



CANDIDATES FOR ST. MARY PARISH COUNCIL



**ST. MARY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE'S GOAL IS TO
INFORM ★ EDUCATE ★ EMPOWER
VOTERS GOING INTO THE ELECTION SEASON**

WITHIN THIS DOCUMENT, YOU WILL FIND INFORMATION AND RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS THAT YOU, THE PUBLIC, ASKED TO THE CANDIDATES CURRENTLY RUNNING FOR ST. MARY PARISH COUNCIL. THESE RESPONSES WERE COPIED EXACTLY AS SUBMITTED AND HAVE NOT BEEN ALTERED IN ANY FORM.

OUR OFFICE STANDS FIRM AS AN APOLITICAL ENTITY, ALLOWING EACH CANDIDATE THE SAME OPPORTUNITY AND PLATFORM TO SHARE INFORMATION WITH THE PUBLIC

St. Mary

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



IMPORTANT ELECTION INFORMATION

PRIMARY ELECTION - OCTOBER 14, 2023

GENERAL ELECTION - NOVEMBER 18, 2023

**IN PERSON/BY MAIL REGISTRATION
DEADLINE SEPTEMBER 13, 2023**

**GEAUX VOTE ONLINE REGISTRATION
DEADLINE
SEPTEMBER 23, 2023**

**DEADLINE TO REQUEST MAIL BALLOT FROM
REGISTRAR - OCTOBER 10, 2023**

**DEADLINE FOR MAIL BALLOT TO BE
RECEIVED BY REGISTRAR - OCTOBER 13,
2023**

EARLY VOTING

PRIMARY: SEPTEMBER 30, 2023 - OCTOBER 7, 2023

GENERAL: NOVEMBER 3, 2023 - NOVEMBER 11, 2023



**YOUR VOTE
YOUR VOICE**

St. Mary Parish Council Districts

Legend

- Precincts
- Council Districts

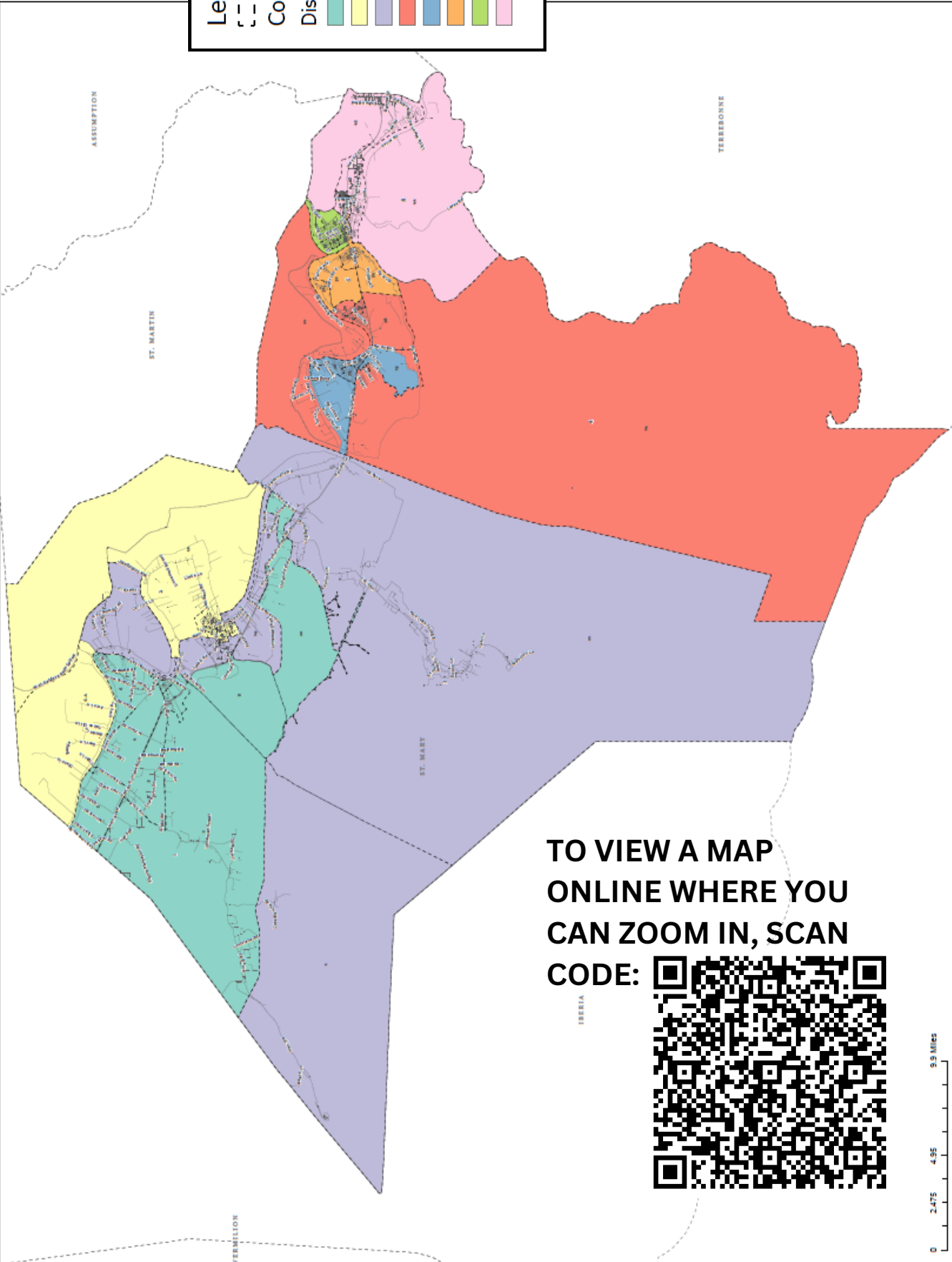
District

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

ASSUMPTION
ST. MARTIN
ST. MARY
FERMILION
IBERIA
TERREBOUNE



LOUISIANA



**TO VIEW A MAP
ONLINE WHERE YOU
CAN ZOOM IN, SCAN
CODE:**



ST. MARY PARISH



WITHIN THIS DOCUMENT, YOU WILL FIND INFORMATION AND RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS THAT YOU, THE PUBLIC, ASKED TO THE CANDIDATES CURRENTLY RUNNING FOR ST. MARY PARISH COUNCIL.

THESE RESPONSES WERE COPIED EXACTLY AS SUBMITTED AND HAVE NOT BEEN ALTERED IN ANY FORM BY OUR OFFICE.

OUR OFFICE STANDS FIRM AS AN APOLITICAL ENTITY, ALLOWING EACH CANDIDATE THE SAME OPPORTUNITY AND PLATFORM TO SHARE INFORMATION WITH THE PUBLIC.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CANDIDATES BY DISTRICT

DISTRICT 1	PAGES 1 - 8
DISTRICT 3	PAGES 9 - 15
DISTRICT 4	PAGES 16 - 27
DISTRICT 5	PAGES 28 - 34
DISTRICT 6	PAGES 35 - 36
DISTRICT 7	PAGES 37 - 44
DISTRICT 8	PAGES 45 - 56
DISTRICT 10 AT LARGE	PAGES 57 - 67

CANDIDATES BY NAME

HERBERT "H.B." BELL	PAGES 1 - 2
CRAIG A. MATTHEWS	PAGES 3 - 8
RODNEY OLANDER	PAGES 9 - 12
PETER SOPRANO	PAGES 13 - 15
MYRON BOURQUE	PAGES 16 - 19
JAVON CHARLES	PAGES 20 - 24
DAVID HILL	PAGES 25 - 27
LESLIE "LES" RULF	PAGES 28 - 31
DOUGLAS STREETY, JR.	PAGES 32 - 34
PATRICK HEBERT	PAGES 35 - 36
JAMES "HAMMER" BENNETT, JR.	PAGES 37 - 41
JAMES "JIMMY" DAVIS, JR.	PAGES 42 - 44
ERIQ BLANCHARD	PAGES 45 - 49
MARK DUHON	PAGES 50 - 52
CARLO GAGLIANO, JR.	PAGES 53 - 56
ANGELENA BROCATO	PAGES 57 - 60
GWENDOLYN "GWEN" HIDALGO	PAGES 61 - 64
REGINALD WEARY	PAGES 65 - 67

AT LARGE DISTRICT 10 - COVERING THE ENTIRE PARISH - HIGHLIGHTED IN RED.



HERBERT "H.B." BELL

CANDIDATE IN DISTRICT 1

PARTY: DEMOCRAT

RACE: BLACK

GENDER: MALE

337-578-2504

HERBERTJBELL@ICLOUD.COM

What is your reasoning behind wanting to serve on the St. Mary Parish Council?
I would like to serve not just District 1 but all of St. Mary Parish as a whole to give the citizens good solid government and have town hall meetings to hear their complaints and concerns to see how we can solve them.

If elected, what is your plan to work with the Parish Government and the Municipality(s) of our district to bring new businesses to our Parish?
First, I would like to use social media and advertise what type of business we need locally and give incentives to attract new business.

What do you see as the biggest challenge for our Parish and how do you propose to tackle that challenge?
The biggest challenge for our parish is economic development and tourist attraction to generate tax dollars to local businesses.

Do you believe lawsuits against the energy industry would harm St. Mary Parish's economy, why or why not, and would you work to prevent these lawsuits?
Yes, it will hurt the economy very much, I will do everything in my power to voice my opinion against lawsuits that would hurt the economy.

There are still a lot of drainage and roadway issues that exist around St. Mary Parish. How do you propose Parish Government aid in improving those issues?
First of all, I would consult a grant writer to find out what monies are available for drainage and roadway issues then put a plan into action.

How could the Parish Council support more things to do for children in our area?
The Parish Council should implement a program in all the facilities in the Parish for children to go and learn the necessary skills needed to prepare them for good jobs to help them raise their families and stay in the Parish where they were reared and not have to relocate to other areas away from home.

HERBERT “H.B.” BELL

CONTINUED

What are your plans to support the local businesses already in existence in our Parish?

Contact all business owners and find out what it will take to keep them afloat and operate their business to keep good employees and keep the tax dollars flowing with a solid relationship with all of their customers.

In your opinion, what are the two most important qualities that candidates for Parish Council should possess?

First a good leadership experience and complete knowledge of everyday activities in the Parish as a whole.

What would be the most immediate change that you would push for in our Parish?

A good economic development for all areas of St. Mary Parish from East to West overall.

In the event of the return of lockdowns, what is your stance on the lockdowns when it causes local businesses and our children to suffer?

First of all a lockdown is a serious precaution and I wouldn't want no child nor business to suffer but if the authorities mandate it we have to follow the rules and I will help in anyway that I can.

“THE TIME IS NOW FOR ALL THE PEOPLE.”



CRAIG A. MATTHEWS

CANDIDATE FOR DISTRICT 1

337-519-2851

PARTY: DEMOCRAT

GRANTSBYNATTHEWS@AOL.COM

RACE: BLACK

GENDER: MALE

I'm Craig Alonzo Mathews #89 on your ballot, and a current resident of Sorrel. However, I was raised in Four Corners. My collegiate undergraduate studies were completed at Grambling State University where I obtained my Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Marketing (Spring 994). After college, I relocated home in pursuit of a long-term career in nonprofit community development and the empowerment of all people in St. Mary Parish.

For the past five years I have served as Chief Executive Officer with St. Martin Iberia Lafayette Community Action Agency (SMILE). I am also one of the founding partners of PediaKare De' Louisiana, LLC (Lafayette), a Pediatric Medical Daycare Center, as well as several other private business interests. I am married to the former Christine Charles and together we have three children, 34, 28, and 21. My leadership experience also includes Senior Pastor at Hubbard United Church of Christ in Gueydan for the past combined 9 years. Prior to this appointment I served as a Youth Pastor for a combined 16 years at St. Moses Baptist Church in Sorrell, Faith Hope Christian Fellowship of Abbeville, and Zion Hill Christian Fellowship of New Iberia.

My professional track record is evidence that I've chosen a life and career dedicated to leadership in public service across all aspects. My career began as the first and founding Housing Development Director of Southern Mutual Help Association's Housing Development Corporation. Through my personal passion in healthcare administration, I've led the development of numerous comprehensive initiatives to improve rural access to high quality care for our citizens. Moreover, I have innovated multifarious childcare and youth development programs for "at-risk" youths. I have been fundamentally engaged in economic and business development efforts in St. Mary Parish. I have advocated in our local school system for numerous collaborative projects to strengthen community engagement in academia and enhance student and school performance.

I previously served for 7 years as the Senior Grant Writer and Program Planner at St. Mary CAA, and for the past 17 years as a member of the Board of Directors. I previously served as Board Chairman of the Acadiana Regional Coalition on Homelessness and Housing (ARCH), which includes St. Mary Parish among the other 8 Parishes that are seeking to eradicate homelessness in our communities, among many other responsibilities. Throughout these combined experiences, I've procured over \$110,000,000 in combined federal, state and private foundation grant and contract funds within numerous communities across the state of Louisiana and in neighboring states. For the past eight years I have served as Finance Committee Chairman for St. Mary Parish Council, and as a board member for the Acadiana Workforce Development Board-40, serving our eight-parish region, including St. Mary.

I am confident that I am the most competent candidate on your ballot for District 1, and plan to resume this Office with the courage, integrity and fortitude that is necessary to help move our entire parish forward by placing FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES AHEAD OF POLITICS. Remember, LEADERS are born, not elected!

CRAIG A. MATTHEWS

CONTINUED

What is your reasoning behind wanting to serve on the St. Mary Parish Council?

Serving in public office requires a genuine love and compassion for others, particularly those that are less fortunate. In many instances I've questioned internally whether public office is something I desire to pursue/continue. However, it has become quite evident to me through the past four terms I've served as the District 1 Councilman, that I didn't choose this path. Rather, I was chosen for this very purpose! The stakes are too high in this current political climate to risk our local government falling into the hands of selfish people whose chief concern and priority is themselves and their own agendas.

It is time for St. Mary Parish to catch up to the surrounding parishes that are exceeding us in growth and development, while more of our families relocate to other areas that can offer a better quality of life. I am confident that our Parish has the potential and resources necessary to shift this paradigm and become more competitive in terms of economic opportunity, affordable housing development, job creation, better infrastructure, and enhanced education and healthcare. I believe that I possess the skillsets and experience to help lead that effort.

If elected, what is your plan to work with the Parish Government and the Municipality(s) of our district to bring new businesses to our Parish?

One of the primary considerations of investors and developers when exploring location options is taxes. We have a huge challenge of having very high mileages / taxes in St. Mary, particularly in the west end. We need to work together with some of our local political subdivisions (Boards) to consolidate those entities where possible, which over time can eventually lower some of those mileages and perhaps even eliminate some. We also need more collaboration and cohesiveness among our Parish Government and the other municipalities to streamline resources and work smarter rather than everyone operating on an individual island of their own.

The disenfranchisement of certain unincorporated communities of the Parish – namely those scattered throughout District 1 must be overcome to close the gaps and eliminate poverty and the lack of access to much needed resources that other communities in St. Mary and surrounding Parishes enjoy. We cannot build a bigger and better St. Mary without leveling the playing field and creating economic opportunity for everyone in our Parish.

CRAIG A. MATTHEWS

CONTINUED

What do you see as the biggest challenge for our Parish and how do you propose to tackle that challenge?

The biggest challenge for St. Mary is the lack of safe, decent, and affordable housing – both multi-family rental property and single-family homeownership opportunities. We unequivocally must relax on some of the restrictions and resistance that seems to prevent such developers from proceeding with and realizing these important accomplishments. I've personally witnessed multiple failed attempts of some very skilled and wealthy experts at what could have been very successful upscale multi-family or apartment complex housing developments over the past decade right here in this Parish, because of reasons that if I began to describe would perhaps bring any reasonably sane person to a pause!

In reality, many of the families that have come to St. Mary Parish to work in some of the jobs that have been created in our Parish now live in neighboring Parishes that are benefiting directly from taxes that they could have been contributing to St. Mary. Even as we raise our families and our children enter the workforce, without a healthy housing stock they will have no choice but to leave St. Mary Parish and seek a life for themselves and their families. I've personally experienced this with my own children.

Do you believe lawsuits against the energy industry would harm St. Mary Parish's economy, why or why not, and would you work to prevent these lawsuits?

Yes, I do believe that these lawsuits, when frivolous, have the potential to create more harm to an already fragile economy in St. Mary Parish and across the state of Louisiana. We are fortunate to still be able to hold on to the little industrial growth that comes through energy production. Unless there are some measures instituted to limit the gross abuse of the judicial system which brings the insurmountable congestion this type of litigation creates, Louisiana and St. Mary Parish will continue to lose economic opportunity and become less competitive.

There are still a lot of drainage and roadway issues that exist around St. Mary Parish. How do you propose Parish Government aid in improving those issues?

St. Mary Parish, like many other rural parishes, is "cash poor". While the Parish Council and Administration have worked cooperatively to avoid operating in a deficit over the years I've served in this capacity, it is absolutely necessary that we seize opportunities to periodically leverage economic investment through bonds in order to make necessary infrastructure improvements such as roads, water and sewer plants, drainage systems, etc.

CRAIG A. MATTHEWS

CONTINUED

We have been very creative in achieving these results. Although, there are still areas that desperately need to be addressed, and this takes time. This strategy must also be complimented by working collectively with our state Legislature and Congress to leverage additional state and federal investments that can increase the rate of return by making a greater impact when those dollars are added to a project portfolio. One great example would be the Road Repair Initiative we implemented over the last three years, which allowed us to resurface and overlay a significant percentage of the substandard roadways that had been neglected across the Parish for the past 30 years.

How could the Parish Council support more things to do for children in our area?

I am proud to say that I have laid the foundation for a proper response to this critical issue throughout my terms in this office! The key to the Parish Council's response to the need for more comprehensive youth empowerment activities lies within our seven Recreation Districts. Most of these Districts/Boards have a dedicated revenue source from which comprehensive programs can be created that will support our children's experiences growing up in rural St. Mary. The challenge is to collaborate in a meaningful way that brings the greatest inspirational impact parish-wide.

I would propose the creation of a parish government position for a recreation director or liaison that could work with all districts to bring the cohesion necessary to ensure that no community or neighborhood would be void of recreational activities. We could also ensure that while rec districts would maintain their own sense of individuality, there would also be some regimented course or curriculum that would be culturally diverse in scope to reflect the demographics of our entire parish. This would take significant thought and commitment from our parish leaders, but it could certainly enhance our current offerings to children and youths.

What are your plans to support the local businesses already in existence in our Parish?

I have made it my personal priority and always encourage others to shop locally instead of traveling outside of the Parish for goods and services, where possible. I also believe that we must do more internally to promote local businesses and ensure that all our citizens are aware of the businesses that exist.

On a grander scale, it is absolutely mandatory that all local governmental units in St. Mary Parish be intentional about educating and empowering local entrepreneurs to participate in the public bidding process when there are public projects being developed. I keep hearing the excuse "They must be qualified to bid." Well, lets help

CRAIG A. MATTHEWS

CONTINUED

them to become qualified! I would like to have the Parish Government work together with our legislators, local municipalities, and federal agencies to host a series of seminars that will train small business owners in the steps to become qualified bidders on all local government projects.

We have built a beautiful state of the art multipurpose room at Bayou Bend Wellness Center that should be filled to capacity with interested parties hoping to become future bidders on these projects! There is no excuse to continue building in this Parish and awarding those MILLIONS OF DOLLARS to outside contractors and subcontractors! IT IS LUDICROUS TO NOT EMPOWER AND BUILD WEALTH AMONG OUR OWN NEIGHBORS! Not to mention, it also shameful.

In your opinion, what are the two most important qualities that candidates for Parish Council should possess?

The two most important qualities that a serious candidate for ANY public office MUST possess are integrity and compassion. Proverbs 29:2 says, “When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; But when a wicked man rules, the people groan.”

Unfortunately, there will always be people to rise to power and authority that are self-driven and unconcerned about the plight of others. However, when righteous men and women gain seats at the decision-making table it creates a greater sense of accountability and reasoning, which makes it a little bit more difficult to totally disregard others.

I believe there are obvious differences among “politicians” and “public servants”. By my summation, politicians are self-serving and seek to further their own interests. On the contrary, public servants are truly concerned about the well-being of others and as it is written in Philippians 2:3-4 “Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.”

What would be the most immediate change that you would push for in our Parish?

The most immediate change that needs to happen at the Parish Council level is a common-sense consensus among the majority members to seriously look at the Home Rule Charter and get some of these antiquated articles that were written in the early 80’s amended to reflect present-day culture and progression to create a more fair, equitable, and just form of local government FOR ALL THE PEOPLE.

CRAIG A. MATTHEWS

CONTINUED

In the event of the return of lockdowns, what is your stance on the lockdowns when it cases local businesses and our children to suffer?

While I do remain very sensitive to the dangers associated with anything as serious as the COVID-19 Pandemic we experienced recently, I also believe there are measures that can be taken locally to ensure that our people and our economy never suffers the devastation of 2020-2021. For example, I believe that we should still be able to operate our local economy by mandating that very limited numbers of citizens are allowed to enter public spaces at any given time, such as regulating times that smaller groups of people are allowed to go out at a given time and day.

This is done by the government all the time when it comes to subsidy programs like SNAP, Medicare, IRS tax refunds, etc. You are allowed access when your name or number is called. We can implement similar measures that would allow business to resume, although at a limited rate.

**“REMEMBER, LEADERS ARE BORN,
NOT ELECTED!”**



RODNEY OLANDER

CANDIDATE FOR DISTRICT 3

337-578-0124

PARTY: REPUBLICAN

ROLANDER@STMARYPARISHLA.GOV

RACE: WHITE

GENDER: MALE

My name is Rodney Olander and I am running for re-election to the St. Mary Parish Council District 3 seat. I would like to thank the Chamber of Commerce for giving me the opportunity to participate in this forum by responding to the questions in this publication. Also, thank you to everyone for taking the time to view the questions and answers submitted by the candidates in this publication. For those of you that don't know, District 3 includes the areas starting from the Calumet Cut going West, a portion of Verdunville, Centerville, Burns Point, Garden City, a portion of Franklin, a portion of Baldwin, a portion of Charenton and Cypremort Point.

I am a lifelong resident of St. Mary Parish, currently residing in Garden City for the past 10 years. I have worked in the commercial fishing industry for the past 44 years; a family tradition that spans over several generations. I am one of ten children and my parents instilled in us honesty, pride, responsibility and most of all importance of family. I am married to my wife of 30 years, Nell Verret Olander of Franklin. She is a retiree of the St. Mary Parish School Board with 35 years of dedicated service. Together we have three children and five grandchildren and our greatest sense of pride and joy are those times spent with our family as we look to God as a source of guidance and strength.

I have served as a member of the St. Mary Parish Board of Adjustments for 7 years, serving as chairman for 4 of those years. I was appointed by the Governor to serve on the Louisiana Shrimp Task Force for the past 6 years and served as chairman. I am a member of LSA, Louisiana Shrimp Association, for 20 years and serve on the Board. Prior to being on the Council, I attended the meetings for many years and feel that knowledge is a powerful asset and it gives me the ability to understand, analyze and make the best decisions in my life and the lives of others. My reasons for seeking re-election to the council are many, but what motivates me most is the opportunity to share my thoughts and ideas while taking the time to listen to the concerns of the people of this parish. Because I have served on Parish Council for the past 4 years, I know how important compromise and cooperation are in order to accomplish desired results.

I am asking the voters of this parish, to step up and re-elect a person, such as myself, to be a leader and pave the way for future generations. I am your typical, hard-working, family man who wants a chance to serve the citizens of this parish to make a difference in parish government. Please allow me to be your voice on Parish Council by voting for #91, Rodney Olander, on October 14th. Thank you for your consideration and support. God Bless.



RODNEY OLANDER

CONTINUED

What is your reasoning behind wanting to serve on the St. Mary Parish Council?

I have always been an avid follower of local and state government. I strive to learn as much as possible about any topic that presents itself. I feel that knowledge gives me the ability to understand, analyze and make better decisions in my life and the lives of others. What motivates me most about serving on Parish Council is the opportunity to give of my time and share my thoughts and ideas to improve the lives of the people in this parish. I feel that my strongest attribute is my character and ability to face challenges with logic and reason which would allow me to be able to work well with members of the council in order to get the job done. I have served on the St. Mary Parish Board of Adjustments for 7 years and the Louisiana Shrimp Task Force for the past 6 years. I am currently serving as St. Mary Parish Councilman District 3 for the past 4 years which makes me confident in my ability to serve as your Parish Councilman for a second term.

If elected, what is your plan to work with the Parish Government and the municipality of your district to bring new businesses to our Parish?

I will continue working with our municipalities as I have over the past 4 years. I am pro-business and believe it is vital to our Parish to promote all new businesses whether it is small businesses or large corporations. I have worked with our state elected officials in the past to bring new business to the Parish.

What do you see as the biggest challenge for our Parish and how do you propose to tackle that challenge?

In my opinion, one of the biggest challenges for our Parish is that the residents are leaving to seek better opportunities for jobs, housing and entertainment in other parishes. Also, the citizens of this Parish should not have to be concerned about their safety when going about their lives and frequenting the businesses in our Parish. They should also be able to know that their property will be protected from theft and their neighborhoods are safe from crime. Our Parish has many wonderful attributes and the promotion of tourism is something that could generate interest for future businesses to locate here, especially because of the many waterways in the Parish. Losing the residents of this Parish has been an ongoing problem for years and I welcome any suggestions from our residents as to how we can solve these issues and grow our Parish.



RODNEY OLANDER

CONTINUED

Do you believe lawsuits against the energy industry would harm St. Mary Parish's economy? Why or why not? And would you work to prevent these lawsuits?

Any lawsuits against our energy industry would be detrimental to our economy in this Parish. I would oppose any lawsuits that would harm our industry in St. Mary Parish in the future.

There are still a lot of drainage and roadway issues that exist around St. Mary Parish. How do you propose Parish Government aid in improving those issues?

I have always been a proponent of improving our roadways and drainage. Recently I have worked with our C.A.O. for the purchase of an asphalt zipper and new asphalt truck so that we are able to start doing our own repairs and chip sealing some of our existing roads. I work extremely well with our drainage department whenever residents contact me with complaints about ditches that need cleaning out. Because of my previous experience, I have been able to aid in making the improvements to several of the boat landings.

If re-elected, I intend to continue to push forward on future projects by working with our State Senator and Representative with whom I have a good working relationship. There are still many roads and bridges that are in need of replacement or repair.

How could the Parish Council support more things to do for children in our area?

Over the past 4 years, I have supported the local Rec Districts by funding the new pavilion at the Centerville Park and the new pavilion at Broussard-Harris Park in Franklin. I have worked with the Rec District and the School Board for future projects at the Centerville baseball field. I have helped with the funding for the Caffrey Park improvements. Our children are a fundamental part of our parish community and I will always support those projects that are needed.

What are your plans to support the local businesses already in existence in our Parish?

Established businesses need to know that there will be no more additional tax burdens placed on them. Everyone in the parish needs to support their local businesses and work together to grow those businesses. I am also a major proponent of the commercial shrimping industry which is on the verge of collapse. I have been going to Washington DC for the past 6 years to meet with lawmakers in an attempt to keep this industry profitable and intact because this industry is vital to our Parish's culture and economics. I will continue to fight for this industry and all other industries that need support.



RODNEY OLANDER

CONTINUED

In your opinion, what are the TWO most important qualities that candidates for Parish Council should possess?

I feel the two most important qualities to possess are knowledge and dedication. I have always been an avid follower of local and state government. I strive to learn as much as possible about any topic that presents itself. I feel that knowledge gives me the ability to understand, analyze and make better decisions in my life and the lives of others. Because of my interest in Parish Government, I have attended the parish council meetings for many years prior to serving as Councilman and had the opportunity to meet and speak with many people to gain their perspective on many topics. Also I have shown my dedication, experience and ability to work with others by serving on the St. Mary Parish Board of Adjustments for the 7 years making decisions that have a positive impact for the residents of St. Mary Parish. I pride myself on being able to find solutions and make the tough decisions for positive resolutions. I would like the chance to prove that I would be a knowledgeable, dedicated and assertive voice for the residents of St. Mary Parish Council District #8 for a second term in office.

What would be the most immediate change that you would push for in our Parish?

I would encourage the entire council to cooperate and work together in order to reach solutions that would be for the betterment of the people of St. Mary Parish instead of constantly being in disagreement with each other and accomplishing nothing. We, as elected officials, have a responsibility to the people that we serve to come together as a Council, men and women, and work to the best of our ability to prevail in what needs to be done.

In the event of the return of lockdowns, what is your stance on the lockdowns when it causes local businesses and our children to suffer?

I am definitely not in favor of lockdowns of any sort as it would be detrimental to the education and mental wellbeing of our children. Also, our businesses cannot survive another shut down and neither can our economy.

“I AM YOUR TYPICAL, HARD-WORKING, FAMILY MAN WHO WANTS A CHANCE TO SERVE THE CITIZENS OF THIS PARISH TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN PARISH GOVERNMENT. PLEASE ALLOW ME TO BE YOUR VOICE.”



PETER SOPRANO

CANDIDATE FOR DISTRICT 3

PARTY: INDEPENDENT

RACE: WHITE

GENDER: MALE

337-828-6582

F.PETER.SOPRANO@GMAIL.COM

My name is Peter Soprano. I was born & raised in Charenton. I have 3 children, a Son & 2 Daughters & 3 Grandchildren 1 Grandson & 2 Granddaughters with Becky Caro Soprano. I was self employed over 35 yrs as a woodworker, cabinet maker, contractor. I spent 2 yrs. building furniture in Madison Wisconsin for the condos above the Bloomingdale Bldg. in Chicago on Michigan Avenue. I came home in 1991 right before Hurricane Andrew. I served as an At Large Dist. 10 Council member from 200-2008 then was termed out. I spent the last 13 yrs prior to retirement at the Franklin Health Care Nursing Home Facility as their Maintenance Director. Working there with an in house Alzheimer unit changed my life & made me realize how precious & short life is. I have bought & renovated over 30 properties in & around District 3 in the Franklin & Centerville area of which I still own & maintain about 15 of.

My children & Grandchildren are here & I want the best we can give them in St Mary Parish. I will work with the Council & Parish President, listen to all sides of an issue & make my decision for a vote that serves the parish in the best way. As a prior council member I worked with the council & Parish President then to get a library in Centerville, build a triplex bldg. to serve our sewer, water, & fire districts, a walking track & playground in Centerville & Verdunville, paved sidewalks, built a nature walk on Alice C Road, & many other projects. I recently retired & purchased a 7300 sq ft bldg. in downtown Franklin where I will open a Gallery & Showroom for my woodwork & the work of other small businesses, & artists in the community in an effort to give them an outlet to sell their & my hand made Louisiana products, & will offer courses to children & adults in woodworking, sculpting, painting etc.

I believe you have to “Stand for Something or You'll Fall for Anything.” I stand for God, Country, my Family, & St Mary Parish!

Please Vote #92 Peter Soprano Oct 14th Thank you!

PETER SOPRANO

CONTINUED

What is your reasoning behind wanting to serve on the St. Mary Parish Council?

I served from 200-2008 as an At Large member. I am now retired & want to serve my Community this way again.

If elected, what is your plan to work with the Parish Government and the municipality of your district to bring new businesses to our Parish?

Have an open ear to our Economic Development Director, Parish President, etc. Work with the Parish President, council members of the parish & municipalities to clean up derelict properties, remove unsafe bldgs., & attempt to keep our parish clean . When companies come in or send reps. in our area to do their due diligence prior to moving here they want to see clean areas, nice playgrounds for kids, they look at our grocery stores, churches, schools, entertainment, housing, hospital, etc.

What do you see as the biggest challenge for our Parish and how do you propose to tackle that challenge?

One of the biggest challenges will be to attempt to address the debt this parish has accumulated in the past 8 yrs. We will also have to find funding to close a portion of our landfill that has not been addressed by this administration after being warned many times that it will have to be addressed.

Do you believe lawsuits against the energy industry would harm St. Mary Parish's economy? Why or why not? And would you work to prevent these lawsuits?

I know little of this but would be willing to listen to those that have more knowledge of this & of course would do what is in the best interest of the parish.

There are still a lot of drainage and roadway issues that exist around St. Mary Parish. How do you propose Parish Government aid in improving those issues?

A lot of our road issues are drainage problems, ie., Water standing in roads, I have asked the parish many times to grade the shoulders so the water can go in the ditches. Water standing in the road is dangerous to drivers & destroys the road. We need to educate the public in the rural areas not to put their tree limbs etc in the ditch waiting for the parish to pick it up, this is a big problem. Would also make sure our royalty road funds are used properly as those funds are supposed to be used on road improvements.

PETER SOPRANO

CONTINUED

How could the Parish Council support more things to do for children in our area?

The parish has built many playgrounds, walking tracks, ball fields etc., they also have recreation districts with the public serving as board members. I would support their endeavors. I recently retired, & purchased a 7300 sq ft bldg. on Mian in Franklin's Historical District by the Courthouse for a showroom for my wood work. I also plan to have woodworking classes for children & adults along with other trades & crafts people.

What are your plans to support the local businesses already in existence in our Parish?

I will work with the other businesses in the parish as I have always done, & now that I have a retail outlet I will work with the other businesses in downtown Franklin in the center of District 3. I was a self employed contractor for over 30 yrs. so I know the struggles of small business.

In your opinion, what are the TWO most important qualities that candidates for Parish Council should possess?

An ear to listen, Common sense, A mouth to speak the Truth & to stand for what is best in St Mary Parish.

What would be the most immediate change that you would push for in our Parish?

Revisit the Planning & Zoning ordinances. I was the only Council member to vote against this ordinance as it was presented. It was modeled after an area in Texas that is not conducive to this rural South Louisiana parish need. Take a look at the Golf Course; which I was also the only No vote on. We need to also look at revisiting the grass cutting contract with the State. Our Maintenance Dept. needs to be updated with new equipment in order to do most of our repairs on equipment in-house. In order to accomplish this we have to pay our people better to attract & keep good people

In the event of the return of lockdowns, what is your stance on the lockdowns when it causes local businesses and our children to suffer?

I am against another lockdown!

“I BELIEVE YOU HAVE TO “STAND FOR SOMETHING OR YOU'LL FALL FOR ANYTHING.” I STAND FOR GOD, COUNTRY, MY FAMILY, & ST MARY PARISH!”



MYRON BOURQUE

CANDIDATE FOR DISTRICT 4

PARTY: NO PARTY

RACE: OTHER

GENDER: MALE

985-759-7424

MYRONB@NWSOINC.NET

Let me state by saying I have lived in St. Mary Parish most of my life. I was born on November 7, 1961. I attended Morgan City High School. I have resided in Bayou Vista for the last 20 years. I have 45 years experience working in Oilfield related business. For the past 8 years, I have served as Chairman of St. Mary Parish Fire Protection District 7 here in Bayou Vista. I (& 4 other board members), oversee taxpayers' monies to ensure it is being spent wisely, monitor maintenance & oversee that all equipment is in the best condition possible to protect our community.

Daily I work with the public to resolve issues in a wide variety of circumstances, not only with professional services but also with years of experience.

I enjoy spending time with family and friends. I am an avid hunter and fisherman in this sportsmen's paradise that is my home. I am married with 3 children and 8 grandchildren and 1 great granddaughter.

I enjoy giving to my community whether it be through acts of kindness or volunteering for a fundraiser or event. I have been Regional Manager at National Welding Supply, Inc. here in Bayou Vista for the past 20 years. And most importantly, I am a Christian.

What is your reasoning behind wanting to serve on the St. Mary Parish Council?

I feel it's time for leadership to understand and address the changes taking place in our community. We need to pull together to create a safe environment for our working residence, as well as our retired generation. Property crimes are on the rise. Our youth is being introduced to drugs that is killing them at an alarming rate. I want to use my platform if elected to provide a safe space for growth in our community, to concentrate on motivation and inspiration to spark positive change.

MYRON BOURQUE

CONTINUED

If elected, what is your plan to work with the Parish Government and the municipality of your district to bring new businesses to our Parish?

If elected I will immerse myself in the community and surround myself with the people who are dedicated to improving the place we call home. I will strive to unite the community and bridge the social, economic and political gaps that are managing to divide our citizens. I will promote sustainable decisions by communicating the needs and interests of not just the decision makers but the citizens themselves. I will work with community leaders in promoting St. Mary Parish tourism.

What do you see as the biggest challenge for our Parish and how do you propose to tackle that challenge?

One of the biggest challenges is our youth leaving our parish and state due to the lack of employment once graduated. Which in return is causing the parents of these young individuals to also move to be closer to their children and grandchildren. Households have enough to worry about with the rising cost of gas, groceries and inflation at an all time high. Retailers are switching to self-checkout which eliminates hundreds of local jobs. I would get with local businesses and see what we can do to keep our future leaders here in St. Mary Parish. Our parish has training in welding, diving, heavy equipment operators and construction just to name a few. We are rich in recreation with nature trails, wildlife habitat observation and offshore/inland fishing charters.

Do you believe lawsuits against the energy industry would harm St. Mary Parish's economy? Why or why not? And would you work to prevent these lawsuits?

Yes, it's unfortunate that there are some repercussions from standing our ground. These lawsuits have been going on for years. We should not cave into the energy industry. We must protect that which is vital for St. Mary Parish. They are being held accountable for destroying wetlands and creating canals that harm our coastal parishes. I would stand firm with the council, and adjoining parishes Lafourche and Terrebonne on the No vote. I understand the consequences of losing jobs are being brought up, but if we lose our marshes and wetlands there is more at stake than just jobs. Settling is not going to repair all the damage that has been done.

MYRON BOURQUE

CONTINUED

There are still a lot of drainage and roadway issues that exist around St. Mary Parish. How do you propose Parish Government aid in improving those issues?

Trees and shrubbery need to be adequately disposed of so as not to impede the drainage culverts. When flooding occurs large cut logs, limbs, branches are washed into culverts and drainage ditches get stuck in culverts creating more flooding situations. There are currently 2 parish debris trucks working in St. Mary Parish. I propose we purchase another vehicle to tackle the load that is put on the parish. I personally have witnessed furniture and trees sitting on the side of the road for weeks on end. Either the parish wasn't notified of the debris, or they were working on the other side of the parish.

How could the Parish Council support more things to do for children in our area?

Obtaining waterfront property to put a boat launch would be excellent. Mr. Ramsey had a good idea, but the location wasn't sufficient. I appreciate the effort by the recreation department with putt putt golf. But with temperatures soaring into the 100's no one wanted to go stand in the sun. I think an addition to the water park, not just for small children but something for adolescents, would be good. We need to find something for our 11 to 14 year old group. We need to keep our children from drug dealers which I was told were hanging out at the skate park and in the parking lot by the restrooms. Step up neighborhood watch by the park area by the public to keep our children safe. It was a good way for a student from Bayou Vista to meet kids from Berwick and Patterson and keep them out of trouble. It is possible to speak with local churches and see if a weekend dance would be possible at one of their locations.

What are your plans to support the local businesses already in existence in our Parish?

I would visit with owners and corporate managers on what they feel the issues are when it comes to growth and expansion of their business. Moving forward with a realistic plan of action that fits their criteria.

In your opinion, what are the TWO most important qualities that candidates for Parish Council should possess?

Honesty and Transparency

MYRON BOURQUE

CONTINUED

What would be the most immediate change you would push for in our Parish?

I would like to have rapid expansion in community-based initiatives to facilitate public participation in decision making where the community is invited to engage besides voting.

In the event of the return of lockdowns, what is your stance on the lockdowns when it causes local businesses and our children to suffer?

I am strongly against lockdowns. I would encourage and advise caution by social distancing for vulnerable elderly and persons with underlying medical conditions. I would ask businesses to create a safe workplace, without taking extreme measures. During a pandemic I will not take away a person's right to work, buy groceries, pay bills, or seek healthcare. I would work with my fellow councilmen and local officials to create a defensive plan without having to shut down schools, churches and businesses. Together we can work up a plan of action to not take away a person's freedoms or put any parishioners in jeopardy.

“YOUR VOTE & SUPPORT WILL BE TRULY APPRECIATED BRINGING OUR COMMUNITY TOGETHER, WHERE THE PEOPLE MAKE A DIFFERENCE.”



JAVON CHARLES

CANDIDATE FOR DISTRICT 4

PARTY: NO PARTY

RACE: BLACK

GENDER: MALE

985-518-6561

CHARLESJAVON@GMAIL.COM

I am a Lifelong resident of St. Mary Parish and an experienced goal-oriented Public Servant. Being born and raised in Bayou Vista I have learned to appreciate small towns. After High School, I attended Belhaven University, A Christian College in Jackson, MS on an Academic Scholarship for Business Administration.

I previously served on the Bayou Vista Drainage Board. I am presently a board member of the St. Mary Parish Industrial Development Board and the Immediate Past Chairman of the St. Mary Parish Recreation District #3 here in Bayou Vista. I have also had the pleasure of serving as Co-Chairman of the Louisiana Recreation and Parks Association (LRPA) District #2 in which I represented a total of 17 parishes. The LRPA is a branch of the Louisiana Municipal Association (LMA).

I was bestowed the award for Role Model of the year in 2019 by St. Mary Foundation. I am a 15-year member of Bayou Vista Baptist Church, affiliate of Louisiana Oil and Gas Association, and a 6-year former member of Law Enforcement.

If you elect me as your next St. Mary Parish Councilman for District 4, I promise to hit the ground running and work diligently to improve not only this district but also the entire parish. I will enact an Open Door Policy so that I am available to my constituents and time needed. I am a No Party candidate because I am running for the People not a Party. I pledge allegiance to the Flag not to a Party or Politicians.

What is your reasoning behind wanting to serve on the St. Mary Parish Council?

My reason for wanting to serve as Parish Councilman is simply to better my community. I have served my entire adult life and I want to take it to the next level. I see the problems in our area such as transparency, drainage, taxation, fiscal responsibility, etc. I plan to implement Town Hall meeting to have open communication with the people of District 4, and to inform them of what is happening on a monthly basis. You cannot say you are representing the people if you are not directly hearing what the people want! I have the knowledge and experience to push forth a several Economic Development opportunities to get business thriving here in St. Mary Parish.

JAVON CHARLES

CONTINUED

If elected, what is your plan to work with the Parish Government and the municipality of your district to bring new businesses to our Parish?

First, I believe that in order to be effective with pushing forth change one must be able to build strong working relationships and have strong communication skills. District 4 encompasses Bayou Vista and a portion of Patterson. I have a great working relationship with the Parish, the Patterson Mayor Mr. R. Grogan and Council, the Patterson Police Chief G. Grogan, the Chamber of Commerce, and many business owners throughout the district and parish. My plan is to first, establish communication with business owners and local officials to understand the challenges of businesses whether it be taxes, incentives, or regulations and evaluate how these conditions can be improved to retain business and attract new business. As a current member of the Industrial Development Board, I will work with the Economic Development Director to increase awareness of the Bonds that the board offers to new and expanding businesses. I currently am working on a plan to bring an Indoor Gun Range to Bayou Vista, which will be franchise operated but fall within the umbrella of Recreation District 3.

What do you see as the biggest challenge for our Parish and how do you propose to tackle that challenge?

There are too many challenges to narrow down to one. A few of the most important challenges are Taxation, Fiscal Responsibility, Modernization, Decreasing Population, and Economic Development/Jobs. According to a 2022 Analysis St. Mary Parish is ranked 47 of 62 parishes for Household income. According to the 2023 NICHE Best Places Rankings St. Mary Parish is ranked 44 of 62 parishes. My objective to address the crime issue is to introduce a resolution to create a Crime Prevention and Security District to provide extra patrols in the affected areas. To tackle taxation I will propose that we hire a full time grant writer, so we don't have to rely on tax payers to get projects funded. As for Fiscal Responsibility, I propose better oversight of local boards and making sure board members are appointed based on ability and instead of personal connection. Modernization is a huge issue that has many aspects. I believe we should have a set standard for parish boards, remodel all community centers via grants, and update the Charter. The last 3 coincide, we have to get the right people, diversify to bring new industry which will create jobs, retain people, and draw people here.

JAVON CHARLES

CONTINUED

Do you believe lawsuits against the energy industry would harm St. Mary Parish's economy? Why or why not? And would you work to prevent these lawsuits?

Yes, I am the only candidate in my race for Parish Council District 4 to have formally met and engaged with the Louisiana Oil and Gas Association and I fully understand how much of an issue frivolous litigation is to the energy industry. When a business in our parish is attacked, it affects our economy because it may cause a reduction in jobs, increase in regulations, or worst-case scenario a loss of the business completely. I will work diligently to prevent these lawsuits. I was invited to attend the Energize the Vote event September 14th, which is Sponsored by Louisiana Oil and Gas Association, Louisiana Mid-Continental Oil and Gas Association, and the Grow Louisiana Coalition. I also happen to be the only Candidate in St. Mary Parish to go to this event.

There are still a lot of drainage and roadway issues that exist around St. Mary Parish. How do you propose Parish Government aid in improving those issues?

Parish Government should have had a full time Grant Writer to capitalize on the billions of dollars that is available from the Federal Infrastructure Bill. Going forward we should get a Grant Writer and pursue these funds so we can get these improvements taken care of without putting any tax burdens on the citizens of St. Mary Parish. I am fully aware of the drainage issues in Bayou Vista and across the tracks in Patterson and I plan to work on these issues as soon as possible.

How could the Parish Council support more things to do for children in our area?

There are several ways the Parish Council can support Recreation for the children. As the Immediate past Chairman of St. Mary Parish Recreation District 3 and the Louisiana Recreation and Parks Association District 2 I am the only candidate equipped to tackle the recreation issues. I am working on a plan to get an Indoor Gun Range in Bayou Vista, Update the Tennis Courts to a Multi Sports Court that would incorporate Tennis, Basketball, Pickle Ball, and Volleyball in a covered area with lights. I have consulted with other Recreation districts within 17 parishes including St. Mary Parish. There are many grants designed to renovate playgrounds and Community Centers available. I believe the Parish should reinstate the Recreation Department and follow how neighboring Parishes are structuring their Recreation. The recreation districts in the Parish as a whole need guidance from a Certified Parks and Recreation Professional. One standard for all districts will help.



JAVON CHARLES

CONTINUED

What are your plans to support the local businesses already in existence in our Parish?

My plan is to first, establish communication with business owners and local officials to understand the challenges of businesses whether it be taxes, incentives, or regulations and evaluate how these conditions can be improved to retain business. As a current member of the Industrial Development Board, I will work with the Economic Development Director to increase awareness of the Bonds that the board offers to new and expanding businesses. I believe we should have events throughout the Parish to support small businesses such as Town Market events. Personally, I would hate to lose any business in St. Mary Parish that is why I am currently fighting to keep Dominique's Dance Studio here in Bayou Vista.

In your opinion, what are the TWO most important qualities that candidates for Parish Council should possess?

The two most important qualities that Parish Council candidates should possess is Integrity and Transparency. We need individuals that will do the right thing even when the right thing is not the popular decision to make. Candidates should honor the Oath that they take to uphold the Constitution. There should be no backhanded deals, conflicts of interest, trading of votes, or division amongst the Parish Council. As far as transparency goes, I tie in Communication with this quality. In order to be transparent one must be able and willing to have open communication. Elected officials should be forthcoming with what is going on with each other as well as with the Community. This is why if elected I will be hosting monthly Town Hall meetings so I can hear from my community and they can hear from me. Also honesty is a very important factor of transparency.

What would be the most immediate change that you would push for in our Parish?

My most immediate change that I would push for is getting a professional Grant Writer hired. I am all about solutions and progression and hiring a Grant Writer will help fix many issues. There are many projects throughout the parish that can be funded by grants, such as Drainage Pumps, Recreation improvements, Parish building renovations, and infrastructure improvements. Utilizing grants is of course a benefit to taxpayers because no tax burden is needed if the grant funds the project. Grants can effect Economic Development by funding an expansion or renovation project, which in turn creates jobs. Also within my first 100 days I will push for



JAVON CHARLES

CONTINUED

monthly Town hall meetings, Indoor Gun Range in Bayou Vista, Increase Recreation projects for the youth, drainage improvements in both Bayou Vista and my part Patterson, and creating a Crime Prevention and Security District to keep citizens of St. Mary safe.

In the event of the return of lockdowns, what is your stance of the lockdowns when it causes local businesses and our children to suffer?

I believe lockdowns are a violation of basic human rights. Lockdowns are part of the reason suicide rates increased during the last lockdowns. Every business needs the ability to operate for the benefit of supply/demand, employment security, and local economy. The lockdowns hurt children and the entire school system. I am completely against ruining once in a lifetime experiences to have lockdowns.

“I AM A NO PARTY CANDIDATE BECAUSE I AM RUNNING FOR THE PEOPLE NOT A PARTY. I PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG NOT TO A PARTY OR POLITICIANS.”





DAVID HILL

CANDIDATE FOR DISTRICT 4

985-397-3794

PARTY: REPUBLICAN

SALES@SOUTHLANDFIREARMSLLC.COM

RACE: WHITE

GENDER: MALE

My name is David Hill and, as most of the candidates are, I am a lifelong resident of the Berwick/Bayou Vista area. I have 2 children, a daughter, Alyssa that is 22 years of age that is a student at LSU Dental and a son Tyler that is 16 years of age and he is a Jr at Patterson High. I am a 2020 graduate of Delgado Community College with a degree in Criminal Justice.

I am a small business owner of Southland Firearms LLC located in Bayou Vista which I started as a homebased business in 2007 and in 2022 I expanded into a full-time business. Being a true small business, I have firsthand knowledge on the important service that we provide to the area. Some of my past civic activities include being a volunteer firefighter for Berwick Vol. Fire Dept. and as a reserve police officer for the Morgan City Police Dept. I have also previously served as the Justice of the Peace for Ward 5.

What is your reasoning behind wanting to serve on the St. Mary Parish Council?

I have always been civic minded and have tried to contribute back to the area in various ways such as being a volunteer firefighter, reserve police officer and being previously elected as the Justice of the Peace for Ward 5(Bayou Vista/Patterson). If elected I can continue to be able to give back to the community.

If elected, what is your plan to work with the Parish Government and the municipality of your district to bring new businesses to our Parish?

Advertising the available land that can be purchased and possibly look into some type of tax incentive to make it feasible for new businesses to open here.

What do you see as the biggest challenge for our Parish and how do you propose to tackle that challenge?

This goes back to the previous question of trying to get new businesses to open within our parish. While driving from Morgan City to Patterson there are numerous businesses that are closed and some that are quite literally falling apart. How does this look to people that are driving through this area looking for places to put their business? We need to make this area more attractive to new businesses.

DAVID HILL

CONTINUED

Do you believe lawsuits against the energy industry would harm St. Mary Parish's economy? Why or why not? And would you work to prevent these lawsuits?

There are way too many lawsuits affecting the oil and gas industry in a very negative way. Some of the lawsuits can and I am pretty sure have driven major business to other states that are more friendly to them. I would work with our state officials in trying to reform laws to help the oil and gas industry as this is one of the main sources of employment in our area.

There are still a lot of drainage and roadway issues that exist around St. Mary Parish. How do you propose Parish Government aid in improving those issues?

Have a strict schedule of cleaning not just the drainage ditches but the culverts. Look into converting some major drainage ditches from a typical dirt side to cement to create less resistance for the water flowing through the ditches. Not only would this make the water flow faster, but it would stop some land erosion. Yes, there would be an increased cost in converting the ditches but the maintenance cost going forward would be reduced.

How could the Parish Council support more things to do for children in our area? 1)

Here in Bayou Vista, we have a wonderful skate park, spray park, ball fields, and a put-put golf course. As a council member, I would support in securing the needed funding to put these types of facilities throughout the parish.

What are your plans to support the local businesses already in existence in our Parish?

As a small business owner, I see first-hand the importance of shopping locally. Although personally I am not at the point where I need to hire help, I can see that sometime soon I will have to. I would not be able to have the success I am having if it was not for the locals that are patronizing my business. The St. Mary Parish Chamber of Commerce does a wonderful job promoting local businesses. The St. Mary council can try to incorporate the same type of marketing.

In your opinion, what are the TWO most important qualities that candidates for Parish Council should possess?

The two most important qualities that I would like to see in a council member is to be approachable and understanding of their constituents needs. For me, this is a couple of traits that I think I do well with. Even after not being the Justice of the Peace for the past three years I still receive phone calls and questions about various issues. I

DAVID HILL

CONTINUED

have never turned anyone away without first asking what the issue is and where they are located so I can send them to the appropriate person to help them. With me having my own business I feel as if anyone will be able to freely walk in and talk to me about any issues that they may have or that I may be able to answer the phone during business hours without having to worry about my employer telling me to not be on the phone.

What would be the most immediate change that you would push for in our Parish? I would like to see the trees trimmed along our power lines not just after a storm comes through. The tree limbs should be maintained throughout the years to keep the limbs from falling onto the lines.

In the event of the return of lockdowns, what is your stance of the lockdowns when it causes local businesses and our children to suffer?

The lockdowns in our country should never have happened. The lockdowns caused a lot of small businesses to lose much needed revenue. I am sure that a lot of small businesses may have even gone totally out of business. There were many instances in this country where certain businesses had to close but some were allowed to remain open the government should not have the authority to be able to dictate which businesses can and cannot be open.

“THE TWO MOST IMPORTANT QUALITIES THAT I WOULD LIKE TO SEE IN A COUNCIL MEMBER IS TO BE APPROACHABLE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR CONSTITUENTS NEEDS.”



LESLIE “LES” RULF

CANDIDATE FOR DISTRICT 5

PARTY: REPUBLICAN

RACE: WHITE

GENDER: MALE

985-519-1433

LIEUTENANT9A@YAHOO.COM

Born on February 9, 1961, to Mr. Leslie Rulf, Sr. and Mrs. Lela Rulf of St. Mary Parish, Les grew up in a family setting that instilled in him a desire to help his fellow man, a deep appreciation of law and order, and a respect of nature, issues which have remained a part of his core beliefs to this very day.

Following his graduation from Berwick High School in 1980, Les worked as a welder at J. Ray McDermott Fabrication in Amelia, Louisiana. In 1984, Les began working for the St. Mary Parish Sheriff’s Office as a road deputy under Sheriff Huey Bourgeois. He then began working in 1990 for the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, serving first as a field agent in the Enforcement Division, then as a Senior Agent Sergeant. In 2000, Les was promoted to District Supervisor Lieutenant, overseeing a 5-parish area that included St. Mary Parish, and occasionally served as Acting Captain of the 2-district Region. In 2014, Les retired from the LDWF and the public sector, but his commitment to public service continued since, as he has volunteered with the Morgan City Police Department Reserve Officer Program from 2015 to 2022; and then in late-2022, he began volunteering with the Morgan City Marshalls Office Reserve program.

As for private sector experience, Les formed his own business called L.R. Services, LLC, a week after his retirement in 2014 from the LDWF. He serves as a vessel captain for various public agencies and private companies, and his knowledge of the local waterways, along with his retention of a permit to carry a weapon, makes Les a valuable resource for agencies and companies.

Les has been married to the former Wendy Sheehan of Berwick for the last 41 years. They have two daughters, Sarah R. Melancon (Dylan) and Lesley R. Chauvin (Courtney) and are the proud grandparents of five grandchildren: Blake Melancon and Luke Melancon, Ahney Chauvin, Tanner Bissonnette, and Jaleigh Chauvin.

In 2019 the people of District 5 elected Les overwhelmingly as their new councilman, to act as their “voice.” Les followed through on his promises and delivered for his constituents by collaborating with the local state legislative delegation to secure over \$265,000 in state Capital Outlay funding for projects at Kemper Williams Park benefiting locals and tourists. He facilitated various highway projects, such as grass cuttings, road repairs, street cave-ins, and highway markings. Next, Les assisted with scheduling the cleaning of area drainage ditches and the removal of abandoned vessels in Bayou Teche. Also, he served on the parish’s airport advisory committee, ensuring that our community airport receives the necessary resources to remain operable.

With another four years, Les will continue working to improve roads, drainage, infrastructure and hurricane protection projects. He will help develop business and tourism opportunities and increase public and private collaborative efforts. He humbly asks for your support and vote (#97) to continue serving as the councilman for St. Mary Parish District 5.

LESLIE “LES” RULF

CONTINUED

What is your reasoning behind wanting to serve on the St. Mary Parish Council?

Public service is particularly important to me. In fact, my entire life has been one of public service, as evidenced by my years with the St. Mary Parish Sheriff's Office, the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries, and as a volunteer with the Morgan City Police Department Reserve Program and currently with the City of Morgan City Marshall's Office Reserve Program. I like helping people and getting things done for them. It is my hope to continue serving the people with another four years as your St. Mary Parish Councilman for District 5. In addition, I want to finish the work that I started during my first term and, consequently, continue delivering for the people of the 5th District and the parish in the next four years.

If elected, what is your plan to work with the Parish Government and the municipality of your district to bring new businesses to our Parish?

As a parish councilman, it is my duty to represent the people of my district which means I must collaborate with others to get things accomplished, including bringing new businesses to the parish and helping existing businesses. Working with our state and federal delegations, state officials and agencies, parish officials, private businesses, and others is key to providing a suitable location for businesses to thrive. It is important that we do all that we can to provide a business climate that allows them to expand. We must ensure that taxes are not overburdensome, infrastructure (e.g., roadways, drainage, electricity, etc.) is adequate and dependable, housing is available for workers, and marketing of this parish is effective, just to name a few things needed. In addition, we need to keep our insurance rates low and affordable. Plus, it is critical that our two parish ports have the proper resources to keep them open for trade, especially in the export/import business.

All of this requires funding, so we should look at not only local funds, but we should make every effort to secure federal grant monies, especially infrastructure funds that have been recently appropriated to communities throughout the United States.

What do you see as the biggest challenge for our Parish and how do you propose to tackle that challenge?

Frankly, I see two big challenges facing the parish. One, insurance rates are climbing and making living in St. Mary Parish a hardship. Flood insurance and housing insurance is causing our fellow citizens to have to make painful decisions in what they can afford to do, buy, eat, etc. It's not fair, and I, as a parish councilman, can encourage our state's Insurance Department to do what needs to be done to lower homeowners' insurance rates and work with the federal delegation to lower the costs for flood insurance. Yes, I know that this is a tough challenge, but it is one that I accept and will work with my parish colleagues to get done. Also, housing is the other large challenge we face in St. Mary. We need places for our families to live in, and we need housing for employees. It will be difficult to attract businesses to St. Mary Parish if there is no place for their employees to live.

LESLIE “LES” RULF

CONTINUED

Do you believe lawsuits against the energy industry would harm St. Mary Parish’s economy? Why or why not? And would you work to prevent these lawsuits?

Simply stated, I am against lawsuits against the energy industry! During this past term in office, it was my honor to join my fellow councilmembers and vote 11-0 against pursuing a lawsuit against various parties in the energy industry. I think suing these businesses is counter to business sense, especially since the state of Louisiana permitted their work. I am definitely against these lawsuits because they crush businesses, and this will make oil companies leave this area, putting good, hard-working people out of work, and leaving no one to eat at our restaurants, buy merchandise/goods at local stores, and so on. The results of energy lawsuits will have a “domino effect” on other businesses, causing them to fail. Plus, we need to remember that with a smaller tax base, less tax revenue will be collected by governmental agencies. This will result in government reducing services to the people, such as street and drainage repairs, new bridges, recreation programs, law enforcement, fire protection, etc. This could cause our fire ratings to increase resulting in higher premiums for fire insurance.

There are still a lot of drainage and roadway issues that exist around St. Mary Parish. How do you propose Parish Government aid in improving those issues?

It is my belief that the parish can’t fix these problems on its own. We will need additional monies from Baton Rouge and from the federal government; and, we can apply for the recent infrastructure grants that have been awarded to communities throughout the United States and even to some entities in St. Mary Parish; however, St. Mary Parish has to be more aggressive in pursuing these funds to help pay the costs for these drainage and roadway issues. As a parish councilman, I believe that we must collaborate with other entities, like the drainage district, for example, to ensure that our drainage canals are clear of debris so waters can flow away from our homes and businesses. In addition, we must look at the state’s “Road Royalty” funds that come to the parish and are intended to maintain our roads. Instead of using them for grass cuttings, perhaps the parish administration should look to using these funds for roadwork so as to keep our vehicles from being damaged

How could the Parish Council support more things to do for children in our area?

The parish currently provides approximately \$2.2 million to parish recreation districts through a 3/10 cent’s property and sales tax. We should look at increasing funding to the recreation districts, not necessarily through an increase in taxes, but, rather, we need to look into grant funds to help fund activities related to children and even adults. Communities throughout the country are securing funds through private foundation grants and funding from state and federal government sources. The parish council needs to encourage the next parish administration to fight for these funds to help with programs directed towards the children of our area. I can tell you that I worked with our state senator Bret Allain II to secure over \$266,000 in funding from the state’s Capital Outlay Program to Kemper Williams Park for enhancements that will provide children with new things to do. Plus, parish councilmembers must work together as a whole and not District vs. District or East vs. West to get things done. For the parish to move forward, the entire parish must work together.

LESLIE “LES” RULF

CONTINUED

What are your plans to support the local businesses already in existence in our Parish?

I am a big believer in marketing and promotions when it comes to businesses; therefore, I would encourage a “Buy Local” program to energize businesses and locals to purchase from local businesses. Plus, as councilman, I would like to encourage our parish tourist commission and Chamber of Commerce to look into an aggressive promotional and marketing campaign to attract people to St. Mary Parish to shop at our stores and visit our local attractions. Plus, I encourage the Tourist Commission and Chamber to continue offering classes that can help businesses with promotions, marketing, business operations, etc. to help them grow and improve. In addition, we must make sure that the infrastructure is conducive to conducting business, such as nice roads and drainage (to prevent flooding).

In your opinion, what are the TWO most important qualities that candidates for Parish Council should possess?

Forget what a candidate should possess, let’s look at two important qualities that a council member should possess. A candidate can tell you what you want to hear to get elected; but, a sitting council member should have two important traits. One, the councilmember must be willing to work with others to get something done. I am confident that I have proven to people that I am able to work with others and that I do, thus getting things delivered for the people of District 5. Second, a parish council member should have a vision of where he or she would like to see his/her district and the parish in 5-to-10 years. Without some sort of idea of where you would like to be in the future, we will get nowhere. Only working together as an entire parish, and not with an East/West mindset, will get us to a future that is prosperous for all, including our children and grandchildren.

What would be the most immediate change that you would push for in our Parish?

I would like to see St. Mary Parish have a full-time parish president with an aggressive job description who could promote the parish throughout Louisiana, the country and world trying to recruit businesses and tourists to St. Mary Parish. In addition, this full-time parish president should be in BR and in Washington, D.C. chasing down dollars for the parish to help fund projects that will benefit the people and businesses of the parish.

In the event of the return of lockdowns, what is your stance on the lockdowns when it causes local businesses and our children to suffer?

I am against lockdowns because they hurt our economy by closing businesses and our children because they are not in school learning and interacting with other children. I will not support lockdowns. They do not work and have a horrible effect on our lives and freedoms.

“PARISH COUNCILMEMBERS MUST WORK TOGETHER AS A WHOLE AND NOT DISTRICT VS. DISTRICT OR EAST VS. WEST TO GET THINGS DONE. FOR THE PARISH TO MOVE FORWARD, THE ENTIRE PARISH MUST WORK TOGETHER.”



DOUGLAS STREETY, JR.

CANDIDATE FOR DISTRICT 5

PARTY: REPUBLICAN

RACE: WHITE

GENDER: MALE

985-519-7854

DOUGSTREETY@YAHOO.COM

I was born and raised in Patterson, married to the love of my life and we had two incredible children. We have always been a Christian family and will continue to instill Christian values in our kids.

I have been in direct sales for 25 years and currently handle major accounts for Lafayette Electric, such as plants and factories. My sales career began during the summer of my freshman year at LSU where I sold books door to door in Virginia. I did very well that summer and was asked to come back the following summer as a student manager which also went very well. This continued every year for eight years in eight different states. Selling, recruiting, training and mentoring other students taught me a great deal about people and business. This experience has helped me tremendously with understanding and dealing with people from all different walks of life and has led to much success in my professional career. Dealing with people and getting along with others is a great strength of mine.

What is your reasoning behind wanting to serve on the St. Mary Parish Council?

Nearly everyone I spoke to about the parish council agrees that we need fresh new minds with new ideas to make this parish a better place to live and raise a family. I believe we can come together and create positive change for the entire parish as long as everyone is in it for the right reasons. I have been very involved and understand the business climate in St. Mary Parish; this is the type of mind I believe needs to be on this council, not career politicians.

If elected, what is your plan to work with the Parish Government and the municipality of your district to bring new businesses to our Parish?

I believe in less taxes, less government and more freedom. My plan is to create an environment that allows businesses to thrive. We can do this by providing tax incentives for businesses committing to move to St Mary Parish. If the tax breaks are enticing enough, people will not be able to resist bringing their business to our Parish.

DOUGLAS STREETY, JR.

CONTINUED

What do you see as the biggest challenge for our Parish and how do you propose to tackle that challenge?

The biggest challenge is lack of jobs. Manufacturers are not building or moving here because of the high taxes and the lack of people to fill the jobs needed to run a plant or factory. If the leaders of our communities worked together to make this parish, as a whole, more opportunistic for business, more people would move or stay here. We can eliminate a lot of wasteful spending that would allow for nicer amenities, which would also play a role in keeping people in the parish. Such results would allow bigger businesses to operate in our parish.

Do you believe lawsuits against the energy industry would harm St. Mary Parish's economy? Why or why not? And would you work to prevent these lawsuits?

Yes, I do believe lawsuits against our energy industry would harm our economy. The energy sector is our way of life and is responsible for most of the economic development in St. Mary Parish. It could set a negative precedent that other companies may recognize as a hostile environment which could push away companies from settling in our parish. Protecting our way of life, our energy based economy and the people that depend on it to provide for their families would be one of my top priorities.

There are still a lot of drainage and roadway issues that exist around St. Mary Parish. How do you propose Parish Government aid in improving those issues?

We would work with the Atchafalaya Basin Levee Board and the US Army Corps of Engineers to seek out the issues starting with the most severe ones. There are also FEMA grants and other State and federal assistance opportunities available that could provide much needed assistance to us to be able resolve such issues.

How could the Parish Council support more things to do for children in our area?

Creating STEM programs for kids would help provide a brighter future for them. Other than academic help, the recreation departments could use much improvement which would benefit our youth. Why can't we pull our resources together and build a really nice sports facility that the whole parish can use instead of all the individual lackluster ball fields?

What are your plans to support the local businesses already in existence in our Parish?

I will work to create tax breaks. All of our local businesses deserve tax breaks. High taxes on businesses causes higher prices which hurt the consumers.

DOUGLAS STREETY, JR.

CONTINUED

In your opinion, what are the TWO most important qualities that candidates for Parish Council should possess?

Integrity and Authenticity

A candidate should want to serve on the council to make the community a better place to live. It is also extremely important to be genuinely interested in the well being of the entire parish.

What would be the most immediate change that you would push for in our Parish?

I would push for more responsible spending of our tax dollars. A forensic audit would identify areas where wasted funds can be redirected appropriately.

In the event of the return of lockdowns, what is your stance on the lockdowns when it causes local businesses and our children to suffer?

I have always and will always be against lockdowns, they are unconstitutional. The previous lockdown caused far more harm than good. So many people and business were devastated by excessive mandates and lockdowns. I will encourage citizens to refuse to comply to any and all draconian lockdown orders enforced by unelected bureaucrats. The areas of the country that went on with their lives as usual, like Florida, thrived while liberal democrat run cities and states abused their citizens by treating them like criminals. The entire lockdown situation was created by the political elites so they could rig the 2020 presidential election and that is exactly what they did. If they try to bring lockdowns back, it will be because there is a critical election coming up in 2024.

“A CANDIDATE SHOULD WANT TO SERVE ON THE COUNCIL TO MAKE THE COMMUNITY A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE. “



PATRICK J. HEBERT

CANDIDATE FOR DISTRICT 6

PARTY: REPUBLICAN

RACE: WHITE

GENDER: MALE

985-518-3366

PJH2055@YAHOO.COM

What is your reasoning behind wanting to serve on the St. Mary Parish Council?

I have served 6 years on the council and looking forward to serving another term. I have been able to learn more on how local government functions with a better understanding of the real needs of our parish. I believe with the experience I have I am the best candidate to lead the parish forward.

If elected, what is your plan to work with the Parish Government and the municipality of your district to bring new businesses to our Parish?

I will continue to work with our economic development director (Evan Boudreux) to encourage businesses to take a hard look at our great parish. I will continue to encourage our citizens to avoid raising taxes on businesses, which is in my opinion a huge deterrent for industry coming here.

What do you see as the biggest challenge for our Parish and how do you propose to tackle that challenge?

I see our biggest challenge is keeping our children here after they graduate from high school. I see them going off to college to never return. I think we need to promote our local high school programs (welding classes) and technical college more, which in turn helps to keep our children in our community. We have companies that are struggling to find workers (welders, fitters, carpenters, plumbers, electricians, office personnel and so many more) and they are all taught right here in our parish.

Do you believe lawsuits against the energy industry world harm St. Mary Parish's economy? Why or why not? And would you work to prevent these lawsuits?

You bet they will! I ask why would I want to attack the companies and industry that our parish survives on? I have voted against suing them and will continue to vote against it.

There are still a lot of drainage and roadway issues that exist around St. Mary Parish. How do you propose Parish Government aid in improving those issues?

I voted to spend \$20 million dollars on road improvements a couple years ago and that work is just completed. This money was spend throughout the parish in every community. We still have a long way to go but I think taking these projects on year after year and submitting for grants will keep the process going

PATRICK J. HEBERT

CONTINUED

How could the Parish Council support more things to do for children in our area?

The council has recreation districts throughout the parish. I believe we leave it up to those districts to cater to the citizens wants of their area. Different communities have different needs.

What are your plans to support the local businesses already in existence in our Parish?

Keep taxes down! It's very difficult to stay in business when your local taxes continue to go up. We need to continue to offer tax incentives for businesses that are willing to expand and hiring more employees.

In your opinion, what are the TWO most important qualities that candidates for Parish Council should possess?

1. Be able to listen to their constituents and not take it personal if they disagree.

2. Work with others members of the council to do what's best for OUR parish and again, don't take it personal if y'all disagree.

What would be the most immediate change that you would push for in our Parish?

Our number one priority should always be infrastructure, that's what government should always be focused on.

In the event of the return of lockdowns, what is your stance on the lockdowns when it causes local businesses and our children to suffer?

I was and still am against any type of lockdown. If you feel threatened to be around others, stay home. I would never support a mandatory lockdown.

“OUR NUMBER ONE PRIORITY SHOULD ALWAYS BE INFRASTRUCTURE, THAT’S WHAT GOVERNMENT SHOULD ALWAYS BE FOCUSED ON.”



JAMES “HAMMER” BENNETT, JR.

CANDIDATE FOR DISTRICT 7

985-255-7099

PARTY: NO PARTY

JWB12041968@GMAIL.COM

RACE: WHITE

GENDER: MALE

Hello everyone! My name is James Bennett Jr., and I have currently been your St. Mary Parish Councilman for District 7 of Morgan City for 7 ½ years. I am the son of the late James “Jack” Bennett Sr. and the late Geraldine Verrett Bennett. I am also the grandson of the late Inez Michel. These individuals made me the man I am today. They taught me that no matter what obstacle or roadblock to always keep moving forward. Along with that, they instilled in me the fight to stand up for what is right, and the important values needed to be a man. I am also blessed to be the husband of the beautiful Becky Bennett and father of James Bennett III. I am also the stepfather to Landon Aucoin. These are the individuals that motivate me to not only keep working hard for the people of Morgan City, but to strive to be a better person. You know what they say: A man cannot be truly a man if he does not devote his life to his family.

To list a few of our achievements, we have worked diligently with the City of Morgan City and St. Mary Parish to fix roads and drainage in our great district. Furthermore, I have served as Vice President of the St. Mary Advisory Budget/Finance Committee for the last 4 years. I have also been on the board of the Council on Aging for 1 year as well as being a member of the Local/National Chapter of AARP for 2 years. This is where I communicate with our senior citizens to gather input on any issues in our community. Additionally, I have sat on the board of directors for the Louisiana Crime Lab for 6 years along with being a member of the St. Mary Parish Planning and Zoning Board for 4 years. Last but certainly not least, I was blessed to play a role in several kids’ lives as I coached local high school and junior high football for 5 years. This is the most significant experience for me as I was able to teach our future generation about life lessons that expand upon the football field.

If re-elected, you all have my word that I will continue to make strides to make Morgan City and St. Mary Parish the wonderful place that we all have come to love. Using my proven strength and experience, along with my established connections, I believe that we can accomplish this. Thank you for all your support. God bless you all!

JAMES “HAMMER” BENNETT, JR.

CONTINUED

What is your reasoning behind wanting to serve on the St. Mary Parish Council?

For my third term, I hope to continue to make improvements in our parish. This includes making more adjustments to the budget along with facilitating more funding for additional projects. I also want to continue working with the current/incoming parish council along with the new parish president to further increase business influx in our parish. These endeavors will allow the City of Morgan City and the parish to have growth that will keep our citizens from leaving for opportunities in other areas. With the joint effort of our economic developer, council, and parish president, I believe that we can continue to make progress in our goal of making a better parish for ALL.

If elected, what is your plan to work the Parish Government and the municipality of your district to bring new businesses to our Parish?

Since my first term, District 7 has had a large amount of business openings that have aided in growing St. Mary Parish. That said, this could not have been done if I did not have the resources and connections with the City of Morgan City. Therefore, I hope to continue working with Morgan City leadership to bring more businesses to our parish. Additionally, I want to continue working closely with the economic developer of Morgan City and the parish to identify potential businesses that come to St. Mary Parish as a home base. This will involve identifying certain areas that we can advertise to draw in these potential firms. This ranges from utilizing our unused land, marketing our established companies, and advertising our massive sportsman paradise target market.

What do you see as the biggest challenge for our Parish and how to you propose to tackle that challenge?

The biggest challenge we have facing our parish is the division between its council members. Without total cooperation and proper communication, we cannot fulfill our parish's full potential. Any candidate can talk about doing this and doing that, but without 6 votes, we cannot pass any measures that can benefit the people. Therefore, my solution is to work tirelessly to unite our board members as division only creates inconsistencies and non-results. This will allow us to achieve a common goal for the betterment of ALL citizens of St. Mary Parish.

JAMES “HAMMER” BENNETT, JR.

CONTINUED

Do you believe lawsuits against the energy industry would harm St. Mary Parish's economy? Why or why not? And would you work to prevent these lawsuits?

Any insignificant lawsuit against the oil industry risks business development and progression in our parish. Therefore, I do not support these types of lawsuits. That said, there are litigations that were coastal based that were filed by the attorney general's office and the governor that the parish government has no control over whether we participate in them or not. These energy lawsuits fund some of the coastal restoration projects. Thus, to say that I completely oppose the lawsuit, would mean refusing access to critical restoration funds that could benefit St. Mary Parish.

There are still a lot of drainage and roadway issues that exist around St. Mary Parish. How do you propose Parish Government aid in improving those issues?

Most of the drainage issues are dealt with through the drainage boards. Because of this, I believe that we should continue to improve the way we monitor their use of people's tax dollars. This is done by participating in their monthly meetings and having open communication with board members. Furthermore, as we always done, we should assist them with applications for capital outlay projects or grants. This will allow us to improve funding for additional and much needed projects that may include resurfacing roads and improving drainage in St. Mary Parish.

How could the Parish Council support more things to do for children in our area?

We have a lot of underutilized resources regarding parish funded parks and recreation departments. Therefore, there needs to be better cooperation between each of these separate parks and recreation departments across St. Mary Parish. Our charter allows for a park and recreation director that oversees all activities and divisions. This position could ensure that the board is utilizing their resources appropriately to better our community for our children. Therefore, I propose that we reestablish this position where he or she will report directly to the parish council. Until we have efficiency in that area, we are never going to have enough facilities in one park location to be able support these bigger sports tournaments (soccer, baseball, etc.). If we have someone who focuses on improving and monitoring our different recreational offices, it will allow more tourism in our area, resulting in increased revenue. These extra funds will allow us to make additional improvements and create different activities for our children to participate in.

JAMES “HAMMER” BENNETT, JR.

CONTINUED

What are your plans to support the local businesses already in existence in our Parish?

First, I want to make it clear that our small businesses play a key role in unlocking our parish's true potential. That said, we as a council need to figure out the true needs of our local businesses in St. Mary Parish. I believe that we should further help them with receiving permits to expand their development. This will range from getting repairs for improvements to branching out to different locations throughout the parish. Additionally, I think that we should assist our business owners by finding the appropriate ways to cut taxes. Giving our local businesses viable tax breaks will allow them to have the income to grow and expand, resulting in a stronger economy for St. Mary Parish. This will allow our people to remain in the parish as they will be able to expand their operations and have more employment opportunities.

In your opinion, what are the TWO most important qualities that candidates for Parish Council should possess?

I believe that relatability is the most important quality in a candidate. I think that we need a parish councilman that represents ALL the people, not just a certain demographic. The people of this parish need to know who represents them, so they can feel comfortable talking about their ideas, thoughts, complaints, etc. I also think that integrity is an important quality that a candidate should have. If you do not build trust and strength with the people, you cannot succeed as a parish councilman. No number of connections and resources can override the need for one to be strong enough to tackle and challenge the important issues. A leader without that quality will deliver inconsistent results that will only hurt St. Mary Parish.

What would be the most immediate change that you would push for in our Parish?

I think the most immediate change that we should push is the better structure of our parish boards, i.e., drainage, sewage, recreation, etc. These entities are the largest consumer of tax dollars. Therefore, we need to ensure that these boards are not carelessly spending taxpayer dollars on transactions that will not benefit St. Mary Parish. We can do this by closely monitoring each of their budgets, and making sure they are transparent regarding their spending.

JAMES “HAMMER” BENNETT, JR.

CONTINUED

In the event of the return of lockdowns, what is your stance on the lockdowns when it causes local businesses and our children to suffer?

Most lockdowns are state and federally mandated and out of the control of the parish government. If a lockdown does occur, I believe that we must do what we can to help local businesses in their time of need. This involves giving funding and finding alternative ways of doing business that are specified for each individual business. This will allow our parish to continue to prosper. Regarding our children, the St. Mary Parish School Board has control over how the schools manage a lockdown, exempting the private schools. Furthermore, the parish council cannot control the actions of the school board as they operate independently. That said, I believe that we should better prepare our teachers and administration to adapt in the event of a crisis, i.e., zoom lectures, technological advancements, etc.

If anyone has any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me anytime at 985-255-7099 or jwb12041968@gmail.com. I would love to hear y'all input on these important issues. Remember, working relationships with our people equals progress and results in St. Mary Parish!

“YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY: A MAN CANNOT BE TRULY A MAN IF HE DOES NOT DEVOTE HIS LIFE TO HIS FAMILY.”



JAMES “JIMMY” DAVIS, JR.

CANDIDATE FOR DISTRICT 7

985-397-2157

PARTY: REPUBLICAN

JDJDIST7SMP@GMAIL.COM

RACE: WHITE

GENDER: MALE

My name is James H. Davis, Jr, but people know me as Jimmy Davis. I have lived and worked in St. Mary Parish my entire life, and now I would like to serve as your council member for District 7. I am the son of Jim and Eileen Davis. I have been married for forty-one years to Tonya King Davis. We have three children Brandy, Jamie, and Frances. We also have been blessed with eight grandchildren. I am a graduate of Morgan City High School. I am a parishioner of Holy Cross Catholic Church. I have worked in sales, owned a business, and now work in operations for a local company.

If elected to serve as your council member for District 7, I will strive to bring about unity in our parish. I will play an important role in the community. I will strive to perform my many duties to the best of my ability with honesty and integrity. I will listen to and try to resolve residents' concerns and to have your voices heard. I will work my hardest to be a problem-solver, to be responsive, to be fair, to act in the best interests of the community, and to work hard to be knowledgeable about community projects and activities. I will listen to your ideas and work to make St. Mary Parish the best place to live, work and raise a family.

What is your reasoning behind wanting to serve on the St. Mary Parish Council?

As a native of Morgan City and St. Mary Parish, I am deeply committed to my community, and I want to be an influence on the direction and future of St. Mary Parish and District 7. I am very passionate about bringing unity across St. Mary Parish. I believe there are much broader challenges, and I am willing to work cooperatively with the other members of the council to address these obstacles as a team. Being a councilman is a labor of love and commitment, and the payback is reflected in the quality of life in the community.

If elected, what is your plan to work with the Parish Government and the municipality of your district to bring new businesses to our Parish?

If elected, I plan to work with the Parish Government and District 7 to brainstorm ways to bring new businesses to our Parish. As a Parish, we have to be competitive with the surrounding parishes and state with proper incentives to attract new



JAMES “JIMMY” DAVIS, JR.

CONTINUED

business and keep current businesses here. In my opinion, the Parish Council should continue to work together with the Port of Morgan City as a team to attract possible dredging companies, oil field support companies, as well as the seafood industry related companies. with the surrounding parishes and state with proper incentives to attract new business and keep current businesses here. In my opinion, the Parish Council should continue to work together with the Port of Morgan City as a team to attract possible dredging companies, oil field support companies, as well as the seafood industry related companies.

What do you see as the biggest challenge for our Parish and how do you propose to tackle that challenge?

I think one of the biggest challenges for our Parish is the divisiveness between the East end of the parish and the West end of the parish. There is prestige in being a council member. It will take a lot of hard work from all of the council members as a team working together to make decisions that will benefit not only respective districts but the whole Parish as well. I will work hard to bring unity to the Parish council.

Do you believe lawsuits against the energy industry would harm St. Mary Parish's economy? Why or why not? And would you work to prevent these lawsuits?

I do believe lawsuits against the energy industry would harm St. Mary Parish's economy. As a lifelong worker in and around the energy industry, I have witnessed the crippling effect that lawsuits have on businesses within the energy industry. Lawsuits detour people from investing in energy related companies. I will work my hardest to be a problem-solver and work together as a team to prevent these lawsuits.

There are still a lot of drainage and roadway issues that exist around St. Mary Parish. How do you propose Parish Government aid in improving those issues? Drainage and roadway issues will always be problematic throughout St. Mary Parish. The Parish Council working along with the public works department should create a prioritized list to address drainage and roadway issues that are most severe. The Parish council should work together with the surrounding cities to find more permanent solutions to these issues like prioritizing repairs, push for funding, and ensure maintenance schedules are in place. It's all about communication, planning, and action.



JAMES “JIMMY” DAVIS, JR.

CONTINUED

How could the Parish Council support more things to do for children in our area?

I believe the current parks could be updated and maintained. In areas of the parish that do not have parks, parks can be created. I believe recreation areas should be created to follow the recreational trends. For example, pickleball is currently very popular and courts could be easily added across the parish. I believe that providing our children with recreational activities promotes unity, health, socialization, communication, and emotional well-being.

What are your plans to support the local businesses already in existence in our Parish?

Supporting local businesses is key to a thriving community. I plan to support and will encourage the community to support local businesses by shopping at local stores, eating at our local restaurants, and using local services. These businesses give our parish its unique cultural experience. When money is spent locally, the money would remain local which would help to boost our economy.

In your opinion, what are the TWO most important qualities that candidates for Parish Council should possess?

I believe that integrity and having good character are the two most important qualities that candidates for Parish Council should possess. Integrity is not what you appear to be when all eyes are on you. It's who you are when no one is looking. It's a high standard of honesty, truthfulness, decency, and honor that is never breached. Having good character means being fair, making good judgements, being respectful to others, being responsible, and caring about the community. I believe I have these two qualities and more.

What would be the most immediate change that you would push for in our Parish?

One change that I would push for in St. Mary Parish is to enhance our existing attractions. I believe improving campgrounds, golf courses, and recreational parks would provide places for people to come together promoting unity in the community. These attractions should be promoted. This would attract visitors to St. Mary Parish which means more spending at local businesses. It's a win-win for our community.

In the event of the return of lockdowns, what is your stance on the lockdowns when it causes local businesses and our children to suffer?

I disagree with the return of lockdowns. Shutting down businesses is not good for our local economy. Not only do our local businesses suffer, but the employees of those local businesses also suffer. Teachers are still trying to fill in the learning gaps from the lockdown in 2020. The children suffer educationally and emotionally. I believe a lockdown would cause more harm than good in both business and education.

“I WILL LISTEN TO YOUR IDEAS AND WORK TO MAKE ST. MARY PARISH THE BEST PLACE TO LIVE, WORK AND RAISE A FAMILY.”





ERIQ BLANCHARD

CANDIDATE FOR DISTRICT 8

985-312-2159

PARTY: NO PARTY

ERIQBLANCHARD22@GMAIL.COM

RACE: WHITE

GENDER: MALE

Hello, I'm Eriq Blanchard and I am running for Parish Council District #8. I was born and raised in Morgan City, where I still currently reside. I graduated from Central Catholic High School in 2014 and shortly after graduating, began my career in Law Enforcement. I served as a police officer in our parish for the past 8 years before changing career paths to the US Army Corps of Engineers.

My plans as a council member are to be highly active and take a leadership role in the community. As a council member, I will put all members in our community before myself, putting their complaints and their concerns before my own. I will be the strong voice for those who are not heard. I will work tirelessly to bridge the gaps in our communities to unite us together.

I believe that this community has built me into the man I am today, and it is my time to give back. I am married to Abigail Bailey Blanchard, who is from Charenton, LA, and is currently the Director of Nursing at Legacy Nursing and Rehabilitation in Franklin, LA. Together we have a daughter, Savannah Blanchard, and are currently expecting our son in late November. Having this in mind, my families' plans are to be lifelong residents of St. Mary Parish and it is in our best interest to help better our community.

Other plans of mine are to focus in on our parks and recreation to make sure that we are providing spaces for our youth to go and enjoy. I would also like to assist in our recreation parks with appealing to tournaments in our area, which would bring in revenue to our hotels, restaurants, and local stores.

Furthermore, I would love to meet with business owners in St. Mary Parish, past, present, and future, to get a better understanding of the challenges they are facing. I would love to listen to the pros and cons of doing business in St. Mary Parish, and what can we do to better position ourselves to attract new businesses.

I will be honest and tell you that I do not know everything, as a matter of fact, there is a lot I need to learn. However, I do know that members in our communities have brilliant ideas to some of the issues that St. Mary Parish faces. I do know that there are people in our communities willing to help. I do know that I will lean on these people and give them the opportunity to lean on me. I will be a council member who listens, asks questions, remains vigilant, and strives to learn for the better of our communities.



ERIQ BLANCHARD

CONTINUED

What is your reasoning behind wanting to serve on the St. Mary Parish Council?

The reason that I wish to serve as the councilman is to give back to the community that has built me. I believe that is time for a younger generation to step up in our community and provide an active council member. Being that I am 27 years old, I want to inspire the younger generation to come out and learn. I want to inspire our youth to bring our new ideas to the table and to work with our local government to better our community. I want to make sure that our children have a great place to grow up in, and I am dedicated to doing so.

If elected, what is your plan to work with the Parish Government and the municipality of your district to bring new businesses to our Parish?

I would like to work closely with our Parish's Economic Development personnel, as well as past and present business owners of our parish to learn the road blocks that our businesses are facing and what may be causing them to fail. Once learning those issues I would like to work with all forms of our parish government to remedy some of the problems and to remove as much red tape as possible that could be holding our businesses back. I would also love to have meetings by local business owners annual to give updates on their businesses to the council, their success, their shortcomings, and what the parish council could do to aid in the businesses success

What do you see as the biggest challenge for our Parish and how to you propose to tackle that challenge?

I believe the biggest challenge for our parish is keeping people here in St. Mary Parish. We have a lot of people leaving our parish to other cities and states to go to work. We are also struggling to bring new businesses into our parish and we are not able to keep doors open for entertainment businesses in our community. I plan on being an active leader in the community who will try to bring new ideas for tourism and entertainment to our town. Our parish is beautiful and has the opportunity to be a Hallmark community, but we need more leaders with drive to get it done. I believe when the tide starts to turn, we will have members in our community come out in numbers to help get it done!

Do you believe lawsuits against the energy industry would harm St. Mary Parish's economy? Why or why not? And would you work to prevent these lawsuits?

I do believe that lawsuits against any industry can harm an economy. However, I do believe is a lawsuit is right and just according to law and negligent acts by companies, then they should be held liable. I do not agree with frivolous litigation and individuals trying to make easy money, and I do believe that the entire state of Louisiana should crack down on those lawsuits. I believe that working with Senators of our District who will have more of a ear in Baton Rouge will be vital in this issue. As I've stated before, working as a team will be the only way to conquer large issues such as frivolous lawsuits.



ERIQ BLANCHARD

CONTINUED

There are still a lot of drainage and roadway issues that exist around St. Mary Parish. How do you propose Parish Government aid in improving those issues?

I would like to speak with members of each of our drainage committees and fully educate myself on how they operate the drainage systems. Then, I would like to do frequent information exchanges amongst our drainage committees to see if they could provide ideas to each other to resolve some of the issues we are having. I also would love to make our committee meetings more open and available to the public so that members of our communities can pitch in their ideas as well.

Issues regarding the roads I believe shall be dealt with one problem at a time. If the issue falls on DOTD then I believe the proper contacts should be made with them to repair the issue. If the problem falls on the parish, we should have a system where a work order is put in and the job completed. I also believe we should have an online complaint portal with these complaints where a citizen is able to review the complaint they filed. It will then be on the parish to provide and update on the complaint for what they observed and the plan of correction if any. Then, I also believe there should be a section for the online program that shows what the parish workers are working on, all the work they have completed, and what's next on the agenda for them. I do not believe in over complicating their job, but at least an easy system for them to fill out and it update our community to give our parish workers the recognition for the job they do, but also to keep the public informed of what's going on!

How could the Parish Council support more things for children to do in our area?

I believe our parish council needs to be more involved. As a council member, you form an audience of those who look for leadership and guidance in the community, use it to your constituents advantage. A council member should aid in making sure the people in their district are aware of what's going on, put the information in front of them! Council members should be attending recreation board meetings, weighing in on ideas, and pushing the boards to work in tandem with our communities! Also a council members should be aware of the public parks in their district, work with other local members in the council to keep these parks clean, up to code, and crime free. There is a park in Lakeside subdivision right now that is stricken with graffiti, broken pieces of equipment that have sharp edges, mulch that hasn't been changed out or dressed up, and is constantly trashed with litter. This park also serves as a park for our special needs and is the only park in the parish that I know of that has a special needs section. It is absolutely ridiculous, and as a councilman if we ride around for more than just elections, you would see neglect. I will be a council member for our community and for our youth, that's a guarantee. Quit looking for your political signs in people's yard and start looking at the help our community needs. If you can't tell my passion behind our community, read this response again.



ERIQ BLANCHARD

CONTINUED

What are your plans to support the local businesses already in existence in our Parish?

I am a shop local person, I preach it, and I love it. I'm okay spending a few extra dollars at our local stores. If you look around at the signs on our ballparks and the sponsorships on event t-shirts, a lot of companies donate back to our town. If it's feasible, shop local and give love back to our community. I would love to spot light some of businesses and tell our community where these businesses are helping us out at. I think at some point we need to look at what kind of taxes we are hitting these businesses with and make sure that they are sustaining and not hurting or in distress. We need these businesses in our community and we don't need to tax over and over again the same dollar that isn't getting bigger. These businesses aren't just supporting our tax income for the parish, but they are supporting their workers, and the children or families of their workers. Let's take care of our people and let's hope that by doing that, we attract new businesses.

In your opinion, what are the TWO most important qualities that candidates for Parish Council should possess?

DRIVE, you have to have the want and the drive built into to you. You have to get out of bed and want to better your community! I'm blessed to have been born with it. My mind doesn't stop and my passion does not fade. I have dreamed of being a public servant, I have dreamed of being a true leader of people, one who is willing to make change. I love our community and I have a family to raise here, so I have an absolute nonstop passion filled drive in me to better our community!

The second feature, **PERSON-ABILITY**, a councilman should be able to relate to ALL members of our parish. Complaints from members of our community **SHALL NOT** fall on closed ears. No matter where you live at, a parish councilman is **PARISH COUNCILMAN**. We should serve ALL members in our communities, and from where I sit, I feel members of our communities are being left out. I will be personable to everyone, no matter where you live, who you are related to (or the lack thereof), or your background. Every single person in our parish is important and deserved to be listened to and represented by our parish council.

What would be the most immediate change that you would push for in our Parish?

I would like to review our boards in the parish and speak to the board members in private. I want to make sure that we have people in positions for the right reason and not for personal gain or personal agendas. Along with that I will try to connect some of our board members with each other in the parish to develop relationships that can benefit our parish by the sharing of ideas and the sharing of hardships that each board is facing.

Along with this change, I would also immediately try to meet with every member in the council to make sure that we are all on the same page and willing to work as a cohesive unit. There has been issues, public and behind closed doors that have been going on and I would like to aid in defusing some of these problems. Our council should be able to work together for the common goal of our communities to get the job done!



ERIQ BLANCHARD

CONTINUED

In the event of the return of lockdowns, what is your stance on the lockdowns when it causes local businesses and our children to suffer?

Well, I won't be winning a popularity contest with this answer for sure. First and foremost, I don't agree with the government shutting down our commerce in any form whatsoever. People in our country have a choice, that's the thing called "freedom" we talk about. I do not believe in forcing people to get vaccines, it's their choice. They also shouldn't be fired behind not getting a vaccine or ridiculed. People who chose to get the vaccine (me), also should not be ridiculed. I got the vaccine because I was REALLY sick with Covid and I hope that it can help me in some form if I get it again.

People who don't want to wear a mask, fine it's their freedom, don't ridicule them. People who want to wear a mask, fine it's their freedom, don't ridicule them. Make your personal choice, you don't like the store because they require mask, shop at a different store. Don't want to go in, order it online and get it dropped off. People are making decisions based on their beliefs and they are allowed to have them, if they don't align with you, leave it.

As far as schools go, the kids have freedom, if they don't want to wear a mask, don't make them. Want your kid to wear one send them with it. Don't like it either way, home school, I don't know what to tell you. I do not like government stepping in and forcing things on us. Just food for thought, I'm not a conspiracy person by any means, but where has Covid been the past few years. My last comment on this no win topic for either side is, take care of yourself, take care of one another, be understanding, and above all else, love your neighbors.

God Bless you all, Elect Eriq Blanchard, a council member who cares about you, your loved ones, our youth, and our communities. Please give my Facebook Page a follow at Eriq Blanchard for St. Mary Parish Council District 8. My phone number is 9853122159 and my email address is – eriqjblanchard22@gmail.com, I am available to you.

"I WILL BE A COUNCIL MEMBER WHO LISTENS, ASKS QUESTIONS, REMAINS VIGILANT, AND STRIVES TO LEARN FOR THE BETTER OF OUR COMMUNITIES."





MARK DUHON

CANDIDATE FOR DISTRICT 8

PARTY: NO PARTY

RACE: WHITE

GENDER: MALE

985-397-2520

MDUHON1@YAHOO.COM

My name is Mark Duhon I Am a Parish Councilman for St. Mary Parish District 8, I am seeking Re-Election on Oct.14th ballot . I come from a line of movers and shakers my father was the late Loylis "T-shoe" Duhon was well -known as a rice farmer and general contractor. He also served 25 Years on the St. Mary Parish Police Jury and Parish Council ,most notably known for his tireless establishing sewers, drainage systems and building roads throughout the Parish. My brother is the Late Gary Duhon, he served eight years as a Parish Councilman at Large.

I am a man of conviction who is honest ,and I speak up for what is right. I will do anything in my community to help . I have personally used my own equipment assisting families in removing dilapidated trailers in my community .I define myself as a resourceful individual ;often using my own resources to give back to the community . I deliver food boxes to the elderly that can't go pick them up been doing this for the past 3 years since it was brought to my attention. I've used my tractor and bush hog cutting the high grass along the foot of the Amelia Bridge to Allison Marine. I've donated two sandbagging machines to assist with sandbagging during high water .I've got better lights installed by the grave yard in Amelia so you can see the area at night. I helped get the new pump station installed In Amelia . I helped get the Duhon -by pass road fixed ,had reflectors and stripes put on the Lake Palourde road ,had railroad crossing repaired and numerous other things fixed to many to list. I've \lead the charge on securing grants of S287,000 for Amelia walking trails to get our children off the road to the recreation center and 5100,000 for the completion of the Morgan City Walking Trail, I've also secured S1,500,000 to overlay Lake Palourde Road in Amelia as well as \$400,00 in state cash and a Parish match of \$133,333 for emergency power for drainage pumps that serves Amelia.

I am a business owner, of Mark Duhon Enterprises for the past 30 years and now I'm semiretired I've built levees, dug canals , built pumping stations, roads and land clearing with my knowledge and skills, I am helping improve our infrastructure issues within our parish . We must revive industry ,attract more manufacturing jobs and provide regular maintenance to beautify our community. And I'm not afraid to stand up for the people .

I have been married to my wife Bonnie Duhon for 24 years we have 4 wonderful grandchildren . I have proven I know how to make St. Mary Parish a more beautiful, economically thriving parish for all. There's still a lot of work to be done in the Parish with my knowledge I will do everything in my power to get it done with your support please vote for me Mark Duhon number 104.

MARK DUHON

CONTINUED

What is your reasoning behind wanting to serve on the St. Mary Parish Council?

I grew up in a house of politics never thought this was something I would do but the people needed a change we were getting left behind in this district and I knew it was time for someone with my knowledge to get involved someone who's not scared to get out there and get the work done if I have to do it on my own I'll do the best I can.

If elected, what is your plan to work with the Parish Government and the municipality of your district to bring new businesses to our Parish?

Get with our business leaders & mayors, Economic development groups for the Parish our ports and see what everyone's opinions are .See what it will take to make this parish more inviting for businesses to come here, talk to other Parishes and see what changes they had to make and see if we can come up with a plan.

What do you see as the biggest challenge for our Parish and how to you propose to tackle that challenge?

Maintaining the quality of life in the parish and making improvements where we can , Work more closely with the school board so we can get quality education for our children .

Do you believe lawsuits against the energy industry would harm St. Mary Parish's economy? Why or why not? And would you work to prevent these lawsuits?

I am against the lawsuits in the energy industry ,it makes us less friendly to work with, if we file lawsuits against the companies they will not want to come here they will take their business elsewhere.

There are still a lot of drainage and roadway issues that exist around St. Mary Parish. How do you propose Parish Government aid in improving those issues?

Apply for grants and work on other government funding as it comes available.

How could the Parish Council support more things for children to do in our area?

Make improvements to our recreation centers make them more kid friendly, open on weekends so the children have a safe place to play when they are not in school.

What are your plans to support the local businesses already in existence in our Parish?

Parish council should have an open door policy and put businesses first.

In your opinion, what are the TWO most important qualities that candidates for Parish Council should possess?

The two most important qualities in a Parish Council I believe is being Honest and Hard working.

MARK DUHON

CONTINUED

What would be the most immediate change that you would push for in our Parish?

To get better drainage improvements and roads.

In the event of the return of lockdowns, what is your stance on the lockdowns when it causes local businesses and our children to suffer?

I am against lockdowns that make our businesses and children suffer. There needs to be a better way.

**“WE MUST REVIVE INDUSTRY ,ATTRACT MORE
MANUFACTURING JOBS AND PROVIDE REGULAR
MAINTENANCE TO BEAUTIFY OUR COMMUNITY.
AND I'M NOT AFRAID TO STAND UP FOR THE PEOPLE .”**



CARLO GAGLIANO, JR.

CANDIDATE FOR DISTRICT 8

985-714-5656

PARTY: NO PARTY

CGAGLIANOJR@GMAIL.COM

RACE: WHITE

GENDER: MALE

I am Carlo Gagliano Jr., a candidate for St. Mary Parish Council District 8- #105. I am a lifelong resident of Amelia. My parents are Brenda Gagliano and the “late” Carlo Gagliano Sr. I attended J.S. Aucoin, MCJHS, and graduated from Central Catholic High School in 1988, then I attended USL and Nicholl State University. My Children are Nicholas, Carson, Gracie, and one grandson – Baker. I have been employed with Acadian Ambulance for 28 years, for which the last 6 years I have worked as Community Relations Supervisor \ Business Development Coordinator\ Government Relations for the Bayou Region (St. Mary, St. John, St. James, Lafourche, Terrebonne, Assumption Parish). My job responsibilities are attending St. Mary Council meeting and work with local and parish government as a rep of Acadian Ambulance. As CRS \ BDC, I am a liaison for local fire, police, and high schools for Acadian Ambulance in the Bayou Region. I am the lead Region 3 Designated Regional Coordinator for the State of Louisiana during disasters which covers St. Mary Parish. I am Chairperson of the United Way for South Louisiana Fund Distribution Committee and on the United Way for the South Louisiana Board of Directors and Executive Committee. This organization helps fund many local food banks and organizations in St. Mary Parish. I have been president of the St. Mary Parish Water and Sewer Commission #1 since November 2019. I am graduate of the St. Mary Chamber of Commerce – Leadership St. Mary. During Leadership St. Mary I learned valuable information about St. Mary Parish industry, education, healthcare, and parish government.

I am the best candidate for District 8 Council because of the leadership positions I hold in the organizations I am involved in and my years of employment at Acadian Ambulance. I will be the best person for District 8 Council because of my 29 years as a paramedic which I had to handle very intense and critical situations. I will be the best person due to my current position at Acadian Ambulance which requires me to be able to intensely listen to the citizens, the parish government, and all customers we serve which I know will translate into the duties of councilman District 8. I am a dedicated leader and will be transparent. I value the concerns that the citizens St. Mary Parish may have, and I will diligently work toward solutions.

Thanks for your support and consideration for voting for #105 -Carlo Gagliano Jr. St. Mary Parish Council District # 8.



CARLO GAGLIANO, JR.

CONTINUED

What is your reasoning behind wanting to serve on the St. Mary Parish Council?

-My reasons for wanting to serve on St. Mary Parish Council is due to the past 6 years of attending the council meetings on a regular basis and witnessing division. I want to bring unity to our council and St. Mary Parish. I have served the community as a paramedic for over 29 years, and I want to continue serving the citizens in another capacity on the Parish council. Another reason I want to serve is because I feel I will bring respect, open mind thought process, and will be transparent to the citizens of St. Mary Parish. As president of St. Mary Water and Sewer Commission #1 I experienced control tactics and division created by a local leader in the community. There is no place for old school politics of strong arming and intimidation tactics in the St. Mary Parish Government.

If elected, what is your plan to work with the Parish Government and the municipality of your district to bring new businesses to our Parish?

My plans would be to work very closely with Evan Boudreaux- Director of Economic Development with the Acadiana and Bayou Region Economic development directors.

Plans to work with industrial organizations in St. Mary parish and neighboring parishes to attempt to bring business to the district 8 region. New business in surrounding regions would live, shop, and do business with local companies especially in and near District 8.

I feel being very vocal expressing what St. Mary Parish had to offer. We need to brag on St. Mary and speak positive. I understand it may cost to promote St. Mary Parish but it is worth it.

I feel working with Young Memorial \ SLCC to assist and communicate training opportunities and skills for our citizens. If feel if a business is thinking of moving to St. Mary Parish, they need to know they will have good, trained employees to hire to start their business and to maintain their business.

I would review tax structure to ensure we do not over taxing the businesses.

We must work together as a parish.

What do you see as the biggest challenge for our Parish and how to you propose to tackle that challenge?

I think the biggest challenge is promoting St. Mary Parish as a place to live and raise your family. Through the years I have heard there is nothing in St. Mary Parish for younger generation to stay and raise their family. Many friends and family moved out. We need to work to transition from a negative narrative to a positive narrative.

I think starts with changing the narrative of our local and parish government by becoming united with a message that St. Mary Parish Government works for the citizens of St. Mary Parish. I feel we need to promote, promote, and promote more, by working together as one.



CARLO GAGLIANO, JR.

CONTINUED

Do you believe lawsuits against the energy industry would harm St. Mary Parish's economy? Why or why not? And would you work to prevent these lawsuits?

I feel lawsuits against the energy industry could harm St. Mary Parish's economy but if the lawsuits are warranted then the energy industry needs to be held responsible for any incidents which could negatively affect St. Mary Parish.

If energy companies have the fear of being sued on a regular basis, then I feel they choose to go elsewhere. I would not work to prevent lawsuits if they are warranted.

There are still a lot of drainage and roadway issues that exist around St. Mary Parish. How do you propose Parish Government aid in improving those issues?

I feel we need to continue to have good drainage districts with good board members to ensure the tax dollars are being spent wisely.

I feel drainage studies would show the most efficient locations for pumping stations in some communities that this has not happened in.

I feel we need to visit with our local state representatives – Beryl Amedee and Vinny St. Blanc along with who will represent St. Mary Parish in Senate District 21 on a regular basis to assist getting drainage and roadway funding from the state and federal government. Having a strong rapport and relationship with the state and federal government is vital to help resolve these issues.

How could the Parish Council support more things to do for children in our area?

Being in the medical field for over 29 years and working throughout the Bayou Region, I have witnessed health fairs focusing on children and their needs. I feel organizing children health care events through our local recreation districts and St. Mary Parish Schools. I feel many local businesses and citizens would be happy to sponsor and assist with such events. I feel working with recreation districts to brainstorm and be creative with physical and educational activities. The key is to work together as one.

What are your plans to support the local businesses already in existence in our Parish?

Working closely with St. Mary Parish Chamber is vital. We need to continue to support the chamber so they can continue to support local business. I think assisting and encouraging local business to become a member of the chamber but also assisting in advertising their businesses. I think promoting "shop local" events are very important which can be done on a regular basis.

I feel having a healthy relation with St. Mary Economic Development is vital in supporting local businesses.



CARLO GAGLIANO, JR.

CONTINUED

In your opinion, what are the TWO most important qualities that candidates for Parish Council should possess?

One quality is having the ability to listen. If you don't listen with a purpose to the citizens of St. Mary Parish, then you don't understand their needs. Be able to listen with a purpose to your fellow council members will provide an open mind to concerns which will give a better view on the situation to produce the best resolution.

The second quality is the ability to communicate. If you are not able to explain and speak well on the issues to the citizens, then that can create confusion, anxiety, anger and undo stress. I feel a councilman should be able to speak on facts and truth.

What would be the most immediate change that you would push for in our Parish?

I would like to change our Parish President position to a full-time position. I know it went out for vote and failed but the Parish President position is vital to the success of a parish. Due to my job, I work closely with other Parish Presidents in St. James, St. John, Terrebonne, and Lafourche parishes who all have full-time parish presidents with appropriate compensation who promote and work daily to improve these parishes. I feel we need a full-time parish president who can work closely with Evan Boudreaux- Director of Economic Development to meet with current business to keep them in St. Mary Parish and to attract new businesses to St. Mary Parish. Promoting St. Mary Parish is going to be key to our success as a parish.

In the event of the return of lockdowns, what is your stance on the lockdowns when it causes local businesses and our children to suffer?

Being in the medical field, the most recent lockdown due to COVID I feel was necessary at the beginning of the event, so I think lockdowns are necessary until a certain point. I feel with technology that there are precautions that can be taken to allow more of a normal life.

If for some reason there is another lockdown, we need to ensure local businesses have avenues to sell online and can advertise local and outside of St. Mary Parish.

We would need to assist with families to encourage activities outside at their residence so the children can be physical.

We can promote online educational zoom calls or events so there are some social interactions with other children. I feel there are many brilliant citizens I can work with to be creative in making sure the well-being of our children and businesses are taken care of.

WE CAN BE A SUCCESSFUL PARISH BY WORKING TOGETHER.





ANGELENA BROCATO

CANDIDATE FOR AT LARGE DISTRICT 10 985-992-0629
 PARTY: DEMOCRAT INFO@VOTEFORANGELENA.COM
 RACE: WHITE
 GENDER: FEMALE

I am Angelena Brocato. I was born and raised in St. Mary Parish. I'm a graduate of Patterson High and LSU with a degree in Public Relations and Advertising. My husband, Lyle, and I have 4 small children in St. Mary Parish public schools. I've served on the Hospital Service District #2 Board for nearly 2 years where I've been actively working to restore labor and delivery as well as implement other quality healthcare access at our local hospital.

While I may not be a career politician, I do have a career in living in St. Mary Parish. I do have a career in living, working, owning a small business, raising a family, paying bills, driving these roads here in St. Mary Parish. It's time for our parish to no longer be stuck and trapped by infighting, division and apathy. Instead it's time to find the momentum we need to thrive and innovate and compete. I believe we must work together to move St. Mary Parish forward while preserving and celebrating our heritage and culture.

We are ONE St. Mary Parish. It's time to UNITE.

What is your reasoning behind wanting to serve on the St. Mary Parish Council?

I was born and raised in St. Mary Parish. I'm a graduate of Patterson High and my husband and I have 4 children in public schools here. I care what happens to St. Mary Parish. We must have economic growth, a quality hospital, safe communities, improved roadways if we want St. Mary Parish to move forward. This parish can be a place that our children and grandchildren CAN return to not only because they want to, but because they have viable opportunity to make a living doing something they love and with the talents and skills God has blessed them with. We are an aging community. Our seniors need our care and so do young families seeking to set down roots here and help grow St. Mary Parish. The parishes that surround ours are thriving. We can thrive too.

ANGELENA BROCATO

CONTINUED

If elected, what is your plan to work the Parish Government and the municipality of your district to bring new businesses to our Parish?

Parish government has been plagued with infighting, separation, lack of conversation, lack of unity and therefor hasn't progressed our parish. The solution to our problems begins with communication. We must NOT use our vote as a weapon against one another. Our vote isn't to be used to settle a grudge. Our vote is supposed to be for the betterment of the entire parish. No progress or momentum or growth is possible when civility, transparency and respect are lost. Step one toward bringing in new business and economic opportunity is having a parish government who can communicate with and respect each other. The next step is having a parish council who is willing to pitch our area to potential new industry. We must be the faces and the voices and do the work of reaching out, connecting with and following through on potential new ventures. The parish council must be ACTIVE. ACTION is required to move forward. We are either moving forward or we are dying. There is no standing still.

What do you see as the biggest challenge for our Parish and how do you propose to tackle that challenge?

Lack of unity. Without unity we cannot progress. We have an East West divide here in St. Mary Parish that has existed for decades. We must realize that to grow we must be united. We must celebrate each other's victories, shop on each other's Main Streets, lend a hand to one another for support. How is this improvement possible when our parish government doesn't unite and treat each other with that civility? We as a parish will continue to be passed by in business, economic opportunity, recruitment, etc. if the ones that represent us aren't active contributors. Developers will continue to look to Terrebonne, Lafourche and Iberia parishes if we can't get our act together. We are ONE St. Mary Parish. If Amelia gets a win, the whole parish wins. If Baldwin gets a win, the whole parish wins. The sooner we realize that and put it into action the sooner we see St. Mary Parish step up into the success and harmony it deserves.

Do you believe lawsuits against the energy industry would harm St. Mary Parish's economy? Why or why not? And would you work to prevent these lawsuits?

To prevent feeling the hit of these energy industry lawsuits we must diversify our energy and economic resources. We know that the oil and gas industry has treated our area well historically and that all resources have their limits. We should diversify our industries so that we aren't tethered to something that is ever changing. We can't sustain economic success if we put all of our hope for success in a single basket. This parish is versatile. There are already wind energy opportunities growing here in our area. St. Mary Parish has the Atchafalaya River, agriculture, ship building, carbon black industry among others. We must look to those long standing resources as well as innovation for opportunity to grow so that we aren't held hostage by ever changing rules, regulations and legislation.

ANGELENA BROCATO

CONTINUED

There are still a lot of drainage and roadway issues that exist around St. Mary Parish. How do you propose Parish Government aid in improving those issues?

The way the parish can best aid in infrastructure improvements is by having more money. We must look at the big picture. These necessary and long overdue improvements require money which is something the parish currently lacks. Immediately beginning work on bringing in tourism dollars, attracting young families, improved grant application efforts will bring that revenue that our parish so urgently needs. This immediate work on acquiring capital is how we begin allocating more funds toward these improvements we are all need and want.

How could the Parish Council support more things to do for children in our area?

The children of St. Mary Parish are counting on us. They are counting on us for safety, healthcare accessibility, quality education and opportunities to socialize and learn from each other and shared experiences. We need more free arts education and exposure through theatre, painting, music. We need more outdoor activities such as a public pool, skate parks and splash pads. Mostly, its our special needs children in our community that lack the access to safe and sensory friendly areas for play and social engagement. Parents of children with special needs are often hesitant to go to public play areas due to the flight risk of some special needs children, lack of equipment that is safe and accessible for special needs and a lack of understanding by others that share the space. It is our jobs to make public play areas safe and inclusive for children with special needs as well as their parents/caregivers. When we see, hear and experience this inclusion we all learn and thrive together.

What are your plans to support the local businesses already in existence in our Parish?

From my understanding there are tax incentives in place for certain new business opportunities and those incentives aren't necessarily made available to existing businesses. The industries and businesses that have kept their home here in St. Mary Parish don't do so without occasional hardship. The appreciation and opportunity must be extended to these industries and businesses as well. While we must grow, diversify and innovate we also should appreciate and lend a hand to the companies that have committed to making this their home and providing jobs, purpose and opportunity for those that live here.

In your opinion, what are the TWO most important qualities that candidates for Parish Council should possess?

1. Great Communication Skills with each other, the community and government/civic leaders and the community at large is required. Transparency and connection is how you build civic trust and encourage creative solutions, engagement and ideas from all.
2. Humility. People who serve in government should be able to drop their ego at the door, listen to the perspective of others and be willing to see things differently. The wants, needs and requirements of our parish and it's citizens are always evolving. We need a spirit of listening, cooperation and a willingness to work diligently for all.

ANGELENA BROCATO

CONTINUED

What would be the most immediate change that you would push for in our Parish?

Building a bridge between council members and the communities. Positive relationships within the parish government are essential. We must respect one another, find common ground and sometimes agree to disagree. This type of transformation in how we approach the necessary and important work of the parish has, in and of itself, the power to improve the trajectory of our success!

In the event of the return of lockdowns, what is your stance on the lockdowns when it causes local businesses and our children to suffer?

When we know better we should do better. We've all been through so much with Covid. Loss of loved ones, loss of independence, loss of social connection, financial loss and the list goes on and on. We've been through something extreme. The hope would be that we know preventative measures such as distancing, hand washing, mask wearing when necessary that would help us move through openly if this should ever present itself again. It is our responsibility to protect ourselves and our fellow citizens while also being able to move through our lives with the purpose and connection we require..

“I BELIEVE WE MUST WORK TOGETHER TO MOVE ST. MARY PARISH FORWARD WHILE PRESERVING AND CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE.

WE ARE ONE ST. MARY PARISH. IT' S TIME TO UNITE.”



GWENDOLYN “GWEN” HIDALGO

CANDIDATE FOR AT LARGE DISTRICT 10

985-518-8173

PARTY: REPUBLICAN

GHIDALGO@COX.NET

RACE: WHITE

GENDER: FEMALE

To all Citizens of St. Mary Parish,

My name is Gwendolyn “Gwen” Hidalgo and I am seeking reelection for the District 10 At-Large seat on the St. Mary Parish Council. My husband, Glen, and I have lived in Bayou Vista for the past 30 years. Prior to that, we lived in Centerville for 8 years and in Berwick for 2 years.

My husband and I are lifelong residents of St. Mary Parish. Our daughter, Heather, son-in-la TK, and our three grandsons, Sport, Eli and Trey are he pride and joy of our lives. My parents are Gertrude and Pete Prestenbach and Jerry and Evelyn Landry. We also have pride in our parish’s strong communities, talented people, and bountiful resources.

I am a graduate of Morgan City High School also Leadership St. Mary. I’ve worked in downtown Morgan City for the Daily Review newspaper for over 25 years, and Wildflower Boutique for 12 years. I am currently employed by the Diocese of Lafayette as a secretary/bookkeeper for St. Joseph’s Catholic Church in Centerville and Church of the Assumption in Franklin.

For the past 4 years, I have enjoyed serving the people of our parish by being a voice for all residents across St. Mary Parish. From Amelia to Jeanerette and all towns and communities in between, every voice has a right to be heard and I am here to listen. I know that there is more to be done to bring our community together to become a parish that works in unison in a positive manner to prosper, grow and move forward.

With your help, I look forward to continuing to work diligently toward that goal and being a VOICE FOR THE PEOPLE! God Bless!

Your vote on October 14th will be deeply appreciated!



GWENDOLYN “GWEN” HIDALGO

CONTINUED

What is your reasoning behind wanting to serve on the St. Mary Parish Council?

I am seeking reelection for another term because serving on the Council has brought lots of personal gratification, being able to help the people of our parish. My first term being a learning experience, and that another term will allow me to get more things accomplished. I interact on a daily basis with people needing assistance with problems and concerns. I have experience of who to call on as needed.

1.If elected, what is your plan to work with the Parish Government and the municipality of you, district to bring new business to our Parish?

As the incumbent representative for District 10, I will continue to have a good relationship with our parish administration and all five municipal administrations to work together on a collaborative plan to make St. Mary as attractive and welcoming to anyone looking to bring a new business here.

First, thing we need to do in my opinion, is to come up with as easier and quicker process to clean up blighted properties across the parish. It's sad that it takes months, sometimes years to remove a structure that is not only an eyesore but an uninhabitable danger to neighboring residents. We must do better with this.

Secondly, although it has gotten better in the last few years, we need to continue to work on making our zoning and building regulations more uniform between parish governments and municipal governments. As well as making them more user-friendly with less red tape.

What do you see as the biggest challenge for our Parish and how do you propose to tackle that challenge?

In my four years on the council, sadly, I have seen more division in this parish than I could have ever imagined. I truly believe that our biggest challenge of the next term will be to bring our parish council and all five municipalities together to work in unison and not fight each other at every turn.

I will continue to stay bipartisan and not “take sides” as they say. I feel that we should be able to agree to disagree but still be able to communicate and work together in the best interests of all residents of our parish.

Do you believe lawsuits against the energy industry would harm St. Mary Parish's economy? Why or why not? And would you work to prevent these lawsuits?

My opinion is that Lawsuits against energy companies will definitely impact and hurt our parish's economy as well as our states. This will not only increase fuel prices which are already too high, but will weaken energy, security of our entire country. Suing Exxon, Chevron, etc. doesn't reduce the demand. It only means we'll have to import more from countries that pollute a lot more than the U. S. ever would. I will work to prevent any lawsuits to the best of my ability.



GWENDOLYN “GWEN” HIDALGO

CONTINUED

There are still a lot of drainage and roadway issues that exist around St. Mary Parish. How do you propose Parish Government aid in improving those issues?

As in the past we've bonded funds, however, another cost effective, way to handle our infrastructure issues is to use our tax dollars efficiently as a match for state and federal grants and continue to communicate to work with our state legislature to bring in those grants to St. Mary Parish.

How could the Parish Council support more things to do for children in our area?

In my four years on the Parish Council, I have always supported children, activities throughout the parish without hesitation. As a representative for the residents, it is my responsibility to appoint good, competent people to our recreation boards and to be a good steward of our tax dollars. I have listened and worked well with various rec. boards on a regular basis.

I want the young people in our communities to have a say, to what they would like to have that will make their free time more enjoyable. I would like them to be invited to recreation meetings to be involved and present their ideas to the board. That is how Bayou Vista Rec. Board got the idea for the skate park, which has become a very big asset to our youngsters.

What are your plans to support the local businesses already in existence in our Parish?

I will continue to work with Mr. Boudreaux, our Economic Development Director as well as the Chamber of Commerce not only to get incentives for new business to come here, but to figure a way to give incentives or possible tax breaks to allow existing businesses to stay and prosper.

In your opinion, what are the TWO most important qualities that candidates for Parish Council should possess?

In my opinion, I believe that common sense and a strong desire to help and be a voice for the people of our parish, are the two most important qualities that it takes to be a good representative of the people. I have seen people who were elected to serve their community, become obsessed with their own agenda, or try to achieve notoriety for themselves. Our job is to serve the residents as best we can to make our parish as safe and enjoyable to live in as possible.

GWENDOLYN “GWEN” HIDALGO

CONTINUED

What would be the most immediate change that you would push for in our Parish?

The immediate change that I would like to push for in our Parish, would be Town Hall meetings in each District at least 2 or 3 times a year. I would like to meet with people in all our communities to get ideas and concerns from them, have open communication and transparency. Also, I would like to hold these meetings at different locations across the parish. With input from the different communities, we could work together and make our ideas and concerns a reality.

In the event of the return of lockdowns, what is your stance on the lockdowns when it causes local businesses and our children to suffer?

I will never support governmental mandatory lockdowns or masking. Shutting down schools and business causes more problems than it helps in my opinion. Both adults and children were negatively affected mentally, physically, and emotionally in the past by the mandates. Depression and Suicide rates increased, children's test scores declined significantly and our freedom to choose was taken away. Sadly, after all of that, there is no proof that the mandates stopped anyone from contracting the disease. My opinion is that they were politically motivated, and not safety motivated.

“I WILL CONTINUE TO STAY BIPARTISAN AND NOT “TAKE SIDES” AS THEY SAY. I FEEL THAT WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO AGREE TO DISAGREE BUT STILL BE ABLE TO COMMUNICATE AND WORK TOGETHER IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF ALL RESIDENTS OF OUR PARISH.”





REGINALD WEARY

CANDIDATE FOR AT LARGE DISTRICT 10 985-381-6588
 PARTY: DEMOCRAT REGWEARY@GMAIL.COM
 RACE: BLACK
 GENDER: MALE

Change is Necessary, especially if it leads to prosperity and unity among the citizens of this great community. I am Reginald D. Weary, MBA, and I am ready to be “Your Choice for Change” in St. Mary Parish.

I am a 1990 graduate of Bogalusa High School, a 1995 graduate of the University of Southwestern Louisiana (USL), and 2011 MBA graduate from the University of Phoenix. I have over 30 years experience in the business field relating to Marketing, Finance, Management, and Municipal Accounting.

I have been a resident of St. Mary Parish for 26 years. I am married to the beautiful Theresa Johnson Weary, whom I met at the University of Southwestern Louisiana a few weeks prior to Hurricane Andrew. We have raised two lovely daughters, Tieriana and Tayla Weary, both of whom are Morgan City High School Honors graduates and ULL Ragin Cajuns Honors Graduates. Tayla was one of the Class of 2018 school's valedictorians and is currently employed as a SMP teacher. Tieriana has received her master's degree from ULM and currently is a GED student advisor. I am the CFO for the City of Patterson and responsible for preparing maintaining a \$15 million budget. I have also worked with the City officials on numerous projects over my 12 years of employment.

I am an active community member. I am an advocate for social justice, a Deacon at Mt Era Baptist Church, a Louisiana Municipal Certified Deputy Clerk (LMCDC), Owner of Weary's Tax Prep and Bookkeeping (AFSP), current Delegate for Leadership St. Mary, Past President of the St Mary NAACP, former Board member St Mary Chamber of Commerce and St Mary Council on Aging, former Vice President of the Tri City Helping Hearts Foundation, former Treasurer for the St Mary Toastmaster.

Through the connections that I have made within this community, I have been able to build professional and personal relationships with leaders throughout the Parish and State. My top concerns are retaining our more of graduates by revitalizing our economy, creating high-paying jobs, bringing new businesses, developing affordable housing opportunities, and maintaining a healthy budget.

As your next councilman, I will continue to work with parish and local municipalities to enhance economic development work with Sheriff, and Local Police Departments to increase safety deliver transparency of all legislation brought to the public work with School Board and Technical Colleges to enhance education.

It is important that St. Mary becomes a beacon parish in this state whereby the next generation will want to live, work and thrive in this community. We have so much untapped potential here and with my vision, financial background, and community involvement experience, we can shine.

I am Reginald D. Weary candidate for District 10 at large #108 on the ballot. “YOUR CHOICE FOR CHANGE”

REGINALD WEARY

CONTINUED

What is your reasoning behind wanting to serve on the St. Mary Parish Council?

I have long been a proponent of improving our Parish, my home. I was offered opportunities to leave and start a life elsewhere, but I wasn't interested. However, I can't sit on the sideline and watch the parish decline.

I am employed by the City of Patterson, and I understand how government works. With my passion and experience, I bring a wealth of knowledge on balancing large budgets and working with the whole parish in terms of community organizations and community development projects. My goal is to use my resources, energy and skills to revitalize St. Mary Parish for our children and for the many residents who feel like me; St. Mary is a great place to live. We need fresh eyes, fresh leadership willing to put in the work to make it even greater to live and thrive here.

If elected, what is your plan to work with the Parish Government and the municipality of your district to bring new businesses to our Parish?

Small business is the heartbeat of this community. And, offering more support to local industry is a sure sign to re-energize those who are already making it work in our parish, but it also serves as an attractant to those who are seeking to expand in our parish. I am poised and ready to partner with council members, municipal and statewide leaders to set up programs that can offer tax incentives to potential businesses. St. Mary has prime infrastructure and access to a host of transportation options. It will be a team effort and it's possible to revitalize our economic footprint. We have the components. We need to deliver.

What do you see as the biggest challenge for our Parish and how do you propose to tackle that challenge?

Affordable housing. It's unfortunate to see and hear stories of our residents moving away from St. Mary. I've canvassed the neighborhoods and talked to residents who have moved away and they agree that affordable housing is a huge challenge when considering staying or packing their bags.

We can accomplish this goal by enacting the parish's condemnation rules and regulations. Demolishing blighted and abandoned homes and rehabbing those properties can ensure more affordable and attractive homes. Growing families need growing communities. Keep our families here by giving them homes in the community in which they work and go to school.

Do you believe lawsuits against the energy industry would harm St. Mary Parish's economy? Why or why not? And would you work to prevent these lawsuits?

I don't believe the energy industry should get a pass if they cause damage. I will not work to prevent any legitimate lawsuits brought before the parish. But, I feel we must work WITH the energy industry to ensure the economy grows without harming the interest of our people and property.



REGINALD WEARY

CONTINUED

There are still a lot of drainage and roadway issues that exist around St. Mary Parish.

How do you propose Parish Government aid in improving those issues?

We tap into resources we have including state funding opportunities, road royalty funds, capital outlay budgets and match funds from local municipalities. We also partner with our state legislators to work on our behalf.

How could the Parish Council support more things to do for children in our area?

Partnerships. The parish council can opt to host more parish wide activities at local civic centers by partnering with schools, churches, and youth organizations. Often times, you'll find community groups hosting children's programs on their own. But, with proper planning and funding, the parish council can better support these ventures or creating new ones by organizing a community-focus group or committee. This committee can find ways to institute academic and athletic activities.

What are your plans to support the local businesses already in existence in our Parish?

Offer more incentives. Again, being an employee with the City of Patterson, I'm aware of how government can affect the local economy. Patterson has implemented a new program to attract and retain businesses called Shop Patterson. The key is to learn what works and build on that. I'm not opposed to adopting strategies from other growing communities. If you know better, you do better.

In your opinion, what are the TWO most important qualities that candidates for Parish Council should possess?

Experience and Integrity.

I didn't just show up at Qualifying to make a difference in our parish. I've been working with parish leaders and community members for nearly 20 years. I bring know-how, fresh energy and integrity to move this parish forward for all of us. It matters to me how my parish compares to the rest of the state. I believe we have what it takes to be top leaders in industry, education and employment. And, I bring experience and integrity to do just that.

What would be the most immediate change that you would push for in our Parish?

Rebalance the budget.

In the event of the return of lockdowns, what is your stance on the lockdowns when it causes local businesses and our children to suffer?

The pandemic really put a strain on our local economy. I would truly advocate for our local businesses. I, too, am a business owner, but I'm also an essential worker. I wasn't able to stay home; I had to be at work every day. In the interest of safety, I would consider the risks.

“YOUR CHOICE FOR CHANGE”

