

**WCTA
COUNTY
COMMISSIONER
CANDIDATE
QUESTIONNAIRE
SUMMARY REPORT**

**2012
ELECTIONS
GUIDE**



1. Fire and Emergency Services funding:

a. How would you propose to equalize fire and emergency services funding between North and South

Candidate	Response
Bill Imfeld	Please see www.waltontaxpayers.org for candidates response
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts	The first step to equalize the funding is to determine where the most fire services are used. Then determine the per centage of fire tax paid per dwelling. Fire tax should be a reflection of the services used.
Allen White	Candidate Did Not Respond To Questionnaire
Bill Fletcher	I don't know enough about funding to offer an opinion at this time.
Franklin (Frank) Day	I would suggest funding all fire and emergency services equally thereby offsetting the double taxing of the existing Special Taxing Districts. This would allow those Special Taxing Districts to reduce their millage rates to accommodate for the BC funding
Paula Riggs	It is evident that there are inequities in funding between fire departments. It is obvious that the South County carries most of the burden of the funding of all fire/emergency services. Those districts that are paying for their own fire protection through a special assessment should not be double taxed for the other districts. In order to better equalize fire/emergency services funding between North and South Walton County, I would first propose a special workshop to include all stakeholders. The fire districts and all associated departments should meet with the County Commission for an open discussion. All parties need to first review Chapters 189 and 190 of the Florida State Statues pertaining to special districts. It is paramount that public participation is highly encouraged through all avenues of advertisement. The taxpayers are the true stakeholders in this issue. Together I believe that Walton County has the resources to develop and implement a plan that is fair and equitable to all and to assure the highest level of service.
W. Robert Nelson	Look at the total current contributions being given by the county to the different departments then using a formula that takes into account assessed value and usage, if structures are present or if it is vacant land and start applying that to the funding levels that are being given to various entities. Then phase in a standardized funding formula over a set period of time.
William J. 'West' Ritchie	Address the needs of the district and fund them accordingly. Need based and fund from one source
William 'Bill' Chapman	Candidate Did Not Respond To Questionnaire
Cecilia Jones	This issue is one which has no easy resolution. While the citizens of South Walton opted to create an independent special taxing district financed with additional ad valorem taxes to enhance fire services south of the Bay, such decision does not provide for any exemption from county wide ad valorem taxes. I do not disagree that this matter is worthy of discussion and consideration, however, it must be approached very carefully. Past county administrators and a county consultant have done in-depth analyses and concluded that extracting the north Walton fire budget from the county budget, charging north Walton properties equivalent fees or additional ad valorem taxes, would be prohibitive. This is based on north Walton median income and property values. However, funding options for north Walton fire and attempts to find equitable solutions must continue. This is an issue I will address with a new County Administrator
Cindy Meadows	This would result in taxes paid for fire and ER services to increase in north. Until people get back to work and the economy improves, we need to work on lowering taxes for all citizens. At some point in the future, fire services will be supported by the cities and areas served by those fire departments.
Thomas I. Babcock	This is certainly a sensitive issue going back to 1995 when I believe the South Walton Fire District was created. I would propose the BCC establish a committee with a clear mandate and time schedule to make recommendations to the BCC for an equitable solution for all parties. The committee would hold workshops for public input as well as input from cities and/or fire departments within the North Walton Fire District.
Timothy G. Pauls	This situation could be treated the same as the Mosquito Control Districts, each District would levy a millage rate within the district for providing services to the residents/property owners within their respective service areas.
Will Palmer	The current system is not fair. South of the Bay has a special district that taxes in order to cover expenses. North of the Bay has not such taxing authority. This leaves taxpayers in the South to pay for a majority of the fire/emergency services in the North as well.

b. Do you favor or oppose requiring owners of vacant or farm land to pay for fire protection?

Candidate	Favor	Oppose
Bill Imfeld	X	
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts	X	
Allen White	No	Response
Bill Fletcher	X	
Franklin (Frank) Day	X	
Paula Riggs	X	
W. Robert Nelson	X	
William J. 'West' Ritchie	X	
William 'Bill' Chapman	No	Response
Cecilia Jones	See WCTA website	
Cindy Meadows	See WCTA website	
Thomas I. Babcock		
Timothy G. Pauls		X

b. Do you believe the TDC Board should have more authority over TDC decision-making? If so, would you favor or oppose changing the statute to enable this?

Candidate	<u>More Authority</u>		<u>Change Statute</u>	
	Favor	Oppose	Favor	Oppose
Bill Imfeld		X		X
Richard (Rick) Roberts		X		X
Allen White	No	Response		
Bill Fletcher		X		X
Franklin (Frank) Day	X		X	
Paula Riggs		X		X
W. Robert Nelson	X		X	
William J. 'West' Ritchie		X		
William 'Bill' Chapman	No	Response		
Cecilia Jones	See WCTA website			
Cindy Meadows	X		X	
Thomas I. Babcock	X		X	
Timothy G. Pauls		X		
Will Palmer		X		X

2. Tourist Development Council:

a. Do you favor or oppose placing the TDC Executive Director under the County Administrator?

Candidate	Favor	Oppose
Bill Imfeld	X	
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts		X
Allen White	No	Response
Bill Fletcher		X
Franklin (Frank) Day	X	
Paula Riggs	X	
W. Robert Nelson		X
William J. 'West' Ritchie	X	
William 'Bill' Chapman	No	Response
Cecilia Jones	See WCTA website	
Cindy Meadows	X	
Thomas I. Babcock		X
Timothy G. Pauls		X
Will Palmer	X	

c. Do you favor or oppose allowing the TDC Board to decide the number of Board meetings each year?

Candidate	Favor	Oppose
Bill Imfeld	X	
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts	X	
Allen White	No	Response
Bill Fletcher	X	
Franklin (Frank) Day	X	
Paula Riggs		X
W. Robert Nelson	X	
William J. 'West' Ritchie		X
William 'Bill' Chapman	No	Response
Cecilia Jones	See WCTA website	
Cindy Meadows	X	
Thomas I. Babcock	X	
Timothy G. Pauls	X	
Will Palmer		X

d. Do you favor or oppose requiring the BCC representative to the TDC Board be a Commissioner representing a South Walton District? If in favor, will you vote to require same?

Vote

Candidate	Favor	Oppose	Yes	No
Bill Imfeld		X		
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts	X			
Allen White	No	Response		
Bill Fletcher	X		X	
Franklin (Frank) Day	X		X	
Paula Riggs	X		X	
W. Robert Nelson	X		X	
William J. 'West' Ritchie		X		
William 'Bill' Chapman	No	Response		
Cecilia Jones	See WCTA website			
Cindy Meadows		X		
Thomas I. Babcock		X		
Timothy G. Pauls	X			
Will Palmer	X		X	

f. Do you favor or oppose the use of TDC funds for use north of the Bay?

Candidate	Favor	Oppose
Bill Imfeld	X	
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts		X
Allen White	No	Response
Bill Fletcher	X	
Franklin (Frank) Day	X	
Paula Riggs	X	
W. Robert Nelson	X	
William J. 'West' Ritchie	X	
William 'Bill' Chapman	No	Response
Cecilia Jones	See WCTA website	
Cindy Meadows	X	
Thomas I. Babcock	X	
Timothy G. Pauls		X
Will Palmer		X

e. Do you favor requiring the TDC to have public workshops as is finally to be done in the proposed "Discovery Center" as a necessary prerequisite to any engagement of outside agencies/contractors as was already done in the present case?

Candidate	Favor	Oppose
Bill Imfeld	X	
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts	X	
Allen White	No	Response
Bill Fletcher	X	
Franklin (Frank) Day	X	
Paula Riggs	X	
W. Robert Nelson	X	
William J. 'West' Ritchie		X
William 'Bill' Chapman	No	Response
Cecilia Jones	X	
Cindy Meadows	X	
Thomas I. Babcock	X	
Timothy G. Pauls	X	
Will Palmer	X	

g. Do you favor or oppose requiring that all documents produced in the conduct of TDC business, including specifically those produced by and in the custody of outside contractors such as advertising and marketing firms, should be made publicly available in their entirety monthly?

Candidate	Favor	Oppose
Bill Imfeld	X	
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts	X	
Allen White	No	Response
Bill Fletcher	X	
Franklin (Frank) Day	X	
Paula Riggs	X	
W. Robert Nelson	X	
William J. 'West' Ritchie	X	
William 'Bill' Chapman	No	Response
Cecilia Jones	See WCTA website	
Cindy Meadows		X
Thomas I. Babcock	X	
Timothy G. Pauls		X
Will Palmer	X	

h. Do you think the TDC operates with too much independence, about the right amount of direction, or not independently enough?

Candidate	Too Much	About Right	Not Enough
Bill Imfeld		X	
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts	X		
Allen White	No	Response	
Bill Fletcher		X	
Franklin (Frank) Day	X		
Paula Riggs		X	
W. Robert Nelson		X	
William J. 'West' Ritchie		X	
William 'Bill' Chapman	No	Response	
Cecilia Jones		See WCTA website	
Cindy Meadows	X		
Thomas I. Babcock		X	
Timothy G. Pauls		X	
Will Palmer	X		

b. Should Commissioners micromanage county employees, or restrict their role to policy-making, budgeting and oversight of management?

Candidate	Micro Manage	Restrict Role
Bill Imfeld		X
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts		X
Allen White	No	Response
Bill Fletcher		X
Franklin (Frank) Day		X
Paula Riggs		X
W. Robert Nelson		X
William J. 'West' Ritchie		X
William 'Bill' Chapman	No	Response
Cecilia Jones		See WCTA website
Cindy Meadows		X
Thomas I. Babcock		X
Timothy G. Pauls		X
Will Palmer		X

3. BCC Role

a. Should Commissioners have individual discretionary accounts for unbudgeted discretionary expenditures?

Candidate	Yes	No
Bill Imfeld		X
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts	X	
Allen White	No	Response
Bill Fletcher		See WCTA website
Franklin (Frank) Day		X
Paula Riggs		X
W. Robert Nelson		X
William J. 'West' Ritchie		X
William 'Bill' Chapman	No	Response
Cecilia Jones		See WCTA website
Cindy Meadows		X
Thomas I. Babcock	X	
Timothy G. Pauls		X
Will Palmer		X

c. Have the numerous early terminations of department heads and administrators been a good thing for Walton County?

Candidate	Yes	No
Bill Imfeld	X	X
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts		X
Allen White	No	Response
Bill Fletcher		X
Franklin (Frank) Day	X	
Paula Riggs		X
W. Robert Nelson		X
William J. 'West' Ritchie		X
William 'Bill' Chapman	No	Response
Cecilia Jones		See WCTA website
Cindy Meadows		See WCTA website
Thomas I. Babcock		X
Timothy G. Pauls		X
Will Palmer		X

d. Do you favor or oppose allowing the office of the County Attorney re-organizing both itself and various county procedures and policies as exemplified by the recent proposals by Toni Craig? *** If opposed, please explain.**

Candidate	Favor	Oppose
Bill Imfeld	X	X
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts	X	
Allen White	No	Response
Bill Fletcher	See WCTA website	
Franklin (Frank) Day	X	
Paula Riggs		X
W. Robert Nelson	X	
William J. 'West' Ritchie	X	
William 'Bill' Chapman	No	Response
Cecilia Jones	See WCTA website	
Cindy Meadows		X
Thomas I. Babcock	See WCTA website	
Timothy G. Pauls		X
Will Palmer		

***See WCTA website for candidates explanation**

f. Do you favor or oppose in-house for road building and maintenance?

Candidate	Favor	Oppose
Bill Imfeld	Did not	Answer
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts	X	
Allen White	No	Response
Bill Fletcher	See WCTA website	
Franklin (Frank) Day	X	
Paula Riggs	X	
W. Robert Nelson	X	
William J. 'West' Ritchie		X
William 'Bill' Chapman	No	Response
Cecilia Jones	See WCTA website	
Cindy Meadows	See WCTA website	
Thomas I. Babcock	X	
Timothy G. Pauls	X	
Will Palmer	X	

e. Do you favor or oppose using in-house legal counsel vs. outsourcing? ***If opposed, please explain.**

Candidate	Favor	Oppose
Bill Imfeld	X	X
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts	X	
Allen White	No	Response
Bill Fletcher	X	
Franklin (Frank) Day	X	
Paula Riggs	X	
W. Robert Nelson	X	
William J. 'West' Ritchie		X
William 'Bill' Chapman	No	Response
Cecilia Jones	See WCTA website	
Cindy Meadows		X
Thomas I. Babcock	X	
Timothy G. Pauls	X	
Will Palmer	X	

***See WCTA website for candidates explanation**

g. What other changes would you make to improve county government and the role of the BCC?

Candidate	Response
Bill Imfeld	1. For items being brought before the board for action, there should be a determination that the matter meets legal, regulatory and policy standards. - 2. There should be a "drilling down" to ensure that requested actions are supported by factual details - 3. Greater Transparency : Do not vote on an item that is a hand-out at the BCC meeting unless the Board is fully aware of the details and that both staff and the public have had an opportunity to review.
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts	I believe that one of the largest issues facing the BCC at this time is transparency. I feel that we should do more to bring issues to the public attention before they are voted on. This will allow the public more time to interpret the information and give the board their input before any votes are cast.
Allen White	Candidate Did Not Respond To Questionnaire
Bill Fletcher	If we could video tape our meetings and post them on the county website, this would allow a much larger number of citizens to see exactly what business is being conducted. Walton is a large county. We need to hold meetings in various locations so more citizens can attend.
Franklin (Frank) Day	I would like to see the BCC agendas advertised in the local newspapers before the meetings. Increase the number of workshops and encourage more citizen involvement in an effort to ensure that the decisions that the BCC makes are actually the citizens of the affected communities desires.
Paula Riggs	When hiring a new county administrator, I believe the Commission needs to make it perfectly clear weekly meetings must be held with all department heads. The Administrator must know that he or she must communicate with all commissioners daily. I would implement a program whereby department liaisons would be assigned to specific commissioners to be rotated yearly. These liaisons should promote more direct lines of communication between departments, constitutional offices, the TDC, and special taxing districts. Thus the commission would have greater control over budget issues in the day-to-day operations to report back to the entire board.
W. Robert Nelson	More transparent to the public so that confidence in the system can be reestablished. Establish operating budgets for the commissioners offices so that accountability can be increased. Install a customer management system so that issues can be pro actively addressed throughout the county instead of reacting to things after they occur.
William J. 'West' Ritchie	Seek approval from the State to use TDC bed tax revenues for other needs of the county. Greatly expand the Economic Development Alliance. Put the BCC meetings on TV. Same for TDC meetings. BCC to meet before the BCC meetings to hash out issues (Public involved)
William 'Bill' Chapman	Candidate Did Not Respond To Questionnaire
Cecilia Jones	Governing is a fluid process. As times and circumstances change, so should the governing process, however, government is instituted for one and only one reason, to serve the citizenry. Each day brings new opportunities for improvement and as Commissioner I am committed to considering each of those opportunities and working to implement those which provide for a more effective and efficient County Government. Commissioners are tasked to run the county for the benefit of its citizens. I believe that listening to citizens is the best way to achieve this end.
Cindy Meadows	I would like to see the role of the BCC one of policy making; not micromanaging. I would consider broadcasting BCC meetings either via TV or internet.
Thomas I. Babcock	1) Schedule more workshops for short term and long term planning. 2) Strengthen the policies for economic and community development. 3) Encourage public input on as many issues as possible.
Timothy G. Pauls	1. Change the time of all meetings back to 5pm. It is very difficult for the working public to attend a meeting at 9:00AM. - 2. In addition to regularly scheduled BCC meetings, add 5 Town Hall meetings per year to be held in each district of the County, with an agenda set by the district commissioner, and 1/2 the time allocated for questions and issues from the community. - 3. Make the consistency of the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Development Code a priority, and see that the County enforces and supports its own promises made when it adopts said Codes. 4. Work on making the Code simpler, clearer, and enforceable. - 5. Each Commissioner should be able to articulate their vote for or against any issue brought before them. Real transparency demands this, and the support of such principal is in the actions of whether or not it is done. - 6. Vote the code not the applicant.
Will Palmer	Transparency is Key ! The citizens deserve a more open process with involvement from the community. The BCC needs to put in place a strategic plan a 10-15 years plan with measurable goals.

h. How would you improve transparency in Walton County BCC processes?

Candidate	Response
Bill Imfeld	See response to part g.3 of the previous question
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts	As I said before the best way to build trust and transparency between the board and the public is to present information to the public in a clearly written manner. This should be done in plenty of time for the publics consideration and feedback. I also feel it is the boards duty to take no action until the publics views are heard.
Allen White	Candidate Did Not Respond To Questionnaire
Bill Fletcher	Video taped meetings would be a big step forward. I would also like to see meeting agendas published at least a few days before the meeting.
Franklin (Frank) Day	My response to question "g" above speaks to this question also. I would move the BCC meetings around the County more and provide more public discussion time at all meetings. I would remind all citizens that Walton County Government belongs them and encourage anyone with concerns and needs to speak. I would also make myself available to meet with anyone outside of BCC meetings as allowed by law.
Paula Riggs	Each and every county commissioner has the opportunity through the Florida Association of Counties to attend educational training sessions. If elected I will attend these sessions and all available training and encourage commissioners and county staff to attend. Understanding and implementing all aspects of the Sunshine Law is the first step to insure transparency. In areas of greatest importance I believe the commission must use all available avenues to inform the public of its meetings even if this involves expending money. In consideration of important issues, I believe workshops are the highest benefit so the commissioners can truly grasp the input of all citizens before voting. In a public hearing or any forum, I vow to stay as long as it takes until all citizen input has been presented. I will be a full time commissioner with easy access so the public feels welcome voicing their concerns. As a commissioner in the past I have had "cookies and conversation" meetings at various locations in the county. If elected I will continue this process of making myself available. Public records laws will be strictly adhered to and I will present any documents as requested to avoid unnecessary lawsuits.
W. Robert Nelson	Placing all invoices and contracts with all vendors online. Placing e-mail online where citizens can see their business being transacted. Make the meeting schedules of the commissioners public.
William J. 'West' Ritchie	Put BCC meetings on TV
William 'Bill' Chapman	Candidate Did Not Respond To Questionnaire
Cecilia Jones	President Theodore Roosevelt once warned, "Behind the ostensible government sits enthroned an invisible government owing no allegiance and acknowledges no responsibility to the people." I believe the best way to uncover the "invisible government" is for the people of Walton County to be involved. We, as Commissioners, serve you. The best ways to improve transparency is more community involvement, better communication, and open government.
Cindy Meadows	Broadcast BCC meetings via TV or internet. Download e-mails and other documents so public can access. Eliminate closed meetings except legal case discussions with attorney. Add a public input time period to end of BCC agenda. Download e-mails and communication for public access.
Thomas I. Babcock	1) I would encourage citizens to contact me for any specific issues and would have regular "open house" sessions in my district. 2) I would encourage citizen attendance for BCC meetings and workshops.
Timothy G. Pauls	Transparency is in the hands of each individual commissioner and their willingness to explain their individual vote, and ask for explanation of the other commissioners about their vote in the Sunshine. No Commissioner is required by law to explain their vote on a matter, but without understanding the motive and rationale for various votes the community often feels left out of the loop. This leads to rumor, various conspiracy schemes, and Sunshine Law violation innuendo. Video of each BCC meeting, as done in part by "Neighbor Vision" for various parts of BCC meetings and other meetings might help the public who are not able to attend meetings to view the meetings at a later date and be better informed on the issues.
Will Palmer	If elected I will keep my website active with current information including what issues are before the BCC with my thoughts on those issues as well as an area for citizen comments.

i. Would you support term limits for Commissioners?

Candidate	Yes	No
Bill Imfeld	X	
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts	X	
Allen White	No	Response
Bill Fletcher		
Franklin (Frank) Day	X	
Paula Riggs	X	
W. Robert Nelson	X	
William J. 'West' Ritchie		X
William 'Bill' Chapman	No	Response
Cecilia Jones	See WCTA website	
Cindy Meadows	X	
Thomas I. Babcock		X
Timothy G. Pauls	X	
Will Palmer	X	

j. Would you support an encompassing code of ethics and appropriate penalties, including suspensions as necessary, for Commissioners? Would you include the public in that process, and if so, ***how?**

Candidate	Support Ethics Code		Involve Public	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Bill Imfeld		Did not	Answer	
Richard (Rick) Roberts	X		X	
Allen White		No	Response	
Bill Fletcher				
Franklin (Frank) Day	X		X	
Paula Riggs	X		X	
W. Robert Nelson	X		X	
William J. 'West' Ritchie	X		X	
William 'Bill' Chapman		No	Response	
Cecilia Jones	See WCTA website			
Cindy Meadows	X		X	
Thomas I. Babcock	See WCTA website			

***See WCTA website for candidates answer.**

4. Budgeting:

a. Do you favor a Balanced Budget Resolution which keeps reserves off-limits except in emergencies?

Candidate	Yes	No
Bill Imfeld		X
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts	X	
Allen White	No	Response
Bill Fletcher	X	
Franklin (Frank) Day	X	
Paula Riggs	X	
W. Robert Nelson	X	
William J. 'West' Ritchie	X	
William 'Bill' Chapman	No	Response
Cecilia Jones	See WCTA website	
Cindy Meadows	X	
Thomas I. Babcock	X	
Timothy G. Pauls	X	
Will Palmer	X	

b. Do you understand "Zero Based" budgeting. Please detail your experience in budgeting.*

Candidate	Yes	No
Bill Imfeld	X	
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts	X	
Allen White	No	Response
Bill Fletcher	X	
Franklin (Frank) Day	X	
Paula Riggs	X	
W. Robert Nelson	X	
William J. 'West' Ritchie	X	
William 'Bill' Chapman	No	Response
Cecilia Jones	See WCTA website	
Cindy Meadows	X	
Thomas I. Babcock	X	
Timothy G. Pauls	X	
Will Palmer	X	

***See WCTA website for candidates experience in budgeting**

c. Do you favor zero based budgeting and public input?

Candidate	Favor	Oppose
Bill Imfeld	X	
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts	X	
Allen White	No	Response
Bill Fletcher		X
Franklin (Frank) Day	X	
Paula Riggs	X	
W. Robert Nelson	X	
William J. 'West' Ritchie	X	
William 'Bill' Chapman	No	Response
Cecilia Jones	See WCTA website	
Cindy Meadows	X	
Thomas I. Babcock	X	
Timothy G. Pauls	X	
Will Palmer	X	

e. If projected revenues are exceeded by projected expenditures, do you favor raising taxes or cutting proposed expenditures?

Candidate	Raise Taxes	Cut Expenses
Bill Imfeld		X
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts		X
Allen White	No	Response
Bill Fletcher		X
Franklin (Frank) Day		X
Paula Riggs		X
W. Robert Nelson		X
William J. 'West' Ritchie		X
William 'Bill' Chapman	No	Response
Cecilia Jones	See WCTA website	
Cindy Meadows		X
Thomas I. Babcock		X
Timothy G. Pauls		X
Will Palmer		X

d. Do you favor or oppose internal auditing of all BCC departments?

Candidate	Favor	Oppose
Bill Imfeld	X	
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts	X	
Allen White	No	Response
Bill Fletcher	X	
Franklin (Frank) Day	X	
Paula Riggs	X	
W. Robert Nelson	X	
William J. 'West' Ritchie	X	
William 'Bill' Chapman	No	Response
Cecilia Jones	See WCTA website	
Cindy Meadows	X	
Thomas I. Babcock	X	
Timothy G. Pauls	X	
Will Palmer	X	

g. Do you support development of a strategic plan and annual reviews thereof for planning for the organizational and financial planning needs of the county?

Candidate	Yes	No
Bill Imfeld	X	
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts	X	
Allen White	No	Response
Bill Fletcher	X	
Franklin (Frank) Day	X	
Paula Riggs	X	
W. Robert Nelson	X	
William J. 'West' Ritchie	X	
William 'Bill' Chapman	No	Response
Cecilia Jones	See WCTA website	
Cindy Meadows	X	
Thomas I. Babcock	X	
Timothy G. Pauls	X	
Will Palmer	X	

f. What are your most important priorities in budgeting?

Candidate	Response
Bill Imfeld	1. Balanced budget - 2. Essential services for public safety - 3. County-wide versus district approach to funding - 4. Elimination of overlapping expenditures
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts	My priority in budgeting will be conserving Tax Dollars ! If we do not use our tax dollars wisely we will not be able to continue adequate funding for the most important areas of the BCC Budget such as public safety. We have to become a county that gets the most out of every tax dollar spent.
Allen White	Candidate Did Not Respond To Questionnaire
Bill Fletcher	Reduce spending where ever possible, while maintaining efficiency. Priorities are: Sheriff's dept., EMS and Fire, sanitation and water, infrastructure improvements and promote new business
Franklin (Frank) Day	In my 26+ years in Walton county I can't remember a budget cycle where the BCC used the zero-based budget procedure. I think it should be used periodically as passed experience has shown modest savings and increased staffing to make it work properly . The savings from this could be used to pay down our Bridge Debt. This and completing our beach re nourishment.
Paula Riggs	As the economy is very challenging right now, we must do everything in our power to protect the tax base as well as other revenues such as: TDC revenues, fines and forfeitures, permitting fees, and revenue sharing such as gas taxes and state and federal grants. As a county we should oppose any unfunded mandates placed on counties by the state and federal governments. By providing economic opportunities, Walton County can protect and nurture its economic structure. As a priority we should insure that each and every expenditure is an absolute necessity. Public safety and the growth of infrastructure should be considered top priority.
W. Robert Nelson	Having a true and realistic picture of what is going to be needed to complete projects and the goals that are laid out for the upcoming year.
William J. 'West' Ritchie	Find the smartest people to review and advise on the best way to be able to pay for and meet the needs of the residents of Walton County
William 'Bill' Chapman	Candidate Did Not Respond To Questionnaire
Cecilia Jones	Value - Is a dollars worth of service delivered for every dollar spent? Efficiency - Are we provided needed services in the most efficient manner? Discretionary - What do we have to fund and what do we want to fund? Impact - What are the financial impacts on the taxpayers? Fair - Are revenues generated in the most fair and just manner? Alternatives - Are there alternative means and methods of funding/achieving desired results?
Cindy Meadows	1. Zero based budget - 2. Limit expenditures to government's limited role - 3. Keeping taxes low - 4. Keeping adequate reserves for emergencies - 5. Returning overages to taxpayers (If at all possible in this economy)
Thomas I. Babcock	Public services and safety, infrastructure, economic development, tourism, community development.
Timothy G. Pauls	1. Whether or not the activity is essential to County Responsibilities. - 2. Is the activity cost effective and a proper use of Tax Payer dollars. - 3. Do we have the funds to pay for the proposed expenditures, and if not how would funds be borrowed or obtained to finance said expenditure. - 4. Will the expenditure help Walton County achieve it's stated goals and adopted vision for the County.
Will Palmer	Transparency - Balanced budget - Make sure we evaluate every dime to make sure it is being spent wisely and that we are getting the most bang for the buck.

5. Infrastructure

a. Please list in order of importance your priorities for infrastructure development in Walton County.

Candidate	Response
Bill Imfeld	1. Completion of the US 331 projects (both 4 laning roads and the bridge - 2. Development of the industrial parks throughout the county - 3. Technology upgrades - 4. Paving and maintaining roads - 5. Medical facilities for remote parts of the county - 6. Quality drinking water for areas not serviced by water works - 7. Quality housing care for the elderly and infirmed - 8. Additional public beach access and parking - 9. Recreational facilities for seniors and teens.
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts	1. Adequate planning and zoning - 2. Road systems - 3. A strategic Economic development plan - 4. Selective targeting for Industry - 5. Planning for public safety - 6. Promoting tourism to stabilize our tax base while using its draw to attract new business minded people to our area - 7. maintaining a low tax rate so that we encourage new development - 8. Utilities -(water, sewer, power and communications)
Allen White	Candidate Did Not Respond To Questionnaire
Bill Fletcher	1. Completion of HWY 331 2. Maintain main arteries - 3. Inspection/maintenance of county bridges - 4. Additional Beach parking - 5. Paving dirt roads
Franklin (Frank) Day	1. Beach re nourishment - 2. Pay off Bridge Debt - 3. Improve 30a traffic flow - 4. Invest in industrial development - 5. Develop a strategic paving plan - 6. Expand the Walton County Airport - 7. Storm water control on 30a - 8. county wide water system
Paula Riggs	1. The four-laning of 331 from Hwy 98 to I-10 and widening of the Wells Bridge. - 2. Maintenance of all existing roads and paving of unpaved roads. - 3. Maintenance of all public buildings. - 4. More north/south roads connecting 30-A to Hwy 98 east of Hwy 395 to provide better traffic flow and hurricane evacuation. - 5. Hwy 331 widening to 4 lanes from I-10 to the Florida/Alabama line. - 6. Hwy 20 widening to 4 lanes for better traffic flow and hurricane evacuation. - 7. Improvements on Hwy 98 and 30-A providing better traffic flow and safety to include access management and synchronization of traffic lights. - 8. Attention to promoting and improving Walton County Industrial Parks to provide greater economic opportunities. - 9. Maintenance and improvement to all storm water retention areas. - 10. The successful resolutions of deficiencies at the TDC/ Visitors Center or relocation of the Center.
W. Robert Nelson	1. Moving forward quickly on the 331 four laning project - 2. Developing a plan for storm water county-wide - 3. Addressing parking/traffic issues at our beach accesses. - 4. Developing our industrial parks for job creation - 5. Making sure we are not at a technological disadvantage with surrounding counties.
William J. 'West' Ritchie	1. Properly fund the EDA - 2. More professionals on the Board - 3. Bring economic development in - 4. Increase the tax base - 5. Use the money to build infrastructure - 6. Use proper planning - 7. Advertise what we have - 8. Keep infrastructure in working order - 9. Be open to new ideas - 10. Never give up
William 'Bill' Chapman	Candidate Did Not Respond To Questionnaire
Cecilia Jones	1. Facilitating economic development - 2. Supporting and enhancing our tourist industry - 3. Roads and bridges - 4. Recreational facilities
Cindy Meadows	1. 4-laning 331 from bridge to I-10 - 2. 4-laning 331 bridge - 3. Pave, repair and maintain roadways and bridges - 4. Safety related infrastructure - 5. Development of additional parking areas in beach areas - 6. Storm water related infrastructure improvements - 7. Landfill facility including recycling - 8. Sidewalks, bike paths throughout county - 9. Develop and maintain parks and recreational facilities
Thomas I. Babcock	1. Roads - 2. Water/sewer expansion - 3. Beach access Beach erosion - 4. Solid waste Recycling
Timothy G. Pauls	1. Highway 331 cross access agreements and service roads need to be planned now to determine how and where individual parcels will be accessed. This is not within the FDOT budget or within the scope of the right of way they have, or will purchase, so the County needs to make this a priority now so that the traffic flow of the new roadway is not impaired by numerous unplanned access requests. - 2. Additional road paving, and a clear understanding of the BCC priorities regarding what and when various roads are to be paved. - 3. A Master Parking Plan is essential for Hwy 30-A and Scenic Gulf Drive, the tourists are here but there is no place for them to park at the beach accesses and the residents in these areas are not happy either. In order to maintain what we claim is our great quality of life, and great tourist experience we must address this issue, or we will begin to lose our place as a tourist top choice location. - 4. Improved internet availability and bandwidth throughout Walton County. This one factor could make the difference to many businesses as to their choice for their business location. - 5. Paving, water, and sewer capability for the Mossy Head Industrial Park, as well as for the Freeport Industrial Parks. - 6. Develop a time line and identify funding sources to accomplish the above.
Will Palmer	1. Paved roads - 2. Ball fields/rec fields - 3. Beach & Bay Access Points - 4. Other road accesses - 5. Bike Paths/Walking Trails - 6. Improved parking at beach access points

b. What recreational facilities for residents and guests do you believe Walton needs? *How would you pay for them ?

Candidate	Response
Bill Imfeld	1. Enhanced library services - 2. Additional beach access and parking - 3. Better maintained bike paths (especially along 30 A - 4. Completion of Helen McCall and Padgett parks -- Funding - 1. User fees - 2. TDC funds where appropriate - 3. Recreational plat fees - 4. Grants & donations - 5. Participation with private enterprises
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts	1. Parks - 2. Pools for swimmers safety classes - 3. Hiking Trails - 4. Sports fields for children's activities - 5. Libraries
Allen White	Candidate Did Not Respond To Questionnaire
Bill Fletcher	1. Covered shelters for family gatherings - 2. More Childrens parks - 3. Public Tennis courts
Franklin (Frank) Day	1. State of the art softball park between DeFuniak Springs and Paxton and in Santa Rosa Beach - 2. Boys and Girls Clubs expanded - 3. Public Pools --- Funding - After completing the Beach Re nourishment and paying off our Bridge debt I would fund the suggested recreational facilities with a combination of grants, corporate partnerships and modest user fees and BCC funding.
Paula Riggs	1. Parking, parks and picnic facilities at beach access ways, parks and boat launches.
W. Robert Nelson	1. Enhance current beach facilities - 2. Community pools. - 3. Recreational facilities at public freshwater lakes/ivers.
William J. 'West' Ritchie	1. A water park - 2. Upgrade existing parks - 3. A Natatorium - 4. Recreation Centers for children who brake from school
William 'Bill' Chapman	Candidate Did Not Respond To Questionnaire
Cecilia Jones	Recreational facilities are near to my heart because I strongly believe that Walton County's uniqueness should always provide a place for raising families and protecting our environment for generations to come. "Natural free entertainment" is the most favorable to residents and guests of Walton County and with our exceptional beaches and forestry we are able to bring this provision. We have developed state of the art ball parks, playground equipment, splash pads, beach walkover's and more. We have numerous natural trails within our forestry including bike paths, walking and riding trails that enhance exploring and environmental education. We have partnered with E.O. Wilson Biophilia Center for educating our young people and providing natural entertainment and education for our guests as well. We have even partnered with Alaqua Animal Rescue to provide a park for our canine family members. Currently, most improvements and creation of our parks and recreation is all being done without using Ad Valorem taxes and I believe we should continue to pursue private and federal grants to create and improve all of our recreational facilities.
Cindy Meadows	1. Public pool(s) and related facilities - 2. Interconnected bike paths and trails throughout the county
Thomas I. Babcock	1. Parking - 2. Boat ramps - 3. Continued expansion of bike paths - 4. Upgrades of Bay and Beach access Bathrooms
Timothy G. Pauls	1. Sports fields - 2. Picnic areas - 3. Boat launch - 4. Walking and hiking trails - 5. Children's playgrounds - 6. Community Pool - 7. Dog bark park - 8. Beach Access Walton County has it all, but... Funding ... While it may be necessary and appropriate for a part of the general budget of the County to fund Parks and Recreation, at the present time just slightly more than 1% of the total Walton County budget is dedicated to Parks and Recreation. The best and largest recreational complex in the County is the 50 acre Freeport Regional Sports Complex. This complex requires various user fees for some of the facilities. Most other recreational facilities in the County do not have any user fees associated to their use. South Walton has experienced tremendous growth, and that growth is continuing. Presently there will not be enough sports fields to accommodate the soccer teams that want to play at Helen McCall Park. As Commissioner I would work on a co-operative agreement with the Walton County School District to be able to use the fields at various schools to accommodate recreational needs of the community. I am in favor of user fees comparable to Destin and Freeport facilities, pursuing any grant opportunities, and working with the TDC to see if various needs can be supported with tourism dollars as they could relate to and help tourism, and the residents in Walton County.
Will Palmer	1. Improved ball fields/soccer fields - 2. Rec center

***See WCTA website for candidates ideas ho how to fund these projects!**

6. Economic Development/Taxation

a. What ideas do you have for economic development in Walton County?

Candidate	Response
Bill Imfeld	Please see www.waltontaxpayers.org for candidate response
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts	Walton county needs to reach out to companies with little or no impact on the environment. For example - call centers for credit card companies, warranty hot lines etc.
Allen White	Candidate Did Not Respond To Questionnaire
Bill Fletcher	In talking with a fairly large number of business owners in the area, we appear to discourage new or expanding businesses. I would like to have public workshops with invited business owners to detail what many believe are onerous, vague and difficult regulations. A task force should be formed to study the issues and make recommendations to entice business. We should coordinate efforts with our Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Alliance, State of Florida and other agencies that exist.
Franklin (Frank) Day	Diversify or jobs by investing in manufacturing infrastructure in the Freeport, Defuniak Springs and Paxton areas. The Mossy Head Industrial Complex has issues that need completion. Revamp our Economic Development Council and establish realistic goals and objectives to bring manufacturers to Walton County that will provide good paying jobs.
Paula Riggs	I believe Walton County can benefit best by providing economic development through the creation of enterprise zones and by offering tax abatements to expanding and existing businesses. Additionally we must provide incentive packages to include training opportunities in cooperation with local colleges and assistance in procuring state, federal and private grants. There are several industrial parks in the county and we need to focus on these as well as entertainment opportunities like restaurants and movie theaters. Walton County should work very closely with the Economic Development Alliance as well as Enterprise Florida. Not only should we concentrate on acquiring new business, we should work with existing business to allow them to expand. Our efforts for economic development should also include encouraging existing business in other locations to relocate here in Walton County.
W. Robert Nelson	Much better marketing of our resources. Being prepared to offer businesses a quicker entry into the marketplace. Enhancing technology to attract more clean industries. Working with the State of Florida to maximize available enhancements and incentives. Streamlining development to make it easier for businesses to comply with regulations. Working with businesses to remove unnecessary and redundant regulatory requirements.
William J. 'West' Ritchie	Properly fund the EDA, appoint college professors and business leaders to boards, attract new businesses to Walton County, increase infrastructure and properly use what we have to create a larger tax base to better Walton County.
William 'Bill' Chapman	Candidate Did Not Respond To Questionnaire
Cecilia Jones	Sustain and diversify. It is vitally important to sustain our current economic engine, which is tourism. Many years of hard work have gone into making Walton County a special destination. We must continue to work to enhance that concept while continuing to support investment into our community. Some state that we are "over-regulated" and while there may be some merit to that argument, many of those regulations have allowed us to create that "special place", fostering a unique destination. We should constantly review such regulations, supporting those which maintain or enhance the things that are important to us and working to amend or eliminate those which do not. Diversification of our economy is challenging, yet vitally important. We must work to create an atmosphere that encourages economic feasibility and success for investor, including incentives, expedited permits, and locations. One of the projects which I initiated, and is identified for the BP fine money, is an underwater plant and fish hatchery, which will provide many more jobs for our area. With the recent passage of the RESTORE Act, we will have perhaps the greatest opportunity one could ever imagine to move this effort forward. We need to pursue industries/businesses to provide jobs that won't interfere with protecting our natural assets.
Cindy Meadows	Use BP funding to develop a science program with labs in conjunction with NWF college and FSU for research, development and education in conservation management, restoration of wetlands and coastal dune lakes, wildlife and marine life restoration and management. This center/lab could be used to study and direct restoration of areas impacted by the spill and be an on-going science center offering degrees and hands-on experience in the sciences. Lobby for train to stop in Defuniak Springs in conjunction with a downtown redevelopment plan. Promote 331 corridor for new business locations including village retail, restaurants, and other targeted businesses.
Thomas I. Babcock	This should be a top priority for Walton County. There is a need for economic product (industrial parks) in order to attract clean industry especially on the North side of the County. We must aggressively target and attract suppliers for the Airbus assembly plant in Mobile. Suppliers are being signed up now and they will be looking for locations in northwest Florida. We have a short time table and must start now. In addition, I will seek distribution centers, jobbers and compatible businesses for our locations.

a. What ideas do you have for economic development in Walton County? - Continued _

Timothy G. Pauls	1. Simplify the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code. This should be done especially as related to the designated Industrial Parks in the County, and the Enterprise Zones. Walton County has a reputation as being very difficult to develop in or build a new business. The only way to change this perception is to actually act like Walton County wants new business ... that starts with how new perspective businesses are treated, and whether or not the Board of County Commissioners vote to approve their projects when they have met the code. - 2. Change the regulations for parts of the Scenic Corridor on Hvy 98 and 331 in South Walton. I would propose that the 98/331 Scenic Corridor be broken into segments: Urban, from Okaloosa County Line to the 30-A Intersection, 30-A to 331, and 331 to the bridge as Suburban, 331 to about Rosemary Beach as Rural, then Rosemary Beach to the County Line as Suburban or Urban. Within the Rural and Suburban areas remove the prohibition of "outside merchandise". This would then allow for businesses, such as a car dealership to be located in those areas. Most all other regulations of the scenic corridor standards could be retained like landscaping, lighting, parking, etc. These standards have produced a noticeable difference between Walton County and surrounding Counties, but I believe it is time to tweak things to allow for businesses that have been forced out and could be tremendous job producers and big tax payers. - 3. Realize that Walton County has specific assets that would be attractive to specialized segments, like businesses contracting with the Air Force Bases. Determining what needs will be coming up to changes in these bases, and then talking to existing contractors might help Walton County tailor what could be offered to companies to locate in Walton County. - 4. In certain circumstances I favor land grants. and tax relief if the business will truly create good jobs for Walton County.
Will Palmer	The county needs to put together a detailed list of what companies we want to attract and then put a plan in place & how to get them to our area. This includes incentive packages and reduced red tape in order to make the move as seamless and smooth as possible. This means the BCC will be working along side the EDA team, Chamber of Commerce and any state agency and possibly the TDC.

7. Key Issues:

Please list the 10 most important issues you think you need to address as a Commissioner.

Candidate	Response
Bill Imfeld	1. Restore citizen confidence in County government - 2. Assure compliance with laws, regulations and policies on items brought before the BCC for action - 3. "Drill down" through matters to validate that details support the action being sought - 4. Additional transparency to the public by postponing action items that are "handouts" to the BCC at a meeting and have not been made available to the staff and public for their review - 5. Use of Restore Act funds to accelerate the appropriate diversification of the economic engines to drive Walton county - 6. Public safety and health concerns regarding the quality of drinking water and health care availability in rural areas (this can be done in conjunction with #5) - 7. Quality housing for seniors and the infirmed (this too can be tied to #5) - 8. Additional Beach access and parking - 9. Recreational facilities for seniors and teens - 10. Review and correction of inconsistencies between the Comp Plan and the land development code
Richard L. (Rick) Roberts	1. Ensuring Public Safety - 2. Keeping your taxes low ! - 3. Conserving tax dollars - 4. Representing the concerns of the public - 5. Advocating at the State/National levels for Walton Counties fair share of funding - 6. Build trust between the District 3 office and the public - 7. Establish clear lines of communication between myself and staff as well as the public - 8. Defend Property owners rights - 9. Developing a stronger infrastructure for economic development. - 10. Ensure Transparency and Clarity!
Allen White	Candidate Did Not Respond To Questionnaire
Bill Fletcher	1. We must restore the faith of our citizens by strict adherence to the Sunshine Law - 2. We can and should reduce spending - 3. Reduce taxes - 4. Encourage new businesses, especially in North Walton - 5. Long term planning for future growth - 6. Redefine the role and direction of the TDC - 7. Review our regulations, codes and DO process - 8. Better communications between our citizens and the BCC - 9. Infrastructure - 10. Better communications between Walton County and Tallahassee
Franklin (Frank) Day	1. Restoring the Public's trust in Walton Counties Government by giving it back to the people - 2. Pay off the Bridge debt - 3. Jobs NOW, diversify jobs by bringing high paying manufacturing jobs to Walton County 4. Beach re nourishment - 5. Invest in industrial development - 6. Develop a strategic paving plan for Walton County - 7. Scale back the tax rate to compete with neighboring counties - 8. Consider putting the Tourist Development Council under the County Administrator - 9. Improve County road 30a traffic flow - 10. Develop a storm water management plan
Paula Riggs	1. Providing to the citizens of Walton County open and honest government. Providing the public with opportunity for input from some very brilliant minds that reside here in our county. We must restore the public trust. - 2. Presenting a balanced, fiscally conservative budget. - 3. Maintaining and improving infrastructure. - 4. Providing more and higher wage job opportunities. - 5. Providing services such as public safety and parks and recreation. - 6. Planning for the future by formulating a Vision Plan. - 7. Formulating a five-year capital improvement plan. - 8. Assuring the land development code, comprehensive plan, future land use maps, and zoning maps are all in agreement. - 9. Embracing our military community and encouraging expanded military presence in Walton County. Twenty percent of Walton County's property belongs to Eglin Air Force Base and this should equate to a greater military presence offering new jobs and real estate opportunities. - 10. Lobby the State of Florida and the federal government to assure there are no unfunded mandates being placed on us at the local level. We should fight for every available revenue sharing dollar.

7. Key Issues: - continued -

W. Robert Nelson	1. Streamlining the regulatory process to make investment in Walton County easier. - 2. Visioning so we have a firm understanding of what are our goals and objectives for the future. - 3. Becoming more customer service oriented. - 4. Trying to fully fund services that result in a return on our investment , ie paving and libraries. - 5. Giving employees the tools, authority, training and responsibility to complete their jobs.
William J. 'West' Ritchie	1. Confidence of the people - 2. Follow the Sunshine Laws - 3. Leadership in Staff and Management - 4. Strong review of the budget - 5. Determine the needs of the county - 6. Address the needs of the LEO and Fire Districts - 7. Use our dollars correctly - 8. How TDC money is spent - 9. 4-lane of HWY 331 to the Alabama line - 10. Education - how funded and spent
William 'Bill' Chapman	Candidate Did Not Respond To Questionnaire
Cecilia Jones	1. Continue to streamline county government to be more efficient on less money - 2. Keep taxes low while providing necessary county services - 3. Diversify the economy - 4. Create more jobs - 5. Encourage community and citizen involvement in government - 6. Improve county government and the public's perception with honesty and integrity - 7. Protect our unique environment - 8. Provide a family-friendly atmosphere - 9. Plan for future generations - 10. Continue to protect our scenic corridors
Cindy Meadows	1. Diversification of economy and job growth. - 2. Restoring public trust in local government - 3. Establishing policies related to open government including public records. - 4. Searching for the most qualified person(s) to fill vacancies including county administrator and department directors. - 5. Restore employee morale and stabilize county operations. - 6. Reviewing TDC and all agencies under BCC management including operations, budgets, et - 7. Determination of the use of BP funds. - 8. Conducting a traffic/parking analysis for residents/tourists and impacted areas and preparation of a plan to address same. - 9. Zero based budgeting. Keeping taxes low. - 10. Addressing Military Land Use Overlay regarding impacts on Walton County.
Thomas I. Babcock	1. Transparency in government - 2. Improve project permitting time. 3. Economic development - 4. Community development - 5. Recycling - 6. Public workshops on major issues - 7. Increasing cost of government 8. Strict adherence to the Sunshine law - 9. Effort to unite South and North Walton County - 10. Jobs for all of Walton County
Timothy G. Pauls	1. Make sure the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Development Code of Walton County are consistent. As long as they are not consistent with each other Walton County is inviting lawsuits by any applicant regardless of any decision by the County. - 2. Begin work immediately on how all parcels along the new 4 laned 331 will have access. - 3. Develop and explain road paving priorities in Walton County 4. Resolve the fire districts taxation methodology - 5. Develop and approve a Master Parking Plan for 30-A and Scenic Gulf Drive - 6. Begin the process of potential changes to the 98 Scenic Corridor to allow for businesses like a auto dealership to be able to locate within the corridor. - 7. Work within the State Statutes to allow TDC funding to build additional parking for our beach accesses, and other infrastructure associated to tourism and accessing the beach, bay, and rivers in Walton County. If not possible based on an opinion of the Attorney General, work to change the statute. - 8. Develop a plan to provide off beach parking, and shuttle service to the beach, and along 30-A and Scenic Gulf Drive that is funded by private business and TDC funds. - 9. Review infrastructure needs for the County Industrial Parks, identify funding sources, so that we can be ready to accommodate new businesses in those areas. - 10. Develop specific plans, with budgets and implementation protocol for the money coming to Walton County as a result of the "Restore Act."
Will Palmer	1. Smart economic growth - 2. Transparency in government - 3. Protecting & enhancing our natural resources (Beach & Bay and Springs - 4. Preserving our scenic corridors - 5. Addressing growing traffic concerns during the busy season.