



## **Bucks County Candidate Interview Det Ansinn**

- 1) Why are you running as a candidate for the Board of Commissioners?

Local government is so important because of the impact that it can have at the end of your driveway. I want to make sure that there is a rational size and approach in the way that local government behaves. Many people are not aware of the impact that the county can have. The decisions that the commissioners make can have a direct economic impact on our community.

- 2) What are the most pressing issues facing the county and what are your plans to address them?

Part of the problem that exists in county government is deficit spending. We have liquidated a good portion of the county's assets. The trajectory of spending is something that we need to seriously examine. Deficit spending could put our AAA bond rating in jeopardy.

- 3) In terms of the 2012 county budget, how should the Board of Commissioners address the issue of falling revenue and increased demand for services caused by the slow economy?

In Doylestown, we took steps to reduce spending to prevent a fiscal crisis. When we saw a decline in revenue, we saw a decline in real estate transfer tax revenue. The county needs to get their spending under control. 60% of spending goes to human services. When people need help, we need to get that help to them. If you look at last year's budget, some departments got 11% and 13% increases in their budgets. In the Borough we made some hard decisions. We got our spending to its lowest in 20 years. We need long-term strategic reform in the way the County does business.

- 4) Would you support property tax reform in Pennsylvania that gives greater authority to the commonwealth to mandate more regular county-wide tax assessments?

That's been a huge issue in Bucks. There has been a lot of new development in this county. The counties' assessments still conform to the law. As such, we are not in a position where we are required by law to do a reassessment.



- 5) What is your position on school districts appealing the assessed value of recently purchased residential real estate in Bucks County?

The Central Bucks School District is pursuing an assessment appeal process that is effectively a rolling reassessment. They are pursuing this despite the fact that rolling reassessments are not permitted under the Pennsylvania Constitution. While the district has yet to be successful with their appeals, the process itself can be disruptive and damaging to the real estate markets in the affected communities. My own community, Doylestown Borough, has been specifically targeted by the district in their attempts to raise revenue.

- 6) Suburban Philadelphia is currently one of the fastest growing regions in Pennsylvania. How do you plan to manage projected population growth and shifts at the county level? How does housing fit into this plan?

Bucks County is the only Philadelphia suburban county that loses people to work in other counties. 50,000 more people leave Bucks County than come here to work. From a revenue perspective, we need to look at attracting business. Do we have a self sustaining economy? When you look at the issues, traffic on the roadways and such, it's because people are going elsewhere to work.

There's more to bringing in business than saying we have low taxes. You have to actively recruit those businesses. We need to have more coordination in the county to accomplish this. We have not done anything to regulate or streamline that process. Having an economic development partner would help us do business. Government has to have that level of engagement.

- 7) REALTORS® are very knowledgeable about their communities and the housing market. As a County Commissioner, how would you utilize this expertise? Would you consider appointing individuals recommended by our organization to real estate related boards and commissions at the county level?

We do this in Doylestown. We like to ensure that we have a representative from the local realtor community on zoning boards and the historical revenue board. They have extensive knowledge of the community. At the County, these positions are not very well promoted. The County needs to do a better job of getting the word out. We need to leverage the expertise that we have in the county. It's about having someone at the table that brings value.

- 8) Have you been endorsed by any political party or organization?

- Bucks Co. Dem. Comm.
- Equality PA – In Doylestown we recently passed an antidiscrimination ordinance



9) Why should a REALTOR® vote for you?

I have a background in government and business. I think it is important to have people in office who have that entrepreneurial experience. Having family involved in construction and realty, I understand the stresses a Realtor faces. Those experiences are important in being able to work the Realtors' community. We have put together ordinances in Doylestown that allows for an incentive-based approach for renewable energy. Good government should provide incentives, not simply try to control behavior with penalties.

*NOTE: Candidates may provide written responses to these questions in lieu of, or to supplement answers given in, an interview. Candidates are also invited to submit a biography and photo.*

*Unless the candidate specifically denies permission, the SRA reserves the right to use candidate's responses to the above questions, and photos, for the purpose of educating its members about the candidate's positions.*

Questions should be directed to Jamie Ridge at 610/981-9000 or at [jsridge@suburbanrealtorsalliance.com](mailto:jsridge@suburbanrealtorsalliance.com).