



2018 Frederick County Council At-Large Candidate Questions and Responses

Note:

The Common Market and the League of Women Voters of Frederick County very much appreciate receiving responses from Susan Reeder Jessee (D), Justin Kiska (R), and Mark Long (D). These are printed below.

No responses were received from Galen Clagett (D), Philip Dacey (R), Kavonte Duckett (D), Danny Farrar (R), Kai Hagan (D), and Jason Miller (R).

1. Racial and ethnic diversity is increasing in the County. What will you do to be sure that the County is engaging with, and is responsive to, the diverse populations that live here?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

Acceptance is a powerful tool that should be used by everyone in this county, especially by those in elected and leadership positions. I have had the honor of working side by side with people from all over the world my entire career for the common good of developing therapeutics to cure diseases. There are not cultural divides in my work and I believe that we can accomplish great things together if we focus more on what brings us together versus what divides us. I also believe a diverse community offers great deal of learning opportunities to an area and if elected I would support this immensely!

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

It comes down to community outreach. We cannot always expect different groups to come to us, so the County will need to go out into the different communities and directly connect with the people and find out what they actually care about, not just what we think they should care about.

MARK LONG (D):

This is something that all of us must take part in during our everyday actions and interactions with others in our community. We can support the various ethnic festivals that take place throughout the year as well as support groups such as the American Asian Center and Centro Hispano de Frederick. Any incidents of discrimination should be reported and addressed. The county can ensure that fair employment and fair housing practices are adhered to and encourage the hiring of bilingual/multilingual staff. Generally, support the work of the Human Rights Commission and Human Rights Department.

2. The population of Frederick County is aging quickly. How would you have the County address the needs of this diverse group – diverse in income, mobility, transportation, health, support systems, and mental acuity?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

I had the pleasure of personally caring for both of my parents the last year of their lives and understand the struggles they faced as well as others in our community. The senior population is the fastest growing population in the county and we must address their needs. I served on the Friends of Meals on Wheels Board for two years to raise additional money to support the county program to make sure no senior goes to bed hungry. I would also support expanding the senior tax credit so it would not include assets that are sometimes hard to liquidate. I would make sure transit services are geared to transporting the elderly with mobility issues, provide additional outreach programs to assist the elderly with everyday tasks and always make sure to let our seniors know how much they are valued and appreciated.

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

Every senior in our community deserves a voice in Winchester Hall. Over the next four years, I would like to promote the development of more affordable housing and expand transportation options and availability for county seniors, as well as discuss expanding the current property tax credit.

MARK LONG (D):

In 2015 the County Executive appointed the **Seniors First Committee**. “This diverse committee included individuals with a range of experiences in senior services, health care, non-profits, education, business, pastoral care and community advocacy as well as staff representatives from the Citizens Services Division, Department on Aging (DOA), Frederick County Department of Social Services (FCDSS) and Frederick County Health Department – Adult Review and Evaluation Services (AERS).” This committee issued a report in November of 2016 that provided numerous recommendations, too many to list here, to enhance services to our senior population in the county. A general recommendation was to completely restructure the county’s Department of Aging and elevate it to a Division level agency. This reflects the importance of addressing the needs of this rapidly growing population. I support the report of the Seniors First Committee and will work to implement its recommendations.

3. What steps should County government take to foster economic development and the growth of good-paying jobs?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

I worked for the City of Frederick Department of Economic Development for two years and understand how tough it is to keep and grow good paying jobs as well as keeping a diverse industrial base. I also was on the original board of the Frederick Innovative Technology Center, Inc. (FITCI) and served on the client selection committee there for 11 years. FITCI has a great record of creating good paying jobs and keeping them local and I believe we should provide the county Department of Economic Development the tools they need to recruit new companies to the area. We should also invest in our current industrial strengths which will attract complimentary businesses to the area. When companies look to locate to an area they look at schools, roads, safety, access to workforce and quality of life and I strongly believe that Frederick County has it all!

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

The best thing the County government can do to encourage economic development is get out of businesses’ way. The more rules and regulations, the more difficult it is for a company to succeed. As a small business owner, I see, firsthand, everyday how difficult it is to run a business. Everyone should have the equality of opportunity to thrive in Frederick County. The government needs to create the

atmosphere to allow entrepreneurs to do what they do best. By doing that, the jobs will come to the County.

MARK LONG (D):

The best companies with high-paying jobs are attracted to vital, livable communities: that is, communities with good, uncongested roads, as well as easy-to-use and effective public transportation; communities with diverse, affordable housing options along with parks and open/green spaces; communities where the arts thrive alongside other opportunities for recreation and entertainment; communities with excellent schools and a well-educated workforce. So, our priority is to enhance sustain the livability of our county as well as support an excellent school system. The Livable Frederick Master Plan provides us a road map forward to achieve this.

In addition, we should encourage and support the work of the Office and Economic Development to reach out to and attract the innovative businesses of the future as well as help sustain our businesses currently in Frederick County.

4. What actions, if any, should the County take to increase the supply of affordable housing?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

The county should offer housing incentives and programs to encourage home ownership which in turn helps stimulate economic growth. Also, building partnerships and engaging stakeholders like developers and the community to the advantages of affordable housing initiatives. The county should promote community acceptance and support affordable housing options which will promote economic viable and livable communities.

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

The issue of affordable housing is a tricky one because what is “affordable” to one may not be affordable to another. If we just look at the issue as how to keep housing costs as low as possible, then we have a starting point. The more fees we place on builders, the more a house costs. The more regulations a builder is required to follow, the more a house costs. The more permits builders are required to pull, the more a house costs. As Council members, we will need to realize that every time we require builders to do more, it adds to the cost for the buyers.

MARK LONG (D):

As a member of the Affordable Housing Council (AHC), I’ve worked on this problem for several years. We raised the fee builders must pay into the Housing Initiative Fund (HIF) in lieu of building affordable. Recently, the County Executive set aside a portion of the Recordation tax for the HIF. Funds from the HIF are dispersed to affordable housing specialists to create affordable housing. Recently the AHC helped with legislation to make it easier to build “tiny homes”. This is another option for affordable housing and I supported this.

Most affordable rental units are financed with Low Income Housing Tax Credits. Securing these funds is competitive but having a community that supports affordable housing helps developers secure these funds. I’m currently helping with legislation to streamline the process for affordable developers to obtain reduced taxes.

There is no single solution to solve this problem. It requires many different approaches.

5. In 2017, the County Executive issued a report on the impact of residential growth already in the ‘pipeline’ – that is, the 21,000 housing units already approved. The report concluded: “The combined road and school infrastructure needed to support this development will cost taxpayers more than \$500 million.” How will you address this concern?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

Carefully and with a lot of research on the subject. We must go back to the guidelines of the APFO that was created when my father was a county commissioner in 1991. Also partner closely with the state to make sure appropriate money is be provided to support this growth. Frederick County is at the crossroads of commerce with interstates of 270, 70 and 15 with access to 81.

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

That report looked at the cost over 25 years. It isn’t that we need to come up with \$500 million in the next year. And some of those infrastructure projects are necessary regardless of the residential growth that’s on the way. \$500 million over a two decade time period is not as frightening as the report made it out to be.

MARK LONG (D):

Because of the Developer Rights and Responsibility Agreements (DRRA) that are in place for these developments, there may not be much that can be done about the impact that the units already in the pipeline will have. Recently the County Executive proposed raising the school mitigation fee that some of the developments are paying in lieu of having adequate school capacity in place. I support this.

Going forward, we must make sure that we don’t approve developments without provisions in place to pay for the necessary schools and roads. The roll out of developments should be timed with our ability to have schools and roads in place.

6. Going forward, how will you ensure that development is shifted from agricultural areas to designated growth areas which are closer to public services, in line with smart growth tools that reduce per capita land consumption as well as improve efficiencies in transportation, utilities, and public services?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

By adapting Smart Growth strategies.

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

I don’t like the idea of forcing growth and development into any specific area. The market should decide where growth occurs. However, it will be the responsibility of the County Council to look at each development project as it comes up so that it can make certain the infrastructure in that specific area can handle the growth.

MARK LONG (D):

Adhere to the Livable Frederick Comprehensive Plan.

7. More than 30% of Frederick County citizens have incomes above the Federal Poverty Level, but can barely cover the basics: housing, child care, food, health care, and transportation. This group is identified as **Asset-Limited, Income-Constrained, Employed** – ALICE, for short. The ALICE population

works in jobs that are integral to our community, from child care educators and home health aides to mechanics. What should the County do to support this population?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

The county should work closely together with partners in the community to address what specific areas need to be addressed first and then develop a short and long term strategy to address the most critical needs first as well as plan for the long term goals.

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

Working toward keeping the cost of living in the county down should always be in the minds of the Council members. Every new policy, rule, or regulation comes with a cost. So before enacting legislation or approving new regulations, it should be determined that it is absolutely necessary and that the associated cost is worth it. Sometimes, what everyone thinks is the right thing to do – regardless of whether it is or not – will actually do more harm than good to the people who can least afford it.

MARK LONG (D)

First, do must as much as possible to keep the county affordable, such as providing more affordable housing and enhancing our public transit system.

Other possible actions include reworking our job training infrastructure to train or retrain workers for the jobs of the future that provide a living wage or better. Look into expanding the services of Frederick County Workforce Services.

Another avenue is exploring how we can expand on the recent bill providing tuition assistance to students attending community college in Maryland.

Work to adopt a Living Wage.

8. We have experienced our first three years of Charter government. Many policies set by the executive and council were not prescribed in the charter, but developed by the first Executive and Council members. Would you recommend any changes?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

Yes, develop ways to make the make the council its own separate entity, loosen up restrictions on allowing council members to contact county staff to address citizens requests that need an immediate response, and look into hiring staff when necessary to address the council needs.

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

I have already public proposed a change to the Charter that would give the Council additional authority in the budget process. My amendment would allow the Council to move money from one line item to another, instead of only being able to decrease funding on line items. In addition, there should be more ability for Council members to directly communicate with County staff so they can provide the best possible constituent service.

MARK LONG (D):

Look into providing more direct support staff for the County Council. Allow the County Council to add to the budget and not just deduct.

9. Livable Frederick is a comprehensive look at Frederick County in 2040. What do you believe are its strengths and weakness?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

Strengths: Community involvement in crafting the document with input from citizens of the county; a visionary approach to comprehensive planning; vibrant communities all over Frederick County that will make life and commerce flourish.

Weakness: Need more time to implement; projected out to 2040 may be too long term.

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

Livable Frederick is a lot of flash and very little substance. It is a beautiful plan, but it provides to certainty or predictability moving forward. When dealing with zoning and comprehensive planning, you must use facts not “visions.” Being that the plan was released in an election year, it has become one of the most politically divisive issues that the Council has had to deal with to date. Since this is a plan that looks out to 2040, we shouldn’t be trying to rush through its approval. If this document is going to become the overarching plan for the future of our county, we need to make sure we know what we’re talking about.

MARK LONG (D):

Its primary strength is that it was developed from input from residents throughout the county. Its overarching vision was created from over 2,000 surveys and 15,000 qualitative comments submitted by residents. Various work groups composed of knowledgeable stakeholders in their fields were formed to develop plans and strategies to implement the vision. It used a Jobs-based Approach to Future Growth Projections and Multi-modal Accessibility Focus. Action Frameworks were formed under the categories of Our Community, Our Health, Our Economy and Our Environment. Development Frameworks were developed with different scenarios rather than adhering rigidly to one plan.

As for weaknesses, I haven’t yet discerned any.

10. How would you approach implementing the Livable Frederick agriculture preservation goals of the permanent preservation of 100,000 acres of farmland, and the retention of a total agricultural land base of 200,000 acres by 2040?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

By working closely with farmers and those that own land to show them how Ag preservation goals will benefit them and the county.

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

At the end of the day, we can’t force people to be farmers. So many family farms are being sold because the next generation isn’t interested in continuing to farm. Should we do whatever we can to encourage these small farms to stay in business? Yes. But what is that going to look like? We need to be mindful of onerous regulations that are driving up costs that these farms simply cannot afford. Like with businesses, the County should be creating an atmosphere so that the farms can thrive and continue from one generation to the next.

MARK LONG (D):

Essentially, I would work to implement the LFP's Supporting Initiatives

1) Evaluate alternative and increased funding options for agricultural land preservation programs or tax credit programs targeted at increasing the number of acres in permanent preservation. 2) Explore other programs that provide funding for easements, such as the federal preservation program. 3) Support the development of a functional and active land trust that works to preserve land through obtaining land preservation funds from the private sector, including foundations, and evaluate the potential for a private Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program. 4) Strengthen our local land trust network and/or evaluate the potential for combining existing land trusts in a regional effort to have an accredited land trust. 5) Partner with the Maryland Environmental Trust on their first Signature Landscape Initiative that targets the Wolfsville to Middletown corridor for conservation and provide technical assistance for the initiative as needed.

11. Plastic pollution is a world-wide problem. Over 200 counties and municipalities require a fee for plastic bags or ban them outright. To curb plastic pollution, are you willing to enact County-wide plastic bag fees or bans?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

Yes

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

No. By doing things like that, the government is beginning to overstep and on finds itself on the way to micro-managing people's lives. We need to encourage people and educate them on why reusable bags should be used versus plastic, but charging any amount for a plastic bag is just another government tax and the people most affected by it will be the ones who can least afford it.

MARK LONG (D):

YES!

12. It's laudable that every Frederick County single-family household (including townhomes) and some small businesses can recycle using the single-stream curbside collection program. Yet some items—such as trash bags, single/loose plastic bags and clamshell packaging—are not acceptable; and many businesses are excluded from the program. If elected, what will you do to improve the recycling program of the County?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

Expand the recycling program to include all businesses and offer incentives to businesses that participate.

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

We've already begun to see some steps forward because plastic bags are able to be recycled if all the bags are wrapped up in one plastic bag and put in the recycle bins. Expanding the program to include multi-unit dwellings and businesses would be the next step. Even more important is education. We need to explain to the residents why recycling is a good thing and its benefits. Until I met my wife, I had never been one to recycle. But she showed me why it was a good thing. I've learned and now understand why we need to be recycling whenever we can.

MARK LONG (D):

Work on expanding the recycling program to businesses.

13. What should the County's next steps be in developing a long term plan for solid waste?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

Invest in Biomass initiatives that produce methane as a progressive way towards a new form of energy from waste. Continue to study a plan for waste disposal options for longer term by meeting with subject matter experts and look at what other areas throughout the US are doing to combat these issues.

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

I wrote an article about just this topic for the Emmitsburg News-Journal and Woodsboro/Walkersville Times called "Trash Talk." In doing my research for the piece, I came to the realization that there isn't one clear answer to "what's next" when it comes to solid waste. Different things work for different communities and in Frederick, it will probably take a combination of things to deal with our future trash. I don't believe building a new landfill is in the cards. They are very costly and not a good environmental solution. We've talked about a waste-to-energy facility before and that was a hugely controversial idea. So the next County Council will need to sit down and talk about what we can do and look at all the options. Nothing should be off the table.

MARK LONG (D):

Implement county wide composting.

14. What is the most critical infrastructure need in the County?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

Roads, Storm water Management and Bridges.

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

The most immediate infrastructure problem is our roads. Traffic has become a fact of life, but there are particular roads in the county that are worse than other and some that can't handle the traffic now, let alone what we know will be coming in the future. Schools are also a concern. While some of our schools are under capacity, many are over 100% and have been for some time. We need to make sure our schools can handle future growth.

MARK LONG (D):

Additional lanes on Rt. 15 around Frederick, more effective transportation options for I 270.

15. Research shows that organic farming practices can improve water quality, conserve energy, increase biodiversity, and contribute to soil health. In addition, the market for organic products is growing and organic practices can provide an economic boon. What incentives should the County develop to support organic growers and farmers wishing to transition to organic certification?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

As the need for organic products increase, incentives could be offered farmers who do or want to organic farming as a way to help them get started which in turn helps our environment.

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

This is an issue that should be left up to the free market. If organic products are what people want and are willing to pay for, farmers will grow organic crops. The government shouldn't be subsidizing or incentivizing organic farms.

MARK LONG (D):

Create an incubator for Organic farming such as we have created for Bio tech and Technology based businesses.

16. Many counties struggle to find ways to improve the provision of internet connectivity that is affordable, equitable, accessible, and useful to citizens of all income levels. Objections have been voiced about Comcast's monopoly on cable internet access and describe it as a bad deal for Frederick County citizens. As a Council member will you be a proponent of comprehensive, free wi-fi throughout the County, with high average download speeds? If not, what will you do to improve high performance access to the internet for all residents, including those with limited income?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

Yes

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

While I think the idea of universal Wi-Fi is great and something I would like to see one day, in reality, there is only so much any government can do. A project/program like that will be extremely costly. Where will the money come from? I certainly would not support raising taxes to pay for something like this? There are just some things the government cannot do.

MARK LONG (D):

I must study this more and give it more consideration.

17. The City of Baltimore, 350 other cities, the State of Maryland, and 15 other states have made commitments to the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement. As a County Council member, will you support Frederick County's formally joining in the effort to meet and exceed these goals?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

Yes

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

This is very much like the previous question. Local governments have a limited ability in what they can do regarding certain issues. Climate change is one of them. Especially when you're talking about an international treaty.

MARK LONG (D):

YES

If not, what do you propose being done in Frederick County to address climate change in a meaningful way?

18. As a Council member would you require Frederick County to develop a strategic plan to advance composting, compost use, and diversion of food scraps from landfills?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

Yes

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

Coming up with a plan only makes sense. If we can find ways to remove food waste from the landfills, that could be one step in dealing with our overall solid waste problem.

MARK LONG (D):

Yes.

19. For over a century, ranked choice voting (RCV), also known as instant-runoff voting, has been used for major elections in the U.S. and other countries. With RCV voters can rank the candidates in order of preference. If no candidate wins a first-round majority of the votes, then the candidate with the lowest number of votes is eliminated and another round of vote tallying begins. Eventually one candidate receives a majority, over 50% of the votes, and wins the election. RCV can be used in single candidate and multiple-candidate races. What is your opinion of RCV for Frederick County offices?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

I would have to research this more before I offer an opinion.

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

The elections are already too long and drawn out and too expensive as it is. Switching to this style of voting now would just add to the cost of elections. Not to mention, voter turnout is so low, getting people to the polls once is hard enough. With RCV, we would see less and less people turning up with each round of voting.

MARK LONG (D):

I think it warrants consideration.

20. An estimated 10 million workers are now employed in over 10,000 worker-owned businesses in the United States. Some of these businesses have started from scratch. In others, owners who want to exit their business, sell the business to their employees. This reduces the possibility that all employees will be fired by the next owner or the business will be moved to another country where labor is cheap and regulations are few. What will you do as an elected official to promote democracy in the workplace through employee-owned and managed businesses in Frederick County?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

I have supported this concept in the past as will continue to do so. My husband has had a business in Frederick County since 1985 and I personally understand the issues small business owners face on a daily basis.

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

It isn't the job of the County Council to interfere with how a private company is run. In fact, I believe it would actually be illegal. If an owner wants to sell their company to the employees, they have every right to do so. How a private company is run though – short of health and safety issues that are under

the purview of the government – is not up to the County Council. We live in a democratic society and therefore the government cannot force Socialist policies on private businesses.

MARK LONG (D):

I must study this further to develop a plan of action.

21. A recent Kaiser Health poll found that over 70% of Americans favor a Medicare buy-in for citizens of all ages. Are you willing to commit the County to take actions that prompt the state and national governments to formally adopt Medicare for all citizens? If so, what actions would you advocate the County take?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

This is more of a state issue so I would work with the elected state officials to make sure the county healthcare needs are being addressed.

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

While the health insurance issue nationwide is a serious one, it is an issue that must be addressed by the federal government and, to some extent, governments at the state level. Expansion of Medicare is not a county level issue.

MARK LONG (D):

Yes.

22. Marijuana is legalized statewide. Will the Council allow farming this high profit crop?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

This is more of a state issue so I would work with the elected state officials to make sure the county healthcare needs are being addressed.

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

I understand the medical marijuana is now legal in the state, but there are a number of rules and restrictions. I don't think the County should just allow marijuana farms to just start popping up all along Route 15. We also have to keep in mind that marijuana is still illegal in the United States. I don't like the idea of local government allowing activities that are directly in violation of federal laws.

MARK LONG (D):

If I'm not mistaken, Medical Marijuana is legal and growing it in Frederick County is already allowed, albeit in restricted industrial locations. If recreational marijuana is legalized, I would investigate expanding farming options.

23. Would you take donations from the NRA?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

No, I would never accept donation from an organization that I don't believe in.

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

Not that I think the NRA has any interest in my campaign for the Frederick County Council, but I would. The NRA is an advocacy group just like hundreds of others. Singling it out in this way makes it clear that the NRA is being seen as some sort of nefarious organization. Why not include other organizations in the question and ask more generally, “Who you take donations from any special interest group?” This could also include the Sierra Club, Teachers Association (which I am proud to say has endorsed me), or Right to Life.

MARK LONG (D):

No

24. Does the Hogan Road Plan prioritize public transportation over public transit?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

So far no from what I can see.

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

Governor Hogan’s plan is looking at what can be done right now. And I think we can all agree it would still only be a first step when dealing with transportation issues. The County has a public transit system in place, but maybe it’s time to take a serious look and see where that system can be improved and potentially expanded to work in conjunction with the governor’s plan.

MARK LONG (D):

No

25. How about cutting fossil fuel subsidies? Then conventional farm produced would cost a lot more and compete with organic food.

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

Anything to wean from Fossil fuel I am for.

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

To my knowledge, the Frederick County Government is not subsidizing fossil fuels, so wouldn’t be able to have an effect on the issue.

MARK LONG (D):

I agree with cutting fossil fuel subsidies but that’s a federal issue.

26. What would you do to lower our taxes?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

Not raise the property tax.

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

As a small business owner, I have to make difficult decisions every day regarding where money is best spent. We need to make sure we’re getting the biggest bang for every dollar. So we need to elect Council members with proven track records, who understand that we shouldn’t be spending more than

we take in and any unnecessary program should be eliminated so that the money can be returned to the residents of the county.

MARK LONG (D):

I would examine the budget carefully and see if there are areas that can be cut without jeopardizing our values and priorities.

27. Do you support a living wage?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

Yes, absolutely! The federal minimum wage has not kept up with the inflation adjusted dollar and if it had, the minimal wage now would be \$19.33/hour. In an economy increasingly characterized by the service sector, a raise in the minimum wage usually affects the lowest-paid workers. In Frederick County it's important to make sure those that work hard are paid well and can live here. I have been involved in the local incubator since its inception in 2004 that has created hundreds of jobs locally.

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

Everyone should have the same opportunity to make a living. It should be the goal of the County to create the atmosphere so that businesses can support their employees. I don't believe the County should step in and impose its own minimum wage because that could have a chilling effect on any economic development policies trying to attract more businesses.

MARK LONG (D):

Yes, most definitely!

28. What will you do to attract businesses to Frederick that offer jobs paying salaries many of us must travel to Baltimore or Washington to achieve?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

As I mentioned earlier in question 3.

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

As I've said before, the County needs to create the right atmosphere so businesses can thrive and grow here. If the government does what it can to stay out of business' way and provide the infrastructure new companies are looking for, then the jobs with the higher paying salaries will follow.

MARK LONG (D):

See question #3.

29. How will you address our current environmental situation and provide more sustainable and green options in Frederick?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

By setting an example. Replace county fleet with all electric, put rooftop solar panels on county buildings, economic development initiative in a composting facility, and work closely with farmers and

last owners along the Monocacy River on the benefits of riparian buffers and regenerative Ag principles.

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

It comes down to education. The more people know and understand the benefits, the more willing they are to buy in to sustainable and green policies. We can't simply force these ideas onto people. Throughout history, education has always been the way to spur change.

MARK LONG (D):

Support and encourage solar installations to power county/municipal buildings. Support continued conversion of county vehicles to electric and/or hybrid. Work to establish a Green Business Incubator.

30. Our County undertook a 2 year effort to figure out what to do with solid waste. Do you support the County's solid waste steering committee's recommendation to begin a composting program? Why?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

Yes because there are knowledgeable people on that committee that came up with some great ideas that need to be addressed and anytime you

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

I would refer back to my answer for Question #18.

MARK LONG (D):

Yes. It's the most effective thing to do to decrease our waste that going to landfills outside of our county.

31. As things stand in Frederick City, anyone who owns a house is free to demolish it or burn it down with the proper permits. The County has no authority to prevent destruction of a house if all permits are met. This includes historic buildings, the landmarks of Frederick's heritage. If elected, would you support, or better yet, introduce legislation to enact an ordinance making it possible for the County to intervene and stop the destruction of buildings that are historically significant and maintain our County's heritage?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

Yes, if each is consider on a case by case basis.

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

There are rules already in place protecting certain historic buildings. On the flip-side though, just because a building is old doesn't mean it has any historic significance. At the end of the day, I come down on the side of the rights of property owners. No one should be told what they can or cannot do with their property as long as they are following the law and not endangering anyone. If a building is truly historically significant, there are mechanisms already in place for its preservation.

MARK LONG (D):

I would first want to discuss this with the Mayor and Alderman of Frederick City. It would be preferable for the City to strengthen their regulations for prevent historically significant properties from being demolished.

32. The County has not provided information regarding the amount of contractor dollars going to minority and women contractors. Would you make it a priority to gather and distribute that data and do you support a program to monitor and encourage ethnic minorities?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

I believe the contracting information in Frederick County should be open and transparent and that should include whether the contact award goes to an ethnic minority or women. That is the way it is handled in federal government level contracting and those statistics are important to document and keep track of to make sure awards are being made in a fair and ethical manner. I would propose the discussion with the procurement division to include these stats in our procurement process and if necessary propose legislation to make this happen.

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

I have long supported the opportunity of equality for everyone, regardless of race or gender. I would love to see us get to a point when we don't even have to be concerned about whether government contracting is fair across races and genders because we know the right person/company received the contract because of being the best qualified and able to do the job. That should be the final goal. Race and gender should have nothing to do with it; government contracts should be awarded on merit. Until that time, the County should do everything it can to avoid getting in the way of women and minority owned companies. The more government regulation and interference in permitting and planning – for anyone – the more difficult it is for a company to succeed.

MARK LONG (D):

Yes.

33. Should Frederick County have a preference for keeping agriculture in our County?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

Yes, as someone that was born and raised in Frederick County, agriculture was and still is our heritage.

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

Frederick County should not be picking one industry over another for anything. Frederick County should be there to support whatever the people of the county want.

MARK LONG (D):

Yes

34. Do you think further investigation needs to occur in how Sheriff Jenkins is handling the 287(g) program?

SUSAN REEDER JESSEE (D):

Yes, an outside independent audit needs to be done.

JUSTIN KISKA (R):

No.

MARK LONG (D):

Yes