the County bans the use of tobacco and vaping products on any county property, inside and outside. What is your position on the ban? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Chewing tobacco and vaping should be unrestricted
- ☐ Smoking should only be banned inside
- ☒ Inside restrictions are fine, but outside restrictions are unnecessary
- ☐ All the restrictions serve the public health and should be kept as is

☐ Other, Explain _____

8. The County, along with the New Hanover County Dept of Health and Human Services, have placed a number of restrictions on the liberty of the individual and business owners during the COVID crisis. Which type of restrictions do you support if the situation is dire enough? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Mask mandates
- ☐ Vaccination mandates
- ☐ Closing of certain businesses
- ☐ Occupancy limits (not related to fire risk)
- ☐ Travel restrictions
- ☐ Mandatory quarantine
- ☒ None

☐ Other, Explain _____

9. What do you believe the County's role should be in defending its citizens right to keep and bear arms? (Check all that apply)

- ☒ The County should make sensible gun ordinances to protect the community
- ☐ The County should help to enforce ALL federal and state gun laws and regulations to the best of its ability, but not make any local gun ordinances.
- ☐ The County should declare itself a "Sanctuary County" when it comes to the 2nd Amendment.
- ☐ The County should instruct the Sheriff's Office, and municipal law enforcement units, not to cooperate with state and federal law enforcement in enforcing onerous gun laws
- ☐ The County should instruct the Sheriff's Office, and municipal law enforcement units, to actively protect its citizens from state and federal law enforcement when enforcing onerous gun laws

☐ None

☒ Other, Explain SEE ATTACHED

10. Civil asset forfeiture is the process where law enforcement seizes the assets of suspected criminals. North Carolina state law prohibits state and local government from permanently keeping these assets unless the suspected criminal is actually convicted in a court of criminal law. However, law enforcement agencies within New Hanover County participate in the Equitable Sharing Program with US Department of Justice. As a result, local law enforcement will request that the federal government seize these assets permanently from a suspected criminal, and then the local law enforcement

agency receives up to 80% of the asset's value in return. Participation in this program has resulted in many individuals losing substantial amounts of money, and other valuable assets, without ever being convicted of (or sometimes ever being charged with) a crime. Should New Hanover County pass a local ordinance barring local law enforcement participation in the federal Equitable Sharing Program? (Check one)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Yes, but only for the Sheriff's Office, and not for municipal law enforcement
- ☐ No
- ☒ Other, Explain SEE Attached

11. What is your position regarding the use of body cameras by local law enforcement agencies? (Check all that apply)

- ☒ These need to be required, and funds allotted so that every officer can wear one at all times
- ☐ All body camera footage needs to be released to the public ASAP
- ☐ Body cameras are unnecessary and place an undue burden on our law enforcement officers
- ☐ Other, Explain _____

End of Section – If you wish to explain your positions for this section of the questionnaire in more detail, please attach additional page(s).

Development & Infrastructure:

12. Currently there is a significant shortage of affordable housing within New Hanover County. What measures (if any) would you take to address this? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Reduce property taxes on homes and apartment complexes
- ☐ Subsidize more low-income housing projects
- ☐ Reduce zoning restrictions so that more housing can be built
- ☐ Nothing, we already have too many people living in this county
- ☒ Other, Explain SEE Attached

13. With the drastic and continuing population increase in New Hanover County, many feel that the infrastructure within the county is dragging far behind. What measures (if any) would you take to address this? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Invest in new roads and bridges in order to deal with increased traffic congestion.

- ☐ Place a moratorium on new commercial development until infrastructure has caught up.
- ☒ Place a moratorium on new residential development until infrastructure has caught up.
- ☒ Place a moratorium on apartment complexes, and limit continued residential development to single-family homes until infrastructure has caught up.
- ☐ Invest in publicly funded high speed broadband to support the increased population and their technology needs.
- ☐ Invest in and incentivize use of, public transportation
- ☐ Nothing
- ☐ Other, Explain _____

14. The large increase in development within the county has left very little green space and may have environmental consequences. What (if anything) should be done? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ The County should buy out the remaining green space and create public parks and conservation areas.
- ☐ The County should create more stringent building codes to protect the county from environmental damage
- ☐ The County should incentivize development projects that protect at least part of the remaining green spaces.
- ☐ Nothing, let the free market reign.
- ☒ Other, Explain See Attached

End of Section – If you wish to explain your positions for this section of the questionnaire in more detail, please attach additional page(s).

15. Please list your top 3 priorities that you will work on, if elected. Attach additional page(s) if necessary.

1. SEE Attached
2. _____
3. _____

END OF SURVEY

Board of Commissioners survey addendum

3. This is a difficult question to answer off the cuff. While it looks on paper that there was a decrease, with property values skyrocketing in our area it is actually costing our citizens more money, plus during my research on this topic, I see that since 2016 we are also paying a "Debt. Service" tax. I would need to learn more about that to see what actual debt the citizens are covering in addition to property taxes. I am in favor of lowering property taxes especially considering the growth of our tax base due to the rampant and unchecked development in our area but I would need more time to research the increase in our tax base and our county's total operating and projected operating costs to make an informed decision on where the property tax rate should be.

7. I support the ban on smoking and vaping inside of county properties mostly because the by-products, smoke and exhaled vape are offensive to most people in confined areas such as buildings. Unfortunately, some people do not have the forethought about this and have "lit up" offending others around them by polluting the immediate environment which is what caused most of these bans to begin with. Outside I have no issue and believe there should be designated smoking/vaping areas, or it should be allowed but restricted within so many feet of an entrance or exit so that smokers/vapers are not congregated around entrances and exits.

9. This is another not so cut and dry answer. I am a student and teacher of the Constitution and a firm and solid believer in our 2nd Amendment. I believe whole heartedly in our right to keep and bear arms, I am a hunter, sportsman, and avid shooter. The county's role in should be to adhere to the constitution and not infringe on the right to keep and bear arms. There should be no limitations made on what type or how many arms a law-abiding citizen may possess. That said, given the potential for injury or death given the misuse or negligence of a firearm owner, especially given our ever growing population, I do believe that certain ordinances may be required on the proximity of use to areas with large numbers of people, i.e. neighborhoods, schools, parks etc.

10. I don't know that passing a local ordinance is actually a viable idea. First it could only possibly apply to the NHC Sheriffs Dept. and I say possibly because the Sheriff is an independently elected official and is has a great degree of latitude in what his department does. Second, I don't think the county would have the authority to tell the other local law enforcement agencies (WPD/WBPD/CBPD/KBPD) what programs they can or cannot participate in. I understand the need to possibly temporarily seize assets to limit flight risk and for other law enforcement/ prosecutorial needs but I think at best the county could only petition these local agencies to only request seizure by the US Dept. of Justice in the event of an actual conviction. More research on the legalities or precedent of a county being able to do so would be needed.

12. Affordable is a relative term depending on who you are. Reducing property taxes on homes is always good but not everyone owns a home. Reducing property taxes on rentals or apartments is almost never passed on to the renter so I don't see that as a viable answer. Low income housing projects bring with them their own issues and subsidizing them will only add to the problem. There are a host of zoning restrictions I would like to see reduced but we are already being over built so adding more houses is again adding to other issues. I think restrictions on anymore "high" priced apartments or condos and high end neighborhoods would be a good place to start to bring our area back in balance and let our infrastructure catch up. How much do you get involved in individual property owners rights to do what they want with their property? Do you get involved with limiting free market? Do you increase low income issues by adding more low-income housing projects? Do you zone certain areas for specific cost ranges for housing possibly affecting sale values of properties? We live in one of the most desirable areas in the country, we have two of the fastest growing colleges in the country here in Wilmington, unfortunately we also live in the second smallest county in the state land wise and there is only so much room here so there is really no slam dunk, single fix answer here for this question. I think slowing the further construction of the high-end housing is a start. Bringing in better paying, non-service industry jobs would help, upping pay scales or somehow lowering our overall cost of living, and fixing our broken education system so that when our young adults graduate they have skills to obtain better than low paying service industry work are all parts to solving the overall issue. Again, there is no silver bullet to this one.

14. Again this is another not so simple question. We don't want more taxes but for the county to purchase all of the remaining green space the money will have to come from some where and that where is the taxpayers. We already have extremely stringent building codes requiring very specific amounts of vegetation and run off protection. To the point of rendering some properties useless, zoning ordinances would do more for this than building codes to protect the environment. I'm not a big fan of incentives, we have seen that backfire many times already. What I think would have the most impact is limiting the density of development and complete clear cutting of huge tracts of land. All you have to do is look at the Riverlights development to understand where I'm coming from. It should never have been allowed to be clear cut like it was or to have the sheer density of homes built there. Not to mention the Condos that were never supposed to be built there. Stopping this type of development will go a long way to protecting our green space.

Three Top Priorities:

- 1) I will work to protect small business and attract good jobs for our citizens ensuring that the backbone of our area, local small business never again see the crippling government overreach into their livelihoods.
- 2) I hope to foster unity and cooperation among our local boards with the goal of actually serving our community instead of serving personal agendas and pet projects.
- 3) I will work to get our house back in order and back in balance by making sure our local government is acting as it should as an employer and constitutional body while seeing that our growth and development are in balance with our infrastructure, our area, and our way of life.