



## Lynn Haven Candidates 2023 Municipal Election

Candidate	Office	Responded to Questionnaire
Jesse Nelson	Lynn Haven Mayor	Yes
Judy Tinder	Lynn Haven Mayor	Yes
Brian Lee Gray	Lynn Haven Commissioner Seat 1	Yes
Joe Brown	Lynn Haven Commissioner Seat 1	Yes
Sam Peebles	Lynn Haven Commissioner Seat 1	Yes
Pat Perno	Lynn Haven Commissioner Seat 2	No
Richard Walker	Lynn Haven Commissioner Seat 2	Yes
Ellyne Fields	Lynn Haven Commissioner Seat 4	Yes
Judy Vandergrift	Lynn Haven Commissioner Seat 4	Yes

BAY COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2023 MUNICIPAL CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Candidate Name	Jesse Nelson
Office	Lynn Haven Mayor
Have you attended a Public Leadership Institute/Political Leadership Institute (hosted by a Chamber of Commerce or Economic Development Council)?	No, I have not attended a PLI. I was not aware of PLI until this survey.
Have you ever run for or been elected to public office? If yes, please describe.	Yes. I was elected as Mayor of Lynn Haven in May of 2021.
Describe your civic involvement. Please include any Boards on which you serve and any positions of leadership.	I am the senior pastor of a civic-minded congregation, Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church. I serve on the board of Anchorage Children's Home, Cornerstone Trust, Pastors United of Bay County, and Salvation Army. I am a member of the 14th Judicial Circuit Human Trafficking Task Force. I volunteer at Mosley High School and as a chaplain for the Panama City Police Department.
Why are you running for office?	I am running for Mayor because I want to continue serving the Lynn Haven community as we restore integrity and progressively improve our quality of life to be the Bay's Best City.
What skills or qualifications do you possess that make you the best choice to serve in this position?	My qualifications include community leadership, civic engagement, and two years of experience as an elected official. My skills would include: interpersonal relationship skills, servant leadership, communication, budgeting, employee management, and more.
What do you consider to be the top three (3) issues facing your city (listing in order of importance)?	Based on citizen feedback, our top three issues are Stormwater, reducing the city debt, and maintaining our quality of life.

BAY COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2023 MUNICIPAL CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

<p>If elected, how do you plan on measuring your performance to report to your constituents?</p>	<p>If elected, I will measure performance by comparing what I do to what I said I would do. My past two years have proven that the promises I made were the promises I kept.</p>
<p>What role should local governments play in attracting new and supporting the existing business community?</p>	<p>Local governments should partner with local chamber of commerce, economic development groups, commercial realtors, and existing businesses in order to attract and support business.</p>
<p>Which legislative priorities in the Bay County Chamber's 2023 Legislative Agenda do you support? Why?</p>	
<p>In the Chamber's 2023 Business Plan, workforce development remains a key objective. How do you plan to attract and retain a vibrant and talented workforce?</p>	
<p>Another important issue identified in the Chamber's Business Plan and Legislative Priorities is affordable workforce housing. What ideas do you have to address workforce housing?</p>	
<p>What is the largest budget you have overseen and how did you prioritize spending?</p>	
<p>Some people in our community say that we have traffic problems.</p>	

<p>What do you think? How would you mitigate those concerns or change the situation?</p>	
<p>Public education remains important to the Chamber. Share your thoughts on challenges and opportunities facing our local public education system and how you can help.</p>	<p>One challenge facing our public education is leadership. Current Superintendent is retiring and a new one needs to be appointed. Another challenge is determining if we need an elected or appointed Superintendent. Another challenge seems to be fiscal oversight. Based on the aforementioned, we have the opportunity to shift gears with leadership and implement a fresh vision and perspective on local education. I can help by being a sounding board for ideas on how we move forward and prepare for our future. I can also help by mobilizing others to be engaged as well.</p>

BAY COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2023 MUNICIPAL CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Candidate Name	Judy Tinder
Office	Lynn Haven Mayor
Have you attended a Public Leadership Institute/Political Leadership Institute (hosted by a Chamber of Commerce or Economic Development Council)?	No
Have you ever run for or been elected to public office? If yes, please describe.	yes, I was elected to the Lynn Haven Commission in 2017 and in 2021
Describe your civic involvement. Please include any Boards on which you serve and any positions of leadership.	I am currently a member of Lynn Haven Historical Society as the program chairman and have held office on two different occasions in The Optimist Club of Panama City. I have been a member of the Panama City Lions Club as well.
Why are you running for office?	I'm running for office to ensure the residents of Lynn Haven THE TRUTH, transparency and honest leadership that realizes our commission serves the residents and we must use THEIR tax dollars, as if they were OUR OWN. My goal is to GIVE THE CITY BACK TO THE PEOPLE and encourage them to share their opinions with the commission.
What skills or qualifications do you possess that make you the best choice to serve in this position?	I have owned previous businesses and currently am co owner of Victoria's Last Bite Cafe. I don't believe our residents should be charged outrageous prices for associated city services.
What do you consider to be the top three (3) issues facing your city (listing in order of importance)?	Flooding and Stormwater Permitting and City fees need review so that contractors and builders will work and help grow Lynn Haven.

BAY COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2023 MUNICIPAL CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

<p>If elected, how do you plan on measuring your performance to report to your constituents?</p>	<p>I WILL communicate with any and all residents that want to meet, communicate their issue and seek satisfaction for all residents</p>
<p>What role should local governments play in attracting new and supporting the existing business community?</p>	<p>I believe that local government plays a huge part in local business in ordinances, code enforcement and fees associated with building new business.</p>
<p>Which legislative priorities in the Bay County Chamber's 2023 Legislative Agenda do you support? Why?</p>	
<p>In the Chamber's 2023 Business Plan, workforce development remains a key objective. How do you plan to attract and retain a vibrant and talented workforce?</p>	<p>I believe in key employees and allowing them the freedom to lead. I also believe that an honest "thank you" is worth a lot in every job and being and feeling appreciated for your efforts. Support, not control, is the key to success and creating longevity among staff. Setting them up to succeed is crucial.</p>
<p>Another important issue identified in the Chamber's Business Plan and Legislative Priorities is affordable workforce housing. What ideas do you have to address workforce housing?</p>	<p>I think its needed in Bay County and I also think it needs to be controlled to ensure infrastructure is in place and that it will serve the community.</p>
<p>What is the largest budget you have overseen and how did you prioritize spending?</p>	<p>Approximately 40 million and I prioritize spending that helps our residents, ensures their safety of home and family and that doesn't line the pockets of others.</p>
<p>Some people in our community say that we have traffic problems. What do you think? How</p>	<p>Our traffic is always changing I would make sure that the developers were responsible for infrastructure while building.</p>

<p>would you mitigate those concerns or change the situation?</p>	
<p>Public education remains important to the Chamber. Share your thoughts on challenges and opportunities facing our local public education system and how you can help.</p>	<p>Honestly, I'm not sure that I've ever given that much thought. I believe our teachers have become glorified secretaries and don't have the contact with students or the time to educate the way they should.</p>

BAY COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2023 MUNICIPAL CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Candidate Name	Brian Gray
Office	Lynn Haven Commissioner Seat 1
Have you attended a Public Leadership Institute/Political Leadership Institute (hosted by a Chamber of Commerce or Economic Development Council)?	No but I have attended one hosted by the Bay County republican party.
Have you ever run for or been elected to public office? If yes, please describe.	Yes, Two years ago I ran for Lynn Haven City Commission seat #4. I won into the runoff, and had to discontinue my Campaign due to being hospitalized with Covid Pneumonia.
Describe your civic involvement. Please include any Boards on which you serve and any positions of leadership.	I am past president of the Florida Council on Crime and delinquency. I am currently Treasurer for the Lynn Haven Historical Society. I also have served on the Lynn Haven Financial review Board. I am a lifetime Member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. I am a member of the Lynn Haven American Legion. I am Chaplain of the Lynn Haven Chapter of the Sons of Confederate Veterans.
Why are you running for office?	I am running for the Lynn Haven City Commission Seat #1 because I feel that it is vital to ensure that local government is: Transparent, Honest, Good Stewards of Public Funds, and can be trusted to make government smaller and more accountable to the citizens.
What skills or qualifications do you possess that make you the best choice to serve in this position?	I am putting my application in to the citizens of Lynn Haven, so that if I am fortunate to be elected I can bring the following skill set to the table. Retired FL Army National Guard (SFC), having served 4 combat tours overseas with the local Infantry Unit. Retired (24 yrs) Senior FL Probation Officer. Currently a LMHC with the Veterans Administration. I have an MA in Clinical Applied Psychology, a M DIV in Divinity, a MS in Theology, and a BS in Management. I have years of



	<p>experience in formulating and implementing various size budgets.</p>
<p>What do you consider to be the top three (3) issues facing your city (listing in order of importance)?</p>	<p>(1) Public Trust in Local Government. (2) Infrastructure (3) Too much deficit spending</p>
<p>If elected, how do you plan on measuring your performance to report to your constituents?</p>	<p>If fortunate enough (Lord willing) to be elected to the position of Lynn Haven City Commissioner, I plan to have monthly meetings with constituents (Coffee with the Commissioner). This could foster a trust between the citizens and their local elected representatives. I look forward to under promise, and over deliver. it would also provided an avenue thru with citizens can have their issues addressed, and have an update on the status of requested services.</p>
<p>What role should local governments play in attracting new and supporting the existing business community?</p>	<p>I believe that local Government should take all available steps to ensure that new businesses can re-locate to Lynn Haven. It may involve effective use of CRA monies or Grant funds. Also permitting/impact fees do not need to be so high as to be prohibitive. While at the same time existing businesses can be able to afford to continue to do business in Lynn Haven. Instead of seeking new revenue sources, government should meet the needs of citizens and businesses, so that businesses will not re-locate in other areas.</p>
<p>Which legislative priorities in the Bay County Chamber's 2023 Legislative Agenda do you support? Why?</p>	<p>Business and Economic Development-Protect Florida's Home Rule Workforce Development and Education-Expand efforts of both GCSC and PC-FSU to meet the needs of the local community and workforce. Quality of Life-Protect affordable Housing Funds. Military and Defense-Oppose any efforts to expand offshore drilling, in order to protect both TYAFB and NSA PC. Gulf Bay Fisheries-Fund Gulf of Mexico economic and environmental restoration funds.</p>

<p>In the Chamber's 2023 Business Plan, workforce development remains a key objective. How do you plan to attract and retain a vibrant and talented workforce?</p>	<p>Ensure that our tax rates are kept low as possible. Allow Haney-GCSC-and FSU PC to adapt their curriculum to the needs of a changing work environment. Ensure that we have as much affordable housing as needed. Ensure that we continue to make every effort possible to maintain of clean and pristine environment.</p>
<p>Another important issue identified in the Chamber's Business Plan and Legislative Priorities is affordable workforce housing. What ideas do you have to address workforce housing?</p>	<p>Ensure that our tax rates are kept low as possible. Allow Haney-GCSC-and FSU PC to adapt their curriculum to the needs of a changing work environment. Ensure that we have as much affordable housing as needed. Ensure that we continue to make every effort possible to maintain of clean and pristine environment.</p>
<p>What is the largest budget you have overseen and how did you prioritize spending?</p>	<p>While serving in the US Army overseas, as a senior non-commissioned Officer, I was in a position to directly manage the personnel and over 5 million dollars in budgetary allocations.</p>
<p>Some people in our community say that we have traffic problems. What do you think? How would you mitigate those concerns or change the situation?</p>	<p>Bay County has sever traffic problems. Immediate mitigation is possible, but we should strive to ensure we are effectively planning for the next 25 plus years.</p>
<p>Public education remains important to the Chamber. Share your thoughts on challenges and opportunities facing our local public education system and how you can help.</p>	<p>We have some of the most talented educators in the country in the Bay County Education system. We must make every effort to ensure that they are unencumbered by excessive Federal and State regulations, so that they can effectively perform what they love to do-enable our next generation to reach their full potential.</p>

BAY COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2023 MUNICIPAL CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Candidate Name	Joe Brown
Office	Lynn Haven Commissioner Seat 1
Have you attended a Public Leadership Institute/Political Leadership Institute (hosted by a Chamber of Commerce or Economic Development Council)?	No.
Have you ever run for or been elected to public office? If yes, please describe.	Yes, I ran unsuccessfully for Mayor of Lynn Haven 2 years ago.
Describe your civic involvement. Please include any Boards on which you serve and any positions of leadership.	Lynn Haven CRA Advisory Board for 4 years, serving as chairman for the past 2 years. Member of the Bay County Affordable Housing Committee for the past year.
Why are you running for office?	Lifelong interest in government and want to continue the job of helping Lynn Haven grow. My background and leadership skills of over 20 years of experience in local and county government will be beneficial as we continue to rebuild and grow.
What skills or qualifications do you possess that make you the best choice to serve in this position?	With over 20 years of experience in local and county governments I understand how local government works. My experience working with elected officials at the county and state level are advantages that I have acquired over the last several years. It won't be as much of a learning experience for me as it will be for someone who doesn't have these vital connections.
What do you consider to be the top three (3) issues facing your city (listing in order of importance)?	Stormwater and infrastructure Economic development Restoring public trust in government
If elected, how do you plan on measuring your	Performance of local elected officials should be based on accomplishments and growth of the city. City

<p>performance to report to your constituents?</p>	<p>commissioners should be making policies and trusting that employees from the city manager to the newest hire can use these tools to accomplish the objectives. Local elected officials are not day to day managers of city workers but must give them the necessary tools to do their job most efficiently.</p>
<p>What role should local governments play in attracting new and supporting the existing business community?</p>	<p>Local governments are an important player in attracting new businesses. But not the only player, it takes a collaborative effort from county and state leaders, economic development professionals, and industry leaders who are already established in the area. Some incentives may be needed such as tax incentives or obtaining grants to meet such needs as infrastructure that new business may require.</p>
<p>Which legislative priorities in the Bay County Chamber's 2023 Legislative Agenda do you support? Why?</p>	<p>Work with the Chamber and Florida League of Cities to protect home rule. Local officials must be able to make decisions pertaining to their city without state or federal attempts to legislate for everyone. Oppose any attempt by leaders in other parts of the state to divert Triumph funds away from the 8 effected counties. Full funding for affordable housing initiatives and prevent these funds from being diverted to the general fund. A feasibility study of permanently reopening East Pass and support for the Panhandle Estuary Program including St. Andrew and St. Joseph Bays.</p>
<p>In the Chamber's 2023 Business Plan, workforce development remains a key objective. How do you plan to attract and retain a vibrant and talented workforce?</p>	<p>We must expand workforce training in the traditional building trades by obtaining additional funding from sources such as Triumph Gulf Coast. Look to the future by preparing students in such areas as drones and cybersecurity and again reach out to such groups as Triumph Gulf Coast for possible grants to develop these programs.</p>
<p>Another important issue identified in the Chamber's Business Plan and Legislative Priorities</p>	<p>Full funding of the housing trust funds at the state level and safeguard these funds from diverted from housing into the general fund. Improve local communication of programs such as SAIL and SHIP</p>

<p>is affordable workforce housing. What ideas do you have to address workforce housing?</p>	<p>that can aid with rent assistance and provide first time homeowners down payment assistance. Bay County took over the administration of these programs last year and we need to do more to make people aware of them.</p>
<p>What is the largest budget you have overseen and how did you prioritize spending?</p>	<p>I have overseen a budget of approximately \$25 million in a city here in Northwest Florida. The city had a weak system of cash flow and therefore whenever something was needed they just took on more and more debt to finance it. We had to look closely at major spending requests to try to function efficiently without acquiring more debt. It might mean only buying 5 police cars a year for a couple of years instead of buying 10 and having to finance all of the purchase.</p>
<p>Some people in our community say that we have traffic problems. What do you think? How would you mitigate those concerns or change the situation?</p>	<p>We do have traffic problems throughout the county not only at the beach. One thing that will mitigate the problem to some extent is the completion of major projects that have been ongoing for years such as the widening of highway 390 from 23rd street to highway 231.</p>
<p>Public education remains important to the Chamber. Share your thoughts on challenges and opportunities facing our local public education system and how you can help.</p>	<p>Public education is one of the most important quality of life issues that I hear about. Everyone wants their children to receive a first-class education. We are fortunate to have outstanding public, charter, and private schools in our area. We must do a better job of retaining qualified teachers in our system. We often hear of incentives to get new teachers into the system but we must do a better job of providing incentives for those teachers who have been involved for a long time in order to retain them to help mentor the newer teachers being brought in.</p>

BAY COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2023 MUNICIPAL CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Candidate Name	Sam Peebles
Office	Lynn Haven Commissioner Seat 1
Have you attended a Public Leadership Institute/Political Leadership Institute (hosted by a Chamber of Commerce or Economic Development Council)?	I have not, but I am intrigued!
Have you ever run for or been elected to public office? If yes, please describe.	This is my first time running.
Describe your civic involvement. Please include any Boards on which you serve and any positions of leadership.	I am the leader of a local worship group that rotates churches to host worship nights for the community. I have also volunteered at the rescue mission every Wednesday before I joined the Air Force. As a leader I have served as a Non-Commissioned Officer in the Florida Air National Guard, and currently am the team lead at role in Risk Management at the Navy base. I'm also a leader in the sense that I am an adjunct professor at GCSC where I mentor students with aspirations to join the career field.
Why are you running for office?	I'm 3rd generation to Lynn Haven. I grew up next door to my grandparents in my parents' house, and now I'm raising my children here. I love this city so much that I moved back here after my time in the Air Force. I have seen the city progress in a positive matter, but I also have seen the progress slow. I want this city to be a city my grandchildren are proud to live in just like me. I have a background in risk management, and with a key concern of the city being flooding, I believe my toolset would be perfect to help the city for now, and the future.
What skills or qualifications do you	With the key issue being flooding, I'm the only candidate who has a background in risk management.

<p>possess that make you the best choice to serve in this position?</p>	<p>In risk management, we look at bad things that could and have happened, and figure out the best way to mitigate them so they won't be as bad in the future. With proper risk management in the past, we would not be dealing with the infrastructure issues we are seeing today. Storm water should be a priority, and I have the background to help.</p>
<p>What do you consider to be the top three (3) issues facing your city (listing in order of importance)?</p>	<p>1. Storm Water 2. We need to find ways to attract local businesses. That's a key way to bring in revenue. 3. Overhaul of reviewing the current codes and ordinances</p>
<p>If elected, how do you plan on measuring your performance to report to your constituents?</p>	<p>The progress being made it create ways to raise funds for storm water through corporate sponsorships as to not overtax citizens. Progress in fixing draining issues, and progress in reviewing codes and ordinances.</p>
<p>What role should local governments play in attracting new and supporting the existing business community?</p>	<p>We need to make an environment that is attractive. Incentivize unique businesses so that we can generate revenue for the city by bringing in funds from not only Lynn Haven, but surrounding cities. It's a win win. Citizens get unique experiences for living in Lynn Haven, while the city gets revenue without having to raise millage rates.</p>
<p>Which legislative priorities in the Bay County Chamber's 2023 Legislative Agenda do you support? Why?</p>	<p>My two favorite are as follows: Continued reduction of business rent tax and ensuring SB 50, signed in to law in July 2021, remains in place S to keep business rent taxes low. Ensuring a fair and equitable tax system is key to attracting and retaining businesses of all sizes in our state. I could not have worded this better. We want businesses to want to be here. They can go anywhere they want. We want them here. Businesses are win-win. Good for the citizens and good for the city. Recognizes the importance of protecting Florida's Home Rule and opposes efforts to remove or reduce this S authority. Home rule is a key to success. There are many times when local leaders' hands are tied because they can't do anything about</p>



	<p>an issue. That needs to be reduced as much as possible.</p>
<p>In the Chamber’s 2023 Business Plan, workforce development remains a key objective. How do you plan to attract and retain a vibrant and talented workforce?</p>	<p>For city employees we need to get debt down. With the city in debt, it cannot afford to give adequate salaries and raises. For non-city employees and city employees alike, we need to work on getting rent prices and home prices down as much as possible. This will result in my disposable income, which equals a higher quality of life.</p>
<p>Another important issue identified in the Chamber’s Business Plan and Legislative Priorities is affordable workforce housing. What ideas do you have to address workforce housing?</p>	<p>We need to reevaluate the red tape laws and permit fees to make sure they actually make sense. We also need to work with DoD. The military members get an allowance for housing. If not managed properly it can result in inflation of housing cost for non-military members. It’s a very delicate thing.</p>
<p>What is the largest budget you have overseen and how did you prioritize spending?</p>	<p>I’ve been more on the opposite end of the spectrum. Whereas I look at what it would cost to fix an issue. The largest asset cost was 41 million.</p>
<p>What is the largest budget you have overseen and how did you prioritize spending?</p>	<p>At the municipal level, we only have control over city roads. However, those need improvement. We need more sidewalks for safety of children, and we need to fix cutouts and pot holes that hinder traffic flow. There is definitely issues on 77 and 390 and we would need to work with the county on those.</p>
<p>Public education remains important to the Chamber. Share your thoughts on challenges and opportunities facing our local public education system and how you can help.</p>	<p>Municipal officials don’t have a huge say in this kind of thing. However, Lynn Haven does have a great school system. My suggestion is to actively ask teachers what can be done to help. Be pro-active, rather than wait for issues to come to us.</p>



BAY COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2023 MUNICIPAL CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Candidate Name	Richard T. Walker
Office	Lynn Haven Commissioner at Large, District 2
Have you attended a Public Leadership Institute/Political Leadership Institute (hosted by a Chamber of Commerce or Economic Development Council)?	No
Have you ever run for or been elected to public office? If yes, please describe.	YES Mayor and Commissioner of Lynn Haven
Describe your civic involvement. Please include any Boards on which you serve and any positions of leadership.	CRA Advisory Board 4 years CRA advisory Board Chair 2 years
Why are you running for Office?	Once again, I foresee difficulties in the management of our City. It has no direction for the future, and very little regard for citizens rights.
What skills or qualifications do you possess that make you the best choice to serve in this position?	Foreign Service Officer (U.S. Embassies) retired Trained in continuity of Govt. I have seen Governments come and to (Mostly go)
What do you consider to be the top three (3) issues facing your city (listing in order of importance)?	Apathy amongst the Citizens. Mistrust of their local Government. The usual Buzz words: Storm water Run-off and Revenue sources Over run of State projects causing a sharp decrease in our Quality of life. and the usual Taxes".
If elected, how do you plan on measuring your performance to report to your constituents?	Usually elected officials have a "purpose" for running for office. Mine is to correct the handling by our commissioners in the treatment of its citizens.
What role should local governments play in	We have an EDA Director/Marketing group and employ Bay County EDAS staff. Our CRA Director

BAY COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2023 MUNICIPAL CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

<p>attracting new and supporting the existing business community?</p>	<p>should divest himself from either EDA/or CRA and take on that project singularly let the city hire full time EDA Director. let these offices do their work.</p>
<p>Which legislative priorities in the Bay County Chamber's 2023 Legislative Agenda do you support? Why?</p>	<p>Protecting Florida's home rule. Any program that increases the Quality of Life for our Citizens. There seems to be a more active drive to decrease the Quality of Life than increase it.</p>
<p>In the Chamber's 2023 Business Plan, workforce development remains a key objective. How do you plan to attract and retain a vibrant and talented workforce?</p>	<p>The Efforts of Florida State University Panama City to continue development and expansion of programs at FSUPC to meet the needs of the community. This must be on a fiscal level to make it obtainable by all.</p>
<p>Another important issue identified in the Chamber's Business Plan and Legislative Priorities is affordable workforce housing. What ideas do you have to address workforce housing?</p>	<p>With the forced collapse of the Lynn Haven Chamber of Commerce it has become difficult to come to grips with the qualified industry Tax refund program (QTI. My experience with it in our city does not work for us. To correct this, we must establish our chamber of commerce and re-establish ties with our Marketing and EDA departments to work in conjunction with the above question.</p>
<p>What is the largest budget you have overseen and how did you prioritize spending?</p>	<p>Working for the U.S. Govt limits ones working with the overall Budget: However, I did get to be part of the State Dep./DOD budgets as a "Small" component User. I had to form my own internal budget for inclusion in the overall burden to the American people. This I prioritized concerning according to needs. While in the civilian service (EDS)again I was an overall small contributor to their budgets concerning contracts between EDS &amp; the U.S. Govt.</p>
<p></p>	<p></p>
<p>Public education remains important to the Chamber. Share your thoughts on</p>	<p>In Lynn Haven Public education has taken a turn to joint activation of the "Charter School" System. It is interesting to note the highly successful Haney Technical School, which takes up the gap of future</p>

challenges and opportunities facing our local public education system and how you can help.

workforce employees not wanting to or be able to pay for higher education. The least heralded is the US. Military which has given many a career path with their specialized training and a portal into education capabilities unheralded in the commercial arena.

BAY COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2023 MUNICIPAL CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Candidate Name	Ellyne Fields
Office	Lynn Haven Commissioner Seat 4
Have you attended a Public Leadership Institute/Political Leadership Institute (hosted by a Chamber of Commerce or Economic Development Council)?	No
Have you ever run for or been elected to public office? If yes, please describe.	No
Describe your civic involvement. Please include any Boards on which you serve and any positions of leadership.	*Chairperson for Bay County Student Health Advisory Committee (SHAC) *VP Bay County Republican Women *Moms for Liberty Bay County *Gulf Coast Women's Club-Environment/Conservation *President Hammocks RCA Lynn Haven *Lynn Haven Historical Society
Why are you running for office?	I believe that the city of Lynn Haven could use my Administrative skills and absolutely needs my core values to uphold a strong code of ethics and morality along with making better decisions than it is currently receiving. I will be an asset to the city, and my plan is to return the city to the people and allow more citizens participation in our long term plans and agenda for the future.
What skills or qualifications do you possess that make you the best choice to serve in this position?	I am a leader with years of Administration behind me, business acumen from owning a small business in which I was the CEO, and knowledge of finances from working on Wall Street. I am able to comprehend architecture and engineering from a family owned business as well. I easily understand law. My BA in Psychology is an added bonus to my patience and understanding of people.
What do you consider to be the top three (3)	1)accountability for decisions being made that are not fair or transparent to the people. I see leaders

<p>issues facing your city (listing in order of importance)?</p>	<p>working against what is right and this leads to problems with my second issue that should be first-balance. 2) balance to our growth in the city in regards to development outpacing our infrastructure and causing increases to stormwater problems, stormwater increased fees, and fix what is broken in our city before compounding with new growth. 3) employ a city clerk who will demonstrate exemplary administrative, management, and organizational skills. This will help to alleviate problems with my issue 1 and 2. A city clerk will be an asset to the city and to the people.</p>
<p>If elected, how do you plan on measuring your performance to report to your constituents?</p>	<p>My performance will be based on how well I research and address issues when voting. Workshops are a great way to measure performance by actively providing data to the people. My vote on agenda items will be fair minded and I will listen to the constituents.</p>
<p>What role should local governments play in attracting new and supporting the existing business community?</p>	<p>Businesses are paramount to any cities well being. Controlling the amount of business is up to the people voted in office. This is why it is so imperative for leaders to think on how attractive businesses will impact the long term life of a city. If we don't have enough businesses to help our economy flourish, people will ultimately move away. Balance in all things is key. Government sets the bar and also makes the rules to allow or not allow certain businesses.</p>
<p>Which legislative priorities in the Bay County Chamber's 2023 Legislative Agenda do you support? Why?</p>	<p>Parental rights and more funding to our schools, especially for mental health issues. I am and always will be an advocate for children and the people who educate them. I would rather raise salaries and give students a better education and keep our kids local when hiring after HS, technical school, or college so that they want to stay and not leave our community for lack of work or because of a failing economy,</p>
<p>In the Chamber's 2023 Business Plan, workforce</p>	<p>First and foremost, promote the STEAM AND STEM programs. Once you have put major industry to work,</p>

<p>development remains a key objective. How do you plan to attract and retain a vibrant and talented workforce?</p>	<p>the workforce need to fulfill services for companies goes hand and hand. Workforce jobs and workforce housing need to be addressed by promoting communities already here and able to sustain both.</p>
<p>Another important issue identified in the Chamber's Business Plan and Legislative Priorities is affordable workforce housing. What ideas do you have to address workforce housing?</p>	<p>Workforce housing is going to be an issue in some places because of zoning, flooding, access to roads, schools, etc. workforce housing needs to blossom around bay county as well. Lynn Haven is limited and is really only able to grow up in buildings, not what we currently have available. Apartment complexes is a solution.</p>
<p>What is the largest budget you have overseen and how did you prioritize spending?</p>	<p>My largest budget would be in the school system. Salaries were always my first priority and then the other expenses that accompanied them. Having a buffer or emergency fund during emergency situations was also valuable when planning. I also made flow charts to see what money was available and what was being spent to keep consistent.</p>
<p>Some people in our community say that we have traffic problems. What do you think? How would you mitigate those concerns or change the situation?</p>	<p>We have severe traffic problems. One of the biggest issues in our city is everyone saying yes to build, build, build. Then, when the focus is off of the project that caused the traffic issue, another project starts across town. This is the balance I spoke of before in my top priorities for the city. I would like to see 20 year plans and I would demand we stick to them.</p>
<p>Public education remains important to the Chamber. Share your thoughts on challenges and opportunities facing our local public education system and how you can help.</p>	<p>Public education is in a crisis right now. The school board does a great job trying to stay on top of these problems. The biggest two, in my opinion, are the empty teaching positions. We have lowered the bar and lowered the pay the teachers receive (by not giving appropriate raises) and it has caused seasoned teachers to leave and be replaced by teachers who are not well trained. This is evident of our scores we receive from FL Dept of Ed every year. Improving education starts by improving the effectiveness of</p>

teachers. No one single factor impacts our schools more greatly than our teachers. Next, I would say mental health issues and students who are classified as homeless (due to no permanent address/not that they necessarily live on the streets) is another area where we need to address and come up with a plan. I helped by joining student health advisory committee and working with school system to educate myself first on the problem, then spreading the word. We need more state funding.

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Candidate Name	Judy Vandergrift
Office	Lynn Haven Commissioner Seat 4
Have you attended a Public Leadership Institute/Political Leadership Institute (hosted by a Chamber of Commerce or Economic Development Council)?	I have not had the opportunity to attend this training. Although I have not attended this particular Institute, I do have a Masters degree in Leadership.
Have you ever run for or been elected to public office? If yes, please describe.	Ran in 2020 Superintendent of Schools-defeated by 500 votes.
Describe your civic involvement. Please include any Boards on which you serve and any positions of leadership.	Junior Womens Club Junior Museum Administrative Board of First Methodist Advisory Board University Academy
Why are you running for office?	I want Lynn Haven to be a prosperous and safe city where citizens select to live and want to raise their families.
What skills or qualifications do you possess that make you the best choice to serve in this position?	I have over 40 years of leadership and budgeting experience. As Deputy Superintendent of Bay County Schools, I was responsible for the Finance Department with a budget of over 300 million.
What do you consider to be the top three (3) issues facing your city (listing in order of importance)?	1. Safety of our citizens 2. Storm water drainage 3. Infrastructure for growth
If elected, how do you plan on measuring your performance to report to your constituents?	1 .Feedback from citizens on the transparency of decision making. 2. Involvement of citizens at Commission meetings. 3. The next election.
What role should local governments play in attracting new and	The City needs to be known as a "business friendly" city. The city government should attract new businesses, relocate businesses to the city or attract



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supporting the existing business community?	businesses that serve the city. Local government can offer tax incentives and ease permitting guidelines.
Which legislative priorities in the Bay County Chamber's 2023 Legislative Agenda do you support? Why?	I feel that affordable housing is critical for our area. Protection of the Housing Trust Fund is extremely important to meet the demands of this housing shortage.
In the Chamber's 2023 Business Plan, workforce development remains a key objective. How do you plan to attract and retain a vibrant and talented workforce?	I have always been a proponent of involving the business community in the school system, We need to go beyond mentoring and speakers in the classes. The Legislature must assist school districts in changing graduation requirements to include more workforce training. Bay County is excellent in preparing students for college but not so good in preparing the non college bound student for the workforce.
Another important issue identified in the Chamber's Business Plan and Legislative Priorities is affordable workforce housing. What ideas do you have to address workforce housing?	The developer needs to know that the city is open to the idea presented to them. Incentives and permitting should not become difficult issues.
What is the largest budget you have overseen and how did you prioritize spending?	As previously mentioned, I worked with budgets over 300 million with BDS. Short term and long range goals described in a strategic plan are critical in the budgeting process.
Some people in our community say that we have traffic problems. What do you think? How would you mitigate those concerns or change the situation?	With growth comes traffic! Local and State government should work together with the traffic engineers to plan ahead for future growth. Be proactive in this situation instead re-acting to the problems. Local governments need to be lobbying now!

Public education remains important to the Chamber. Share your thoughts on challenges and opportunities facing our local public education system and how you can help.

The teacher shortage is an immediate problem. The State is allowing individuals with no teaching experience or a Bachelors degree in a non education subject area to teach students. Disruptive students should not be allowed to disrupt the learning process of students that want to learn.