



Keys to the Candidates

2024 Primary Election

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About the Keys

The League of Women Voters of Bloomington-Monroe County has compiled candidates' views on selected issues. This compilation gives the unedited responses of candidates for national, statewide, and local races. Several candidates had not responded by press time. Information received since then and additional information on candidates covered here is available by entering your address in the League's online guide, VOTE411, at <https://www.vote411.org>. In each race included in the Keys, candidates are listed in alphabetical order by last name. No corrections or changes have been made to the responses submitted.

The League is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through advocacy and education.

For information on the May 7, 2024, primary election, contact Monroe County Election Central at:

<https://www.co.monroe.in.us/departments/division.php?structureid=89>.

For information on the League of Women Voters go to:

<https://lww-bmc.org>.

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President of the United States

Duties: The President is: the head of state of the United States of America; the Chief Executive Officer; and, the Commander in Chief of all military forces. The powers of the President are prescribed in the Constitution and federal law. The President appoints the members of the Cabinet, ambassadors to other nations and the United Nations, Supreme Court Justices, and federal judges, subject to Senate approval. The President, along with the Cabinet and its agencies, is responsible for carrying out and enforcing the laws of the United States. The President may also recommend legislation to the United States Congress. Term: Four years. Limit of two terms.

Candidates

Joseph Biden, Democrat

Nikki Haley, Republican (withdrew)
The candidate has not yet responded.

Donald Trump, Republican
The candidate has not yet responded.

Q1. What steps should be taken to address the high cost of living and depressed wages in America, including families, people with disabilities, and people that are economically disadvantaged?

Biden: President Biden and Vice President Harris will continue to invest in the American people and fight to lower costs for families. They will continue working to eliminate junk fees and call on corporations with higher markups to pass savings onto consumers. President Biden and Vice President Harris are also pushing Congress to lower the cost of housing, lower prescription drug prices for more Americans, expand access to affordable, high-quality child care and long-term care, extend the enhanced Child Tax Credit, ensure access to paid

family and medical leave for every American, make preK free and college more affordable, and more. Additional information can be found in this letter: <http://tinyurl.com/BidenHarrisLetter>

Q2. What steps will you take to ensure all Americans have access to quality and affordable health care, including reproductive care and prescription drug coverage?

Biden: The Biden Administration is lowering prescription drug prices – President Biden was the first president to take on Big Pharma and win. He has capped the cost of insulin at \$35 for seniors and finally allowed Medicare to negotiate drug prices — starting with some of the costliest, most widely used drugs used to treat blood clots, cancers, diabetes and more. The Biden-Harris Administration is also defending in court a woman’s ability to access medication abortion, fighting to ensure that women receive the medical care they need in emergencies including miscarriages, working to protect the right to travel across state lines to access care, and strengthening privacy protections for patients and doctors. <http://tinyurl.com/BidenHarrisLetter>

Q3. What will you do to support an economy and job market that are strong and inclusive of all people?

Biden: President Biden and Vice President Harris came into office with a vision to grow the economy from the middle out and the bottom up—not the top down. They’re focused on an economy that builds more in America, invests in American workers, and promotes competition to lower costs – and their economic vision is working. Additional information can be found in this letter: <http://tinyurl.com/BidenHarrisLetter>

Q4. What are the most important steps you will take to create an accessible path to citizenship, including Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (ACA) recipients?

Biden: President Biden and Vice President Harris are also using all the tools at their disposal to build a safe, orderly, and humane immigration system. While Donald Trump has repeatedly said that immigrants are poisoning the nation’s blood and is calling for an extreme immigration plan that would wreak havoc across communities while doing nothing to keep us safe, the Biden-Harris Administration has both increased legal pathways for migration and increased border enforcement. And, since Day One, President Biden has called on Congress to take action to build an orderly and humane immigration system. Additional information can be found in this letter: <http://tinyurl.com/BidenHarrisLetter>

Q5. What measures do you support to expand voter access and restore trust in our elections?

Biden: As president, Joe Biden has made the defense, protection, and preservation of American democracy the central cause of his administration. This starts with strengthening and fighting for our democratic institutions and free and fair elections and President Biden is using every tool at his disposal to do so – including through an Executive Order directing all agencies to promote voting and voter registration, calling on Congress to pass the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act to restore and strengthen the Voting Rights Act and the Freedom to Vote Act to establish national baseline standards for access to the ballot. Additional information can be found in this letter: <http://tinyurl.com/BidenHarrisLetter>

Indiana Governor

Description: The Governor of Indiana is the Head of government and Head of State of the state of Indiana. The governor is elected to a four-year term, and responsible for overseeing the day-to-day management of the functions of many

agencies of the Indiana state government. The governor also shares power with other statewide executive officers, who manage other state government agencies. Term: 4 years. Limited to two terms.

Powers and responsibilities include:

- Veto legislation passed by the General Assembly. If vetoed, a bill is returned to the General Assembly for reconsideration.
- Call out the state defense force (the Indiana Guard Reserve) or the Indiana National Guard in times of emergency or disaster.
- Enforcement of all the state's laws and the Indiana Code through the Indiana State Police.
- Ability to grant a pardon or commutation of sentence of any person convicted of a crime in the state, except in cases of treason or impeachment.
- Appointment of judges.

Candidates

Mike Braun, Republican

The candidate has not yet responded.

Brad Chambers, Republican

The candidate has not yet responded.

Suzanne Crouch, Republican

The candidate has not yet responded.

Eric Doden, Republican

Education: BA Business Finance, Hillsdale College. JD, Valparaiso University School of Law

Leadership Experience: Founder, PAGO Development. Past President, Greater Fort Wayne, Inc. Past President, Indiana Economic Development Corporation.

Curtis Hill, Republican

Jennifer McCormick, Democrat

Education: 2011 Ph.D., Educational Leadership, Indiana State University,

Terre Haute, Indiana; 2008 Ed.S., Educational Leadership, Indiana State University, Terre Haute, Indiana; 1999 M.A., Special Education, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana; 1993 B.A., Elementary Education, Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana

Leadership Experience: Jennifer McCormick is a lifelong educator and multi-generational Hoosier from New Castle, Indiana. She has spent decades serving Indiana as a teacher, principal, and most recently, state superintendent of public instruction. While superintendent in rural Indiana, Jennifer fought to protect local control of school districts to ensure parents, teachers and administrators could make the best decisions for their children. As state superintendent, she was a powerful advocate for teachers and students, ensuring they had the resources they needed to succeed while also protecting the taxpayer dollar by demanding transparency and fiscal accountability.

Jamie Reitenour, Republican

The candidate has not yet responded.

Q1. What would be your number one priority as governor, and what steps would you take to achieve it?

Doden: As governor, my highest priority is to fight for the rural Hoosier communities politicians have ignored. We can't be a state where only three or four counties are thriving, we must be a state where all 92 counties are thriving. My Indiana Main Street Initiative gives Indiana an economic development plan and playbook for the 2.7 million Hoosiers who live in small towns. We will reclaim our historic downtowns, restore community pride, enhance small business formation, and stimulate economic and population growth for small-town Indiana. I am dedicated to governing by the small town values that career politicians have failed to remember, and I pledge to be a conservative champion for small towns across the state.

Hill: My number one priority is ending the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. I will use an executive order on day one to end this and restore fairness to all institutions. We must reward excellence and pick the best person for every role. I will not play into identity politics.

McCormick: As governor, my priority would be to ensure the well-being and prosperity of every Hoosier by prioritizing their health and education. This commitment involves championing the restoration of reproductive rights and freedoms, ensuring individuals have autonomy over their bodies and healthcare decisions. Additionally, I would advocate for robust and equitable funding for education, encompassing comprehensive programs from birth through pre-K to post-high school and workforce training initiatives. By investing in both health and education, we not only empower individuals to lead healthier and more fulfilling lives but also cultivate a stronger, more resilient community poised for future success which builds a stronger economy for Indiana.

Q2. What suggestions do you have for changes in Indiana tax law?

Doden: Indiana tax law provides a great opportunity to work with the legislative body and create change Hoosiers can feel in their pocketbooks. The American Dream seems out of reach for many Hoosiers as they struggle to pay for everyday expenses and high property taxes. I plan to work closely with the legislature to build a statewide plan that brings down these high tax rates and caps property taxes for seniors. I support a tiered approach to property taxes that allows Hoosiers who are over 65 to receive relief and stay in their homes by capping the amount their property taxes can increase each year. As governor, I will not leave Hoosiers with promises that can't be kept, but commit instead to working with the General Assembly to lower taxes.

Hill: We must return the gas tax to pre 2018 levels. Big government Republicans pushed this through and it hurts the average Hoosier. Reducing this tax would also help farmers who have to operate heavy machinery on a regular basis. This is a sensible and achievable goal, not a gimmick.

McCormick: Prioritize inclusive decision-making through a comprehensive study committee, ensuring input from diverse stakeholders and fostering transparency and accountability. This study would include examining tax incentives for new businesses and industries. I would halt the increase of gas taxes, as burdensome taxes disproportionately affect low-income individuals and hinder economic growth. Revise current revenue allocations to alleviate property tax increases that fall outside the cap, providing relief to homeowners. By revisiting income tax structures to identify opportunities for reduction, we can ease the tax burden on working families and encourage economic activity, growth, and development for all Hoosiers.

Q3. What measures will you take to improve the management of Medicaid and Medicare funding to ensure adequate health care coverage for these recipients?

Doden: First, we need to avoid errors like the billion-dollar budget projection deficit revealed last legislative session. That starts with leadership in the governor's office and in our state agencies. I'm the only candidate in this race on the record saying each agency head will be required to reapply for their job. For Indiana's Medicaid and Medicare programs specifically, management of these programs is a vital part of the state's overall budget along with education, transportation, infrastructure, and public safety. That means working with the General Assembly to live within our means and bring these programs out of their projected deficits, making sure able-bodied people

are working, and preserving access for the most vulnerable Hoosiers.

Hill: I will always protect seniors and low-income Hoosiers. Funding healthcare is important, including attracting qualified medical professionals to Indiana to provide world class care. My economic plan addresses this through targeted tax breaks.

McCormick: Our Medicaid and Medicare oversight in Indiana has become untenable, exacerbated by the burden of COVID-19 on our community starting in early 2020. Our fellow Hoosiers who depend on these resources deserve better. To enhance Medicaid and Medicare management, I will conduct a thorough audit of the current revenue and expenditure flow, ensuring transparency and accountability. Collaborating with affected families and organizations, I'll ascertain the optimal timing and necessity of fund distribution, prioritizing equitable healthcare coverage. Additionally, implementing a robust oversight system across state agencies will guarantee responsible fund utilization, safeguarding resources for comprehensive and sustainable healthcare access.

Q4. Do you support or oppose current Indiana laws on abortion? Comment on your response.

Doden: As a husband, father, and faithful Christian, I am 100% pro-life. For me, being pro-life is a human rights issue: it means being pro-mother, pro-child, and pro-family. In the office of governor, I will be a champion for life by supporting legislation and policies that protect unborn children and mothers. Our Zero-Cost Adoption Plan will lead the way in ensuring mothers who choose life and families who choose adoptions receive the support they need to provide safe and loving homes for Hoosier children. Together, we can build a culture of life in Indiana by protecting the vulnerable and making Indiana one of the first states in the nation to provide zero-cost adoption.

Hill: I support the current law but believe it needs to be properly enforced. We must demand Terminated Pregnancy Reports (TPRs) from the Indiana Department of Health so that only those with truly extraordinary circumstances are using these exceptions. I believe in a culture of life and will fight for it.

McCormick: I strongly oppose Indiana's current laws on abortion. Indiana's Republican-led extreme abortion ban has taken away the right of women to make deeply personal decisions regarding their own healthcare. Government action should not compromise the health of its citizens or severely limit opportunities to reach their full potential. The abortion ban disregards the health and well-being of Hoosier women. Indiana's maternal mortality rate is the third highest in the nation, and the further lack of access to maternal health services will only exacerbate this already major contributor to these deaths. Currently, 25 Indiana counties are classified as "maternity care deserts." Unfortunately, the new abortion ban will again only make matters worse.

Q5. Do you support or oppose the sending of Indiana National Guard troops to the Texas/Mexico border. Comment on your response.

Doden: We must hold the line at home against Washington's immigration crisis. I boldly support the sending of Indiana National Guard troops to the border, along with an increase in border protections and the heavy persecution of drug dealers. Unlike some D.C. politicians, I refuse to cave under liberal pressure and will lead where D.C. has failed to keep drugs and violence out of Indiana. I pledge to give border states the tools they need to keep illegal immigrants out of the United States and stop the flow of drugs and illegal immigrants over our border. Your safety will always come first, and my bold vision for Indiana will protect our borders and restore our communities.

Hill: I support sending National Guard troops to the border. I publicly called on Governor Holcomb to do just that and days later he did. I will stand up against the crime and drugs coming over our border. I will always put Hoosiers first.

McCormick: As a military mom and fierce advocate for our service members' well-being, I oppose sending Indiana National Guard troops to the Texas/Mexico border under the current circumstances. I refuse to exploit their service for political gains. Border security and immigration are complex issues that require a bipartisan solution. Instead, I commit to collaborating with the federal government, regardless of party affiliation, to uphold our state and national security. It's imperative to prioritize genuine security measures over political showmanship, ensuring our troops are deployed judiciously and in alignment with our values of freedom and democracy.

Indiana US Senator

Description: The United States Senate is the upper house of the United States Congress. It consists of 100 members. Each state has two senators, and they are elected directly by the people.

The term of a senator is six years, and the terms are staggered so that approximately one-third of the seats are up for election every two years. The staggering of the terms is arranged to ensure that both seats from a given state are never contested in the same general election except when a mid-term vacancy is being filled.

The U. S. Constitution sets three qualifications for senators: 1) each senator must be at least 30 years old, 2) must have been a citizen of the United States for at least the past nine years, and 3) an inhabitant (at the time of election) of the state they seek to represent.

Powers reserved to the Senate include:

- Confirming or rejecting treaties;

- Confirming or rejecting presidential appointments to office, including the Cabinet, other officials of the executive branch, federal judges, including Supreme Court justices, and ambassadors;
- Trying a government official who commits a crime against the United States.

The Senate uses committees for a variety of purposes, including the review of bills and the oversight of the executive branch. The appointment of committee members is formally made by the whole Senate, but the choice of members is made by the political parties. Each Senate committee and subcommittee is led by a chairperson, usually a member of the majority party.

In addition, the House and Senate is known collectively as the Congress. Among other powers, Congress can declare war, regulate interstate and foreign commerce, and control taxing and spending policies.

The job of a senator is to act on behalf of the American people in legislative sessions to ensure the voice of the common citizen is heard.

Candidates

Jim Banks, Republican

The candidate has not yet responded.

Marc Carmichael, Democrat

Leadership Experience: Indiana State Representative 1986-1991; Director of Governmental Affairs, Indiana Gas Company 1991-1999; President, Indiana Beverage Alliance, 1999-2020.

Education: BA University of Notre Dame 1972

Valerie McCray, Democrat

Leadership Experience: Valerie McCray, PH.D. is a Clinical Psychologist practicing in the State of Indiana. While navigating the challenges of being a single mother of one son, Ryan, she earned BA, MA, and PH.D. from the University of

Michigan. Dr. McCray accepts every opportunity to serve our men and women of the military. She has evaluated thousands of men and women of the military suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Traumatic Brain injuries from wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Gulf War, and Vietnam. She works to s

Education: Doctorate

Q1. Identify a top domestic challenge in the United States. How would you address it?

Carmichael: The striking down of Roe V Wade by the Republican majority of the Supreme Court. Codify Roe V Wade at the federal level.

McCray: Equitable, quality healthcare SHOULD BE a fundamental right for all people; not a privilege for the wealthy few. Millions of Americans are one bad diagnosis away from going broke. It's time for a system that is focused on patients, not profits. In Congress, I will be committed to finding constructive ways to improve our nation's health care system, expand access to quality and affordable health care, and reduce costs for middle-class families no matter their income, race, gender, zip code, or medical diagnosis. I will make it a priority to end abusive pricing practices by the pharmaceutical industry and give patients a break at the pharmacy counter. I will support increases for health and science research to invest in tomorrow's cures.

Q2. Identify a top foreign challenge for the United States. What suggestions do you have to respond to it?

Carmichael: Protect and expand democracies. Fully fund the Ukraine war effort and fully support NATO.

McCray: Our values at the national level are inconsistent. On one hand, we support Ukraine's sovereignty and independence against Russia; but on the other hand, we enable the death and destruction of Palestinian people and the

constant encroachment of their land. We're losing the respect of the global community because of this hypocrisy. We can't pick and choose when and if to impart our values. Our solution is to implement policy and foreign relations that value ALL human life—applied equally. I understand that because of historical trauma, there is a need for safety of Jewish people—it shouldn't be at the expense and security of the Palestinians. An immediate ceasefire and a return to a commitment for a two-state solution is a must.

Q3. What reforms would you recommend for improving the management of immigrant and refugees on our southern border?

Carmichael: Adequate foreign aid to the countries from which the refugees are fleeing, enhanced border security with more border guards, adequate shelter for refugees seeking asylum, more judges and courts to address the legal backlog.

McCray: First, we need to get the facts straight. We must stop using immigration as a scapegoat for America's problems—this fear mongering is subjecting immigrants to exploitation, trafficking, neglect, & cruelty. When I'm in office, I will focus on comprehensive immigration reform legislation through bipartisan efforts without watering down democratic values. I will push for expedited work permits for those already here; fairer/more efficient process for asylum claims, & immigrant visas for families/workers. We aren't here to dehumanize and tear apart families. I will push for increased funding for immigration judges, asylum officers, border patrol agents, and equipment. President must have the ability to shut down the border when/if overwhelmed.

Q4. Do you support or oppose current Indiana laws on abortion? Comment on your response.

Carmichael: Oppose. Indiana's abortion laws are narrow minded, mean spirited, and unconstitutional. Women in Indiana are second class citizens. Indiana, as well as all the other states, should have uniform abortion laws that are no less than those set out in Roe V Wade.

McCray: The right of a woman to make autonomous decisions about her own body/reproductive functions is at the core of her basic human rights to equality, medical privacy, & bodily integrity. I will push for legislation that protects access nationally to abortion with FDA-approved medication/procedures & defend access to emergency medical care & everyday reproductive care. Affordable contraception to anyone who wants and needs it. Safeguard the privacy of patients/providers & ensure they have accurate information and legal resources necessary. For those choosing to grow their family, ensure they have adequate access to resources and for pay for quality of life. In the meantime, I will push for ability to safely travel from banned states.

Q5. As a potential member of Congress, are you willing to support bipartisan legislation for the benefit of Hoosiers and the country?

Carmichael: Of course. I will put country before party at every turn. If I am elected to the US Senate I would look forward to cooperating with Sen Todd Young to get things done for Indiana and the United States in a bipartisan manner. I am a legislator, not a bomb thrower.

McCray: As Senator, I will meet/confer with my colleagues on all sides of the political spectrum. Although we're more polarized than ever, it's still possible to have productive conversations about political beliefs. If we focus on PEOPLE over politics, we are closer to finding common ground. If we stick the facts/avoid confrontation (if possible), we can be an advocate, rather than an opponent. With that said, I will not water down or

forsaken MY democratic values. Ultimately, human rights are non negotiable. The decision of whether marginalized groups should receive assistance, support, or advocacy should not be based on which party happens to be in power at the time. Politicians should uphold rights of all people, not just a few.

Indiana US House District 9

Description: U.S. House of Representatives Qualifications: To be elected, a representative must be at least 25 years old, a United States citizen for at least seven years and an inhabitant of the state he or she represents. Each representative is elected to a two-year term serving the people of a specific congressional district.

<https://www.house.gov/the-house-explained>

Duties: Among other duties, representatives introduce bills and resolutions, offer amendments, and serve on committees. The house has several powers assigned exclusively to it, including the power to initiate revenue bills, impeach federal officials and elect the President in the case of an electoral college tie.

<https://www.house.gov/the-house-explained>

Candidates

D. Liam Dorris, Democratic
Educational background: Vocational
Occupation(s): Metrologist

Hugh Doty, Republican
The candidate has not yet responded.

Erin Houchin, Republican
The candidate has not yet responded.

Timothy (Tim) Peck, Democrat
Educational background: College of the Holy Cross - Bachelor of Arts, New York University School of Medicine -

Doctor of Medicine (MD) Emergency Medicine

Occupation(s): Emergency Physician, Entrepreneur

Q1. What policies and plans do you have to address the challenges of pollution as it affects the climate and the environment?

Dorris: As a staunch advocate for environmental stewardship, I prioritize implementing aggressive policies to combat pollution and address climate change. This existential threat demands immediate action, whether through supporting initiatives like The Green New Deal or pursuing alternative resolutions. It's imperative that we unite our efforts, channeling our collective determination to safeguard the future for generations to come.

Peck: As a candidate committed to environmental stewardship, I believe strongly in policies to combat pollution and its impact on climate and the environment. This includes advocating for regulations on industrial emissions and environmental impact, investing in renewable energy sources, and supporting initiatives to preserve and restore ecosystems.

Additionally, I prioritize community engagement and collaboration to address local environmental concerns effectively. By prioritizing science-based solutions and fostering partnerships, we can mitigate pollution's harmful effects, safeguard our planet for future generations, and build a cleaner, more sustainable future for all. Indiana is ranked 49th in pollution and air quality. We must do better.

Q2. What are your priorities on reproductive health and access to obstetric health care?

Dorris: Ensuring equitable access to comprehensive reproductive health services stands as a cornerstone of promoting societal well-being and fairness.

I staunchly advocate for educational excellence, extending to robust sex education within schools. Additionally, universal healthcare, encompassing affordable contraception, is paramount, coupled with unwavering support for safeguarding women's reproductive rights.

Quality prenatal care, maternal health services, and robust support for pregnant individuals, especially those hailing from marginalized communities, are non-negotiable imperatives.

Crucially, I stand firm in my belief that being pro-choice is not just a stance; it's a fundamental right that demands codification into law.

Peck: As an Emergency Physician, I've saved the lives of pregnant women who had to make the tough choice to live or die. I've had to witness the trauma of rape and incest - and I've seen that the continued trauma of a woman's or girl's pregnancy from an act of sexual violence. The doctor-patient relationship is based in science, trust, empathy, and faith - and the government has no role in the exam room.

Q3. What actions, if any, would you take to address the need for affordable housing?

Dorris: In addressing the need for affordable housing, I advocate for comprehensive measures that ensure housing is accessible to all individuals, regardless of their economic status. This includes repurposing vacant homes to provide immediate relief to those experiencing homelessness. Additionally, I support policies aimed at promoting economic justice in housing, such as rent control measures, affordable housing initiatives, and programs to assist low-income families in securing stable housing. It's imperative that we prioritize the well-being of our communities by guaranteeing everyone has a place to call home, laying the foundation for a more equitable society.

Peck: Fighting poverty is a moral imperative. I will focus on targeted policies

addressing education, job creation, and social support programs to lift our community members out of poverty.

I also believe in working with the private sector to promote the construction of more housing, limiting the red tape around sustainable development and providing incentives for affordable home construction.

As the son of a man who built homeless shelters for a living, I understand the importance of helping the less fortunate and housing the unhoused.

Indiana State Senate District 40

Description: The Indiana Senate has broad powers to pass laws that affect the daily lives of Indiana citizens. It decides the type of taxes and rates that will be levied on citizens and businesses for State purposes. It can create and abolish agencies of state government. It determines how much will be spent for each of the many government services. It sets the rules for operation of Indiana's local governments. It determines the amount of state collected tax funds to be distributed to the units of local government for schools, highways and other purposes and designates the basis on which these funds are to be distributed. The 50 Senators are elected to four-year terms but only half are elected every two years. It dictates the procedures for the election of state and local government officials including drawing the voting districts.

Candidates

Shelli Yoder, Democrat

Occupation(s): Senior Lecturer at Indiana University Kelley School of Business
Educational background: M.S. Ed. and M.Div.

Q1. What policies and plans do you have to address the challenges of pollution as

it affects community health, the climate, and the environment?

Yoder: The state must better incentivize the transition to renewable energy sources and promote regenerative practices in agriculture and waste management. Supporting public transportation investment and infrastructure improvements will also curb pollution. I will continue to support and work on policies that establish monitoring systems to track air and water quality, as well as protect local units of government's ability to promote environmental stewardship and public health within our communities. Addressing the challenges of pollution affecting community health, climate change, and the environment requires comprehensive state policies and plans grounded in science and evidence-based medicine.

Q2. Should all schools that receive state funds be held to the same standards of fiscal transparency, academic standards, and accommodations that public schools are subject to? Please explain your answer.

Yoder: All schools receiving state funds should be held to the same standards. Fiscal transparency ensures that taxpayer money is used responsibly, promoting trust and accountability. Fraud and loss of millions of taxpayers' dollars have already occurred due to lack of oversight as more state dollars are going to voucher and virtual charter schools. By holding all schools to the same standards, we uphold the principles of equity, transparency, and excellence in education for all Indiana students. More than 90% of all Indiana students attend a traditional public school, and our school funding should reflect this preference. I will fight back against the demonization of public schools and support their value as a public good.

Q3. What are your priorities on reproductive health and access to obstetric health care?

Yoder: As a fierce advocate for reproductive freedom and access to abortion care, my priorities are to protect and improve reproductive healthcare and outcomes in Indiana. These include advocating for evidence-based and age-appropriate comprehensive human sexuality education in K-12, affordable contraception, and accessible abortion care services. I will continue fighting for the repeal of Indiana's abortion ban, improving maternal health outcomes, and addressing Indiana's alarming infant mortality rates. I support full funding for maternal health programs, including doula services for Medicaid individuals, improved access to prenatal care, and better postpartum care services for all Hoosiers.

Q4. What actions, if any, would you take to address the need for affordable housing?

Yoder: First, tackling stagnate wages and wage disparities is essential to addressing affordable housing. Utilizing affordable housing tools like community land trusts can help create long-term affordable housing options for low to median income residents. Protecting local governments' ability to implement tenant protections, such as eviction prevention measures, is vital to stabilize housing access and security. Additionally, enabling court-based enforcement of habitability standards ensures that tenants have safe and livable housing conditions. By combining these approaches, Indiana can make significant strides in improving access to affordable housing, promoting economic stability, and fostering thriving communities for all residents.

Q5. What policies on gun safety do you support?

Yoder: I support gun safety policies such as secure storage and child access prevention legislation proven to prevent tragic accidents and unauthorized firearm use. Additionally, advocating for background check requirements is essential to keep guns out of the hands of

individuals who pose a danger to society, and regulating ghost guns will help curb the proliferation of untraceable firearms. I also support prohibiting domestic abusers under temporary orders from possessing firearms to protect victims from further harm. Furthermore, requiring new handgun models sold in Indiana to incorporate childproofing features will bolster safety measures and prevent unauthorized access to firearms.

Indiana State House District 61

Description: The Indiana House of Representatives has broad powers to pass laws that affect the daily lives of Indiana citizens. It decides the type of taxes and rates that will be levied on citizens and businesses for State purposes. It can create and abolish agencies of state government. It determines how much will be spent for each of the many government services. It sets the rules for operation of Indiana's local governments. It determines the amount of state collected tax funds to be distributed to the units of local government for schools, highways and other purposes and designates the basis on which these funds are to be distributed. All 100 members of the house of representatives are elected every two years to two-year terms. It dictates the procedures for the election of state and local government officials including drawing the voting districts.

Candidates

Matt Pierce, Democrat

Q1. What policies and plans do you have to address the challenges of pollution as it affects community health, the climate, and the environment?

Pierce: The Republican supermajorities have chosen protecting polluters over protecting our air, water, and natural

resources. I have consistently opposed legislation reducing protections for wetlands, weakening the rulemaking authority of the Department of Environmental Management, and attempting to redefine the forever chemical PFAS to allow its continued use. I have offered legislation to protect wilderness areas of Indiana's state forests from logging and pushed for a faster transition to renewable energy to combat climate change. I supported efforts to protect groundwater from coal ash contamination. I will continue working for proactive policies that clean-up our environment and prevent future pollution.

Q2. Should all schools that receive state funds be held to the same standards of fiscal transparency, academic standards, and accommodations that public schools are subject to? Please explain your answer.

Pierce: I have a long record of voting against legislation that diverts tax dollars away from public schools to private and religious schools that do not have the same standards and accountability. Charter schools and schools receiving vouchers are exempt from many requirements that apply to traditional public schools. Any school receiving taxpayers' money should expect to be transparent and meet the same requirements as traditional schools.

Q3. What are your priorities on reproductive health and access to obstetric health care?

Pierce: I am a strong supporter of women's reproductive freedom and fought the passage of legislation that took away rights from women that had been guaranteed since 1973 under the Roe v. Wade decision. These restrictions make it more difficult for women to get the care they need, endangering their lives. My priority is to restore women's reproductive freedom. I will also work to block any efforts to limit access to birth control or in vitro fertilization (IVF).

Q4. What actions, if any, would you take to address the need for affordable housing?

Pierce: I voted for legislation that provides incentives to local governments to facilitate the construction of new housing. I also supported legislation designed to limit the impact of sudden property tax hikes for homeowners caused by skyrocketing property values. Higher property taxes are making it more difficult for existing homeowners to continue living in their homes. I will support efforts to commit more funding in the next budget for housing programs designed to help first time homebuyers and renters who are paying more than 25% of their income for housing.

Q5. What policies on gun safety do you support?

Pierce: I voted against the legislation that removed any requirement for a permit to carry a concealed weapon. I continue to be frustrated by the Republican super-majorities' complete unwillingness to even consider gun safety proposals. I support common sense legislation such as closing loopholes that allow the purchase of guns without a background check, banning military style assault rifles that are often used by mass shooters, requiring firearms training, and requiring weapons to be properly stored to prevent access by children.

Indiana State House District 62

Description: The Indiana House of Representatives has broad powers to pass laws that affect the daily lives of Indiana citizens. It decides the type of taxes and rates that will be levied on citizens and businesses for State purposes. It can create and abolish agencies of state government. It determines how much will be spent for each of the many government services. It sets the rules for operation of

Indiana's local governments. It determines the amount of state collected tax funds to be distributed to the units of local government for schools, highways and other purposes and designates the basis on which these funds are to be distributed. All 100 members of teahouse of representatives are elected every two years to two-year terms. It dictates the procedures for the election of state and local government officials including drawing the voting districts.

Candidates

Dave Hall, Republican

The candidate has not yet responded.

Thomas Horrocks, Democrat

Education Background: Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies and Master of Divinity

Occupation: Pastor and Military Chaplain

Q1. What policies and plans do you have to address the challenges of pollution as it affects community health, the climate, and the environment?

Horrocks: U.S. News and World Report has ranked Indiana 50th in "Natural Environment." Our waterways are the most polluted in the country and our air is the third most polluted. For those reasons, I would support a State Environmental Action Plan that seeks to reduce pollution across all sectors. That plan should include increased state funding for conservation, mitigation, and restoration. It should also include both incentives for promoting environmentally friendly policies and practices as well as penalties for polluters. That plan should also require an environmental impact report on all proposed legislation and, ideally, major developments.

Q2. Should all schools that receive state funds be held to the same standards of fiscal transparency, academic standards, and accommodations that public schools

are subject to? Please explain your answer.

Horrocks: Funding for public education is a direct investment in our future and, as such, should be a top priority for our state. In order to ensure fiscally and socially responsible investment, any school that receives public education dollars should be subject to the same standards and accountability as traditional public schools. Schools that wish to be exempt from those requirements should not receive state money.

Q3. What are your priorities on reproductive health and access to obstetric health care?

Horrocks: As of 2022, Indiana had the third highest maternal mortality rate and the seventh highest infant mortality rate in the country. Furthermore, 25 percent of Indiana's counties are maternity care deserts, and this is likely to get worse as OB-GYN's flee the state in response to the legislature's drastic overreach. It is imperative that we prioritize the full spectrum of reproductive health by both rolling back the state's abortion bans and working to increase the accessibility and affordability of obstetric health care across the state.

Q4. What actions, if any, would you take to address the need for affordable housing?

Horrocks: I would support measures that incentivize both county and municipal-level governments to invest in and promote mixed-income housing developments. I would also support subsidies for new housing developments to help offset the costs of infrastructure, so long as those cost savings are passed on to the buyers and/or renters in order to lower the barrier to entry. Finally, I would support measures that enforce habitability standards and protect the rights of low-income tenants.

Q5. What policies on gun safety do you support?

Horrocks: I support universal background checks on all firearm purchases without loopholes, restrictions for people with dangerous histories and other red flag laws, secure storage regulations, and an end to gun-maker immunity.

Monroe County Council At Large

Description: The County Council appropriates all funds for county use, adopts county budget, fixes county tax rate, and has exclusive power to borrow money for the County.

Candidates

Matt Caldie, Democrat

Trent Deckard, Democrat

Educational background: PhD Student in Global Leadership with a Focus on Organizational Behavior and Change

Occupation(s): Business Communication Faculty, Kelley School of Business, Indiana University

David Henry, Democrat

Educational background: MPA, Local Government Administration, Indiana University. BA, Baldwin Wallace University

Occupation(s): Government Management Consultant, Teaching Faculty - IU O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs

Cheryl Munson, Democrat

Educational background: BA, Anthropology, Geology, University of Arizona, 1965; MA, Anthropology, Archaeology, University of Illinois, 1971

Occupation(s): archaeologist

Q1. City and town residents are also residents of the county. How would you work

to encourage communication and a good working relationship among city, town, and county elected officials?

Caldie: Elected officials are at their best when they work collaboratively. This means listening to the advice of relevant experts and to the voices of resident stakeholders. It also means working well with elected officials and government employees across the city and county, as issues such as public health, climate change, and so many others can't be solved by either city or county alone.

Good relationships boil down to trust that everyone is operating in good faith. It takes work to build that trust. I will commit to prioritizing communication, to assuming the good faith effort of all county and city officials and employees, and to focus on our areas of commonality rather than our differences. After all, we're all in this together.

Deckard: I would do what I have always done to maintain city and county relationships: show up positively and energetically, listen, engage, and interact with our partners in local government. I've attended numerous meetings with all local officials, ranging from Ellettsville, Bloomington, and Stinesville, on issues consisting of everything from protecting rural transit and drafting interlocal agreements for our forthcoming convention center to addressing health insecurity. I believe with every ounce of my experience working at the federal, state, and local levels of government that elected officials can and should work together. When they do work together alongside community partners, they can get good results for the people they represent.

Henry: Frankly, we haven't had the best interpersonal communication in recent years among officials. I believe this is in part to how isolating some technology is in building interpersonal relationships. While public business must be conducted open-door, we need leadership that can have a coffee together and build up

personal rapport. I can contribute that approach. As a trained meeting facilitator, I've led consensus-building workshops in my past consulting work. As the most recent chair of the Democratic Party, I have a good working rapport with all of our elected officials (and some Republicans too) and relationships that carries with it the trust and goodwill to help continue to bridge relationships among city and county officials.

Munson: The last decade has seen more confrontation than collaboration between our city and county. For example, the expansion of the Convention Center was stalled for several years due to disagreements between the elected city and county executives. But in smaller ways, city-county collaboration has been successful for years, e.g., Animal Control and Building Inspections. Having a shared goal and a willingness to compromise is fundamental to successful collaboration. Our city and county would benefit from another "joint" endeavor. I would suggest a good start would be a City-County Childcare Task Force to identify possible solutions for our local government employees whose struggles to find affordable childcare impact their lives and work.

Q2. Beyond public statements at meetings, letters, and email messages to you, how would you plan to hear from all the citizens of Monroe County?

Caldie: The typical answer is to offer monthly constituent meetings. However, such meetings are usually difficult for residents to attend. This is especially true for residents who may be busy juggling more than one job alongside family commitments. My goal is to reach as many citizens as I can, particularly those from less represented groups. So, while I would like to engage in constituent meetings – ideally jointly with other elected officials – I will likely prioritize meeting people where they already are. This means finding neighborhood groups, affinity groups, and events where residents meet. I won't know

what strategies work until I try, but I'm excited to learn which methods allow for effective connections with residents. I'm open to ideas.

Deckard: I strive for access for more residents through a variety of approaches. First, in the last two years, I have served on the Steering Committee of the Monroe County Health Equity Council. This organization provides a platform to bring more voices to the table regarding issues affecting health care, and it does so by reaching into advocacy groups and organizations. It is an offshoot of Community Voices for Health, an initiative from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, which engaged multiple voices towards a new way to get policymakers to create local engagement. I have hosted listening sessions alongside my other two at-large county council colleagues at libraries and on Zoom. I plan to continue these activities well into the future.

Henry: There is no reason the first time someone speaks at public comment is the first time a citizen should meet their Councilperson. Every time we can educate people on how government works is time well spent. Election day is only the beginning and not the end of community engagement. We need far more listening opportunities for one another. I'll focus on town hall meetings and putting "council on your corner" events far afield from the courthouse. Social media, old fashioned phone calls and digital events are only part of the puzzle - being in the community means being in the community. That also means doing the work to keep going to places elected officials only visit at campaign time - from community organizations to union halls.

Munson: While constituent meetings proved to be an unsuccessful way to communicate with anyone but a small number of people, I have had the good fortune to know and work with people who reside in various parts of the city and county. Also, the opportunity to talk with diverse citizens arises when I am

working on boards, committees, or just lending a helping hand at various events (e.g., historic preservation, reorganization of fire protection in the county, annexation discussions, History Center Garage Sale, the County Fair, Indian Creek Easter Egg Hunt, Ellettsville's Fall Festival, Harrodsburg Heritage Days, Lotus in the Park, etc.). Spending time working with community members gives me a chance to hear people's concerns about a host of issues.

Q3. What do you view as the biggest financial challenge for Monroe County this year and next?

Caldie: The biggest immediate financial challenge for Monroe County is the Justice Center, as the current facility can no longer appropriately serve the community. It has long been evident that a new facility is needed, and that Justice Center employees would prefer to remain co-located with the jail and in a downtown location. Once location and design decisions are made, the County Council will need to determine how to fund the building and, if necessary, the purchase of the land. However, new facilities are only one piece of a larger justice puzzle. We must also focus on upstream strategies to address issues contributing to encounters with the justice system. By prioritizing long-term solutions, we can work to reduce the need for incarceration.

Deckard: The demands of county government and the services related to health, infrastructure, roads, and our judicial system constantly grow. In contrast, the county's revenues face threats. We managed well in past crises such as the pandemic by maintaining strong reserves, but we must take a cautious approach. I helped create a Long Term Finance committee of the council for just this reason. Despite the increased demands of services particularly in health, the county could see an annual impact of the City of Bloomington's annexation efforts that removes an amount of \$1-3 million in

revenues annually. This also comes at a time when we consider the cost of a new facility for our justice center, which we must factor into future decision-making.

Henry: We are on borrowed time to assure a quality of life and economy our whole community can enjoy. We are constrained by state law on how much revenue our community can take in. Our economic base and property tax revenue struggles to meet our basic obligations - like a constitutional jail and criminal justice system or repairing county roads and culverts. It is basic math - we either foster economic development and more housing choices to share the tax burden, or, fewer people will carry more of the burden with declining services. We simply must move forward with economic and sustainable housing possibilities to deliver services, living wages and benefits for county employees, resilience to a changing climate, and for overall quality of life.

Munson: Replacing the current inadequate and physically failing jail with a new facility within which incarceration will be part of a "Justice Center Complex" that will ideally incorporate treatment services for mental health and substance use disorders. Additionally space will be needed for the Sheriff, Prosecutor, Public Defender, the Circuit Court, and Probation Services. Paying for the Justice Center will require considering the best mix of funding sources,-- bonds, revised allocations of existing tax revenues, grants, and other funds. The possibility of a "jail tax" to help fund the Justice Center's construction and operations should be evaluated as well in finding the lowest overall cost.

Q4. What approaches would you favor to address the problems of homelessness in Monroe County?

Caldie: Short-term, evidence suggests that a rapid re-housing model can be an effective method. When people have a home, they are better equipped to

address the challenges that may have led to their homelessness in the first place, such as unemployment, mental health challenges, or substance use issues. By connecting people with flexible rental assistance and support services within our community, we can improve their chances of staying housed.

Long-term, living here needs to become more affordable. Residents in Monroe County, particularly in low-income and renter-occupied households, are paying too large a percentage of their income on housing. Easing this burden should reduce the likelihood of residents becoming unhoused.

Deckard: Local government and community stakeholders will have to engage on this in a few ways. That work is underway. I believe we need to continue investments into the existing Heading Home plan that Monroe County supports. This plan identifies a range of solutions, from fundamental infrastructure investments to data sharing, with a priority of a housing-first model to alleviate the crisis. More can be gleaned from <https://headinghomeindiana.org/the-plan/>. We can also increase housing stock for low-income households, help landlords with incentives for affordable housing, and expand the health care and income opportunities for those experiencing housing insecurity. This requires buy-in from everyone participating.

Henry: As a member of the now defunct Affordable Housing Advisory Commission, we made recommendations to make "housing a human right" a reality that are still not implemented. We can, with smart use of the ARPA funds that remain, build emergency housing, sanitation, and support the NGOs that already lead on this issue. We should treat the challenges the unhoused face as the disaster it is - no differently than a tornado displacing those with houses. I'd like to see us fund our values and put our money where our mouth is, if you will, on putting the rungs back on the housing security ladder. With much more urgency,

we need to roll back 20 years of inflationary & mental health challenges, that more of our neighbors experiencing homelessness face.

Munson: Those places having fewer obvious homelessness issues reportedly encourage unhoused people to move to other cities, including our own. Instead of transporting the homeless away, Bloomington and Monroe County have favored providing housing along with supportive services. Winter conditions stress both housing and other basic needs because many people still live in scattered tent camps. While public and private funding is directed to support new construction projects to provide additional long-term housing and services, I doubt that we can build enough to solve the issue. I think we should fully explore additional alternatives, e.g., the pros and cons of organized tent encampments or neighborhoods of "tiny houses" centered around services.

Monroe County Commissioner District 2

Description: The Monroe County Board of Commissioners have a wide range of executive and administrative authority. Among the most important powers are those related to:

- Auditing and authorizing claims against the county.
- Receiving bids and authorizing contracts.
- Controlling, maintaining, and supervising County property including the Courthouse; the Justice Building, which houses the Courts, the elected officials associated with those courts, and the jail; the Health Services Building; the Highway Garage Facility, the Karst Farm Park, the Flatwoods Park; and the Jackson Creek Park.

- Supervising construction and maintenance of County roads and bridges.

Candidates

Peter Iversen, Democrat

Educational background: Lawrence University, bachelors; IU O'Neil SPEA, masters

Occupation(s): County Councilman, Philanthropic Engagement Officer

Julie Thomas, Democrat

Educational background: BS Telecommunications & Film (Eastern Michigan U), BA History (Eastern Michigan U), Master of Arts, History (Eastern Michigan U), Master of Arts, Russian History (Indiana University Bloomington), Ph.D. Russian History / Gender Studies (Indiana University Bloomington)

Occupation(s): County Commissioner, part-time faculty at Franklin College and/or Southern New Hampshire University

Q1. City and town residents are also residents of the county. How would you work encourage communication and a good working relationship among city, town, and county elected officials?

Iversen: My approach to leadership puts collaboration at the center. Throughout my time on the County Council, I've built strong working relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders.

During my time as administrative chair of the Justice Fiscal Advisory Commission, I worked closely with members, which included both elected officials from across the county as well as individuals from the community. As a result of this collaboration, we created time-sensitive justice actions.

Additionally, during two Climate Resilience Workshops I led in 2023, I made an effort to include individuals from every walk of life throughout Monroe County. Through this cooperation multiple

climate vulnerabilities and their potential solutions were recorded.

Thomas: Working with community stakeholders is a hallmark of my work as Commissioner. During the pandemic, we met regularly with Bloomington, Ellettsville, public health, township, and IU officials to coordinate the response, provide testing, and distribute vaccines. Townships asked us to create a Fire District to ensure public safety. We worked with them to do so. The Rural Housing Repair project was developed with the help of township Trustees. Although stalled by COVID-19, the Convention Center project is moving forward - all of the necessary agreements are complete. Currently, I am working with Ellettsville officials to ensure the continuation of Rural bus service to populated areas of the county. We can only be successful if we work together.

Q2. Beyond public statements at meetings, letters, and email messages to you, how would you plan to hear from all the citizens of Monroe County?

Iversen: It is my strong belief that as an elected official, I serve the public and it is my obligation to hear from any Monroe County resident who wants to be heard. I have embodied this spirit in my campaign, where I have worked alongside a team of dedicated volunteers to reach voters. Through these exchanges, we have listened to what residents need from local leaders.

As County Commissioner, I will continue to seek out opportunities to reduce communication barriers and hear from our residents. I will go to the places citizens congregate like farmers' markets and community celebrations and make myself open and available to them. I will continue to keep open access to my calendar so anyone can schedule a meeting with me.

Thomas: I speak with residents during scheduled virtual office hours, as posted on the calendar at co.monroe.in.us,

where my personal phone number is also listed (812-345-0707). I engage with residents as I volunteer and attend events across the community. I will continue to encourage residents to participate in public meetings, including those we hold throughout the community related to specific projects. The feedback and insight we gain help us improve plans, designs, projects, and planning petitions. As a member of the Monroe County Health Equity Council from its inception, I serve on the Steering Committee and lead the government relations committee. Our focus is finding new ways to encourage public engagement with local policy makers.

Q3. What do you view as the biggest financial challenge for Monroe County this year and next?

Iversen: Homeownership. We are in a housing crisis, and the lack of housing inventory stands in the way of every family's ability to generate wealth. This means that young people are leaving our community in droves. When they do so, they are taking valuable tax revenue with them in terms of property tax and income tax, they're also taking themselves out of our shared wisdom and energy as a community.

I have a plan for all of Monroe County at PeterIversen.org. It's not just for the next year or two—we have to start thinking about our community decades into the future. That's why your vote in this election is so important, indeed your vote will chart the future of our community for decades to come.

Thomas: With American Rescue Plan Act projects established, the next financial challenge will be the development of the justice complex. I toured facilities across the country with colleagues and learned innovative ways to reduce incarceration and recidivism and to address the mental health / substance use disorder crises facing our community. Our local situation reflects national trends. The Council is responsible for funding the new jail and

justice complex, but opioid-settlement dollars can fund the development of substance use treatment in our county - to prevent initial incarceration and reduce recidivism. Just like ARPA projects, this investment - in people's lives and our community's well-being - will impact our county for decades to come.

Q4. What approaches would you favor to address the problems of homelessness in Monroe County?

Iversen: Housing is a two-level problem, and we need to start from the evidence-based position that homelessness is a housing issue.

The County needs to have supportive housing for those who have greater needs. It really is that simple—but implementation requires planning, cooperation, and substantial expenditures. I sit on the Financial Board at Beacon Inc., proudly worked on the Heading Home plan for our community, and voted time and time again to support housing-first investments in our community.

We must do better when it comes to tent encampments. The best way to change this approach is by working alongside community organizations that already have relationships with those living in the area to formulate plans for where people will go.

Thomas: Another national issue with local implications, we need to continue to listen to what advocates for those experiencing homelessness are telling us and, more importantly, we need to hear what people who are unhoused are saying. The mental health and substance use disorder crisis in our community is connected with this issue as well. Elected leaders need to lead by example - to treat those who are least fortunate among us with both dignity and respect. I supported the Heading Home program, Habitat for Humanity (Osage Place and the new proposed project), Beacon's development, and New Hope's cutting edge facility - they are vital investments in our

community's future. I volunteered at the Osage Place Habitat site in 2023.

Monroe County Commissioner District 3

Description: The Monroe County Board of Commissioners have a wide range of executive and administrative authority. Among the most important powers are those related to: Auditing and authorizing claims against the county. Receiving bids and authorizing contracts. Controlling, maintaining, and supervising County property including the Courthouse; the Justice Building, which houses the Courts, the elected officials associated with those courts, and the jail; the Health Services Building; the Highway Garage Facility, the Karst Farm Park, the Flatwoods Park; and the Jackson Creek Park. Supervising construction and maintenance of County roads and bridges.

Candidates

Penny Githens, Democrat

Occupation(s): Monroe County Commissioner

Educational background: BS Chemistry and math education; MS Educational Psychology

Jody Madeira, Democrat

Occupation(s): Professor of Law, Indiana University Maurer School of Law

Educational background: B.S. Comm Studies /B.A. English, Millersville University of PA; MS Sociolinguistics Georgetown, Ph.D./J.D. University of Pennsylvania

Joe Van Deventer, Republican

The candidate has not yet responded.

Steve Volan, Democrat

Occupation(s): Host and Executive Producer, The 812 Show; Instructor, IUB

Educational background: Master of Arts in Geography, IUB 2019

Paul White, Sr., Republican

The candidate has not yet responded.

Q1. City and town residents are also residents of the county. How would you work to encourage communication and a good working relationship among city, town, and county elected officials?

Githens: Monroe County Government already works with Bloomington and Ellettsville on multiple projects: waste reduction, animal shelter, dispatch, trails, and transit. We hope to work with Bloomington officials on ways to jointly use opioid settlement money. We combined our Human Rights Commissions to simplify the process for residents. By the time this is published, I expect the inter-local agreement for the Monroe Convention Center expansion to be signed by all parties, along with an easement for a City trail. The county needs a new correctional campus. The Commissioners are in regular talks with the Sheriff and other County officials on this issue. Residents should know that we also work with the entities like the BEDC, DBI, United Way and Beacon.

Madeira: I want to change the dynamics of how the county and city interact. I would start with the basic premise that we're all working towards the same goals - the good of this community to which we all belong. "Winning" is moving the community forward together, with a shared vision and a mutual willingness to roll up the shirt sleeves and get to work. As a county official, I would thoroughly educate myself on issues, reading and speaking with stakeholders and impacted individuals. I would be kind and respectful, actively listen to those with whom I interact, and avoid personalizing issues. I would avoid obstructionism and would especially seek out those with different views to maximize the chances that decisions are fair and fully informed.

Volan: The Commissioners are the most powerful entity in County government; they set the tone for everyone else. I'd

start by doing the opposite of what the current Commissioners have been doing: discouraging communication, ignoring input from everyone. I'd restore the Community Justice Response Committee, for example, invite representatives from Bloomington and Ellettsville, and then rely on the CJRC's advice for the jail.

After 20 years serving the city, I have a better working relationship with City Hall than anyone. The county must stop pretending like the city is a problem; the city and county need each other. Without someone in the Courthouse who engages with the city instead of shutting it out, everyone in the county will miss out.

Q2. Beyond public statements at meetings, letters, and email messages to you, how would you plan to hear from all the citizens of Monroe County?

Githens: As my sons were growing up, I helped with their school activities and served as a volunteer special education advocate; I remain in contact with many of those families. As a Commissioner, I hold 2 virtual office hours every month, 1 in the middle of the day and 1 in the early evening. I attend many events in the community, such as the Ellettsville Chamber of Commerce and BEDC meetings, along with the Canopy of Lights and the Monroe County Fair. When there are rezoning requests, I often drive out to the property so that I can see first-hand what the issues are. I do volunteer work, such as delivering food for Pantry 279 at Thanksgiving and assisting with drive-through food distributions. In short, I'm an active member of this community.

Madeira: It's important for elected officials to be present and visible within their communities to listen to and learn from constituents. I want to hear how certain issues impact residents and listen to their viewpoints and ideas. I would seek out as many opportunities as possible to meet with residents in person. I would hold regular "listening meetings" where residents could meet with me at local coffee shops or businesses and share concerns

and insights. Bigger "town halls" are also useful forums. I would attend community events where I could meet residents. I would also invite residents to email me with questions or concerns and would diligently respond to those messages. Finally, I would seek out residents whose voices are often marginalized.

Volan: I'd actively solicit opinions that aren't usually heard. In my time with the city, I saw that public comment periods favor people who can afford to be in the room — who aren't working, who aren't caring for children — or who think that maybe their voices just don't count.

I now host and produce a daily podcast interviewing local decision makers, so my ability to listen seriously to people is available for download every weekday. In the same way that I solicit interview subjects to come on the show, I'd proactively ask to meet with groups underrepresented by the normal comment process. And I'd go to them, not wait for them to come downtown. We could do worse than to host such meetings where people are at, all across the county.

Q3. What do you view as the biggest financial challenge for Monroe County this year and next?

Githens: There are 3 big financial challenges facing Monroe County in the upcoming years. The 1st is building a new correctional campus. We know we need to build a new jail. While it will be costly, it will cost less to build offices for other parts of our correctional system if we do it all at once, and it will save money on the staffing needed for inmate transport. The 2nd is developing a transit system that meets the needs of all residents of Monroe County. Residents outside of Bloomington should be able to take public transportation to and from Bloomington for work, dining, recreation, and healthcare. The 3rd is the expansion of the Monroe County Airport and upgrading of its terminal, something that is needed by local industries, Crane and IU.

Madeira: This question can be answered two different ways - for residents and for the county. Monroe County residents' biggest challenge is financial survival. A 2023 Monroe County ALICE report found that 24% of county households are in poverty. That's why affordable housing is such a priority, including addressing housing insecurity, rental housing, and increasing home ownership. As a political subdivision, Monroe County's biggest financial challenge will be financing maintenance and repairs for county properties (e.g., the jail) while also building new facilities as expeditiously as possible and ensuring that all county facilities are maximally accessible via public transportation, particularly expanding routes outside the city.

Volan: Rebuilding the giant, ongoing human-rights violation that is the county jail. Because the Commissioners dithered for so many years on fixing the jail, inflation and interest rates have blown up their consultants' estimates (just like with Mayor Hamilton's attempt to move BPD HQ to Showers West). Their ambition for some 25-acre "justice campus" is folly now, and bad policy for lots of reasons. There's only one place for the jail to be, and that's downtown. Instead of wasting millions on new land, and the \$9+ million parking garage they built just a few years ago, we have land in the city center where we could build a more decent facility. We have to get going now on something good enough — not their unattainable "perfect" solution.

Q4. What approaches would you favor to address the problems of homelessness in Monroe County?

Githens: I recently learned that if an unhoused person is medically stable before being housed, they are more likely to remain housed. Healthnet-Bloomington has a street-outreach program, and when I asked what their greatest need was, they said they needed another vehicle. Monroe County quickly donated a truck to them. We are active partners

with groups like Heading Home, Beacon, New Hope for Families, and the Community Kitchen. We hope to use opioid settlement dollars to add beds for individuals in recovery. We donated land to Habitat for Humanity for Osage Place to increase affordable housing, and we are working with them on another possible neighborhood. Finally, we are looking at where it is environmentally safe to increase housing density.

Madeira: Homelessness is a complex issue involving mental health, substance use, medical concerns, and underemployment/unemployment. The county must work towards long-term sustainable solutions that have buy-in from government, service providers, individuals with lived experience of being unhoused. This includes making information on vacant low-market rentals easily accessible; providing permanent housing to people experiencing homelessness that also includes access to other support services like counseling, medical care, and substance use treatment; use preventative measures like mediation and emergency funds to avoid eviction; creating court diversion programs for homelessness-related offenses; and increasing communication between stakeholders.

Volan: If our community (meaning the whole county, not just the city) has a shortage of housing at all levels, we shouldn't be surprised by the degree of the homelessness problem. The county needs to take advantage of the ordinance I authored last year that expanded Bloomington Transit's limits to the whole county. Transit makes more housing more affordable. Shrewd expansion of it can serve every income level, but is crucial to people experiencing extreme poverty. Less-expensive housing also means smaller lot sizes, smaller building footprints, and lower parking mandates. Nodes of smaller homes built close together can be served by transit, and allows homes in many more places, both outside and inside the city, that could alleviate the crisis.

Monroe County Auditor

Duties of the Auditor: FINANCIAL Budget Preparation for County Council, Preparation of County Annual Financial Additional Appropriations, Transfers of Funds, Payroll for all County employees, Employee Benefits, Accounts Payable and Receivable.

TAXATION Manages the filing of all exemptions and deductions allowed by the state statute, Maintains property ownership and current mailing addresses, Handles all transfers of ownership of real property Tax Sale - Publication and Records of Sale, Deeds Tax Abatements Preserves plat maps on the county GIS system.

SECRETARIAL Secretary to the County Commissioners and County Council

Candidates

Brianne Gregory, Democrat
The candidate has not yet responded.

Monroe County Coroner

Description: County Coroner is a constitutional office elected for a four-year term. The chief responsibility of the coroner is to determine the manner of death in cases involving violence or casualty or when someone is found dead in unexplained circumstances. Once the cause of death is determined the coroner must file a report with the local health officer. There are no professional requirements for the Coroner; however, there is required training that must occur within six months after Coroner takes office. If an autopsy is necessary, the coroner is required to employ a qualified physician to direct the autopsy.

Candidates

Jeffrey (Jeff) Hall, Democrat
The candidate has not yet responded.

Monroe County Surveyor

Description: The Indiana Constitution officially established the County Surveyor as an elected office. Like many county officials, the County Surveyor is elected to a four year term. Due to the technical nature of the position and the expertise required, the surveyor has no term limits. Responsibilities include: Section Corner Perpetuation Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Stormwater Management - Water Quantity and Quality Site Development

Candidates

Trohn Enright-Randolph, Democrat

Q1. What are your qualifications for this office?

Enright-Randolph: With almost 19 years of experience in Local Government, the Public Land Surveying System, and Geographic Information System, I believe I possess the institutional knowledge and skills to lead this Office effectively and efficiently. I also serve on the Indiana Geographic Information Council Board of Directors and co-chair the Cadastral, Boundaries, and PLSS Workgroup, and I am the current President. I am a member of the Indiana Association for Floodplain & Stormwater Management, Indiana Society of Professional Land Surveyors, and the County Surveyors Association of Indiana, serving as the Vice-President for the Southern Region during 2017 & 2018. As an active member of these organizations, I have learned and gained valuable insight.

Q2. Why are you running for the position of Surveyor?

Enright-Randolph: As County Surveyor, I have dedicated myself to professionalizing the Office and providing a higher level of service to the community. I value being diplomatic and approachable and always putting the needs of our

constituents at the forefront. Over the years, I have built strong relationships locally and throughout the state. I am committed to improving our services, enhancing environmental protection, streamlining operations, helping county departments and offices to meet goals and objectives, generating cost savings, and improving collaboration between our local and state officials. We can continue to improve, and I would be honored to continue serving the citizens of Monroe County.

Q3. How would you describe the importance of the Surveyor's Office?

Enright-Randolph: The County Surveyor's Office assists the public, other government offices, contractors, developers, and private surveyors with questions related to their property boundaries and the PLSS, which is the framework for property rights.

The Monroe County GIS Division, which is a part of the Surveyor's Office, has created websites open to the public that offer interactive web applications and data dashboards designed to engage the community and gather feedback for future projects.

The County Surveyor sits on the Storm-water Management Board, Drainage Board, and Planning Commission, which concern themselves with drainage plans, storm-water plans, development plans, karst conservancies, and environmental protection.

Q4. What are your top three priorities for the Surveyor's Office, and how would you address them?

Enright-Randolph: Continue to provide higher accuracy of information about legal survey records and official corners of the PLSS. In 2016 the Professional Surveyor position was created, and in 2020 the creation of a Surveyor Technician was created to support the heightened standard.

Continue to develop our County's GIS and improve collaboration between our

local officials. In 2023 the position of a GIS Technician was created, and the expansion of our Enterprise License Agreement was approved which allows us to provide more GIS tools to county employees.

Continue to follow local and state policy to ensure the safety of our environmental resources by staying engaged and working with experts on matters that involved Monroe County.

Monroe County Treasurer

Description: The County Treasurer is a constitutional office elected by all county residents to a four-year term. The Treasurer collects, retains custody of and disperses county funds. The Treasurer collects delinquent taxes including the sale of real property for taxes and is required daily tender all judgments paid in the record maintained by the Clerk of the Circuit Court.

Candidates

Catherine (Cathy) Smith, Democrat
The candidate has not yet responded.

Monroe County Circuit Court Judge, 10th Circuit, Division 3, Seat 2

Description: A Judge of the Circuit Court is responsible for issuing decisions in all types of cases impartially and according to the law and legal precedent of the circuit in which they serve. Circuit courts are vested with unlimited trial jurisdiction in all cases, except where exclusive or concurrent jurisdiction is conferred upon other courts. Circuit courts also have appellate jurisdiction over appeals from city and town courts.

Candidates

Christine Talley Haseman, Democrat

Educational background: Juris Doctor, IU Maurer School of Law; M.B.A., IU Kelley School of Business; B.S., IU Kelley School of Business

Occupation(s): Judge, Monroe Circuit Court III; Adjunct Professor, IU O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs

Q1. Why are you running for this office?

Haseman: I am running for re-election as Judge of Monroe Circuit Court III, Seat 2, a position I have held since January 1, 2019. I preside over a general jurisdiction docket, with primary responsibility for criminal cases, up through and including murder. I have served as a judge or judicial officer in various capacities for a combined total of more than eight years and practiced law for more than twenty years. I am seeking re-election for the opportunity to continue to ensure that the court is open, fair, and responsive to all individuals who become involved with the criminal justice system.

Q2. How would you describe your general judicial philosophy?

Haseman: It is my job to ensure that parties are treated fairly and with dignity and respect. For justice to be served, I believe that parties need to be allowed as much time as they need to present their case to the court, and they need to know their case will not be decided until all evidence has been presented and all parties have been heard. I ensure that parties in my court have the time they need to fully present their evidence so that they are heard on relevant issues that are important to them. I base my legal decisions solely on the law and facts of each individual case as presented in court, without regard to external factors or my own personal views.

Q3. How will you work to ensure equity for people of all backgrounds in your courtroom?

Haseman: I am the Judge in a criminal court. People come before me from all walks of life, each with different backgrounds and life experiences. I give each person the opportunity to ask any questions they have about the legal proceedings and I encourage them to let me know if something happens that they do not understand. I make every effort to explain my reasoning and the basis for decisions that I make so that the person understands why I decided as I did and what it means for them. Understanding the proceedings and establishing an atmosphere where a person can ask questions about what they do not understand is an absolute necessity in ensuring equity in the courtroom.

Q4. What would you do to ensure safety for all people in your courtroom?

Haseman: I work to ensure both the physical and emotional safety of people in my courtroom. We have protocols to ensure the physical safety of individuals, including electronic screening at the entrance to the Justice Building. Our bailiffs provide additional security throughout the building. Emotional security is equally important for people in court. People need to feel emotionally safe to tell their stories and work toward a successful resolution of their case. I strive to create an emotionally safe atmosphere of acceptance, respect, and openness for all parties, regardless of age, race, gender, gender-identity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, economic status, and other factors that make us each unique.

Monroe County Circuit Court Judge, 10th Circuit, Division 4, Seat 3

Description: A Judge of the Circuit Court is responsible for issuing decisions in all types of cases impartially and according to the law and legal precedent of the circuit in which they serve. Circuit courts are vested with unlimited trial jurisdiction in all cases, except where exclusive or concurrent jurisdiction is conferred upon other courts. Circuit courts also have appellate jurisdiction over appeals from city and town courts.

Candidates

Catherine B. Stafford, Democrat

Educational background: Bloomington High School North, 1989; Indiana University, B.A. English, Medieval Certificate, 1993; University of Minnesota Law School, 1997

Occupation(s): Judge

Q1. Why are you running for this office?

Stafford: I have been honored to serve as one of the Monroe County Judges since first taking office in 2019. Before taking office, I worked for the Minnesota Justice Foundation, Indiana Legal Services, and founded my own law firm. I practiced family law, including Collaborative Law, serving as a Guardian ad Litem, CASA Attorney volunteer, and Registered Domestic Relations Mediator. I am certified as a Family Law Specialist by the Family Law Certification Board of Indiana.

In my first term, I helped create the Eviction Prevention Project, a collaboration of local non-profits that provide free legal advice and representation to people facing eviction. I am running for reelection to continue my work in making court a fair experience for all.

Q2. How would you describe your general judicial philosophy?

Stafford: Many of the litigants in my courtroom are self-represented. My goal as a judge is to balance providing information about how court works with maintaining my neutrality as a judge. For example, I've worked to update our small claims forms to be in English rather than 'legalese.' I've created handouts on preparing for court that my court sends to all self-represented litigants. I'm also working to establish a Self Help Legal Center that would provide walk-in access to legal advice for low-income people.

I worked with the Indiana Bar Foundation to secure a self-help kiosk where folks can access the bank of do-it-yourself legal forms and a free printer (located outside Courtroom 212 in the Justice Building).

Q3. How will you work to ensure equity for people of all backgrounds in your courtroom?

Stafford: Court should be equally open to all people. Historically, that has not been the case. I work hard to be conscious of internal bias, regularly attend Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion trainings, and try to take the time in every case, but especially when folks are not represented by attorneys, to explain what we are there for in court and how it will work. I frequently appoint Guardians ad Litem for children and vulnerable adults to ensure that their wishes are heard.

I am grateful that we have one of the most diverse benches of any county in Indiana and am proud to be a woman judge.

Q4. What would you do to ensure safety for all people in your courtroom?

Stafford: I regularly hear Order of Protection cases, with allegations of intimate partner violence, stalking, sex offenses, and/or harassment. Our courts' policy is to have a bailiff in the courtroom during all such hearings. After hearings where there is a safety concern (not limited to Order of Protection cases), I have the petitioner choose whether to leave first or

last, and have a staggered exit from the building for the other party.

With our aging court building, we do have challenges. For example, when the dedicated jail elevator is broken, inmates are sometimes taken into public areas of the building. It is critical that a new jail and new court building be constructed with modern safety features and a constitutional level of care.

Monroe County Circuit Court Judge, 10th Circuit, Division 9, Seat 8

Description: A Judge of the Circuit Court is responsible for issuing decisions in all types of cases impartially and according to the law and legal precedent of the circuit in which they serve. Circuit courts are vested with unlimited trial jurisdiction in all cases, except where exclusive or concurrent jurisdiction is conferred upon other courts. Circuit courts also have appellate jurisdiction over appeals from city and town courts.

Candidates

Darcie L. Fawcett, Democrat

Occupation(s): Judge

Educational background: B.S.; University of Wisconsin; J.D. Indiana University School of Law

Q1. Why are you running for this office?

Fawcett: I am seeking re-election to the Monroe County Circuit Court so I can continue to contribute to a collaborative system of care that promotes rehabilitation and reduction in recidivism. I will rely on my twenty years of experience in criminal law and deep understanding of legal principles in order to make fair and informed decisions that will result in a positive impact on the community.

Q2. How would you describe your general judicial philosophy?

Fawcett: My judicial philosophy is to approach all cases with professional integrity, meaning I have no personal agenda. I remain open minded until all of the issues are fully presented. I treat all of those who appear before me with dignity and respect and I afford all parties with procedural fairness before deciding each issue in a transparent, straightforward manner, without bias or any preconceived notion of how the matter is going to turn out.

Q3. How will you work to ensure equity for people of all backgrounds in your courtroom?

Fawcett: I will treat each person before me with patience, dignity, and respect no matter what his or her status or station in life is. I will encourage all litigants to

present their arguments and evidence and establish an environment in which everyone is afforded a full and fair opportunity to be heard. Having worked with a variety of people throughout my career, I am comfortable communicating with, and relating to, people of various beliefs and backgrounds. I will approach each matter with an open mind and will consider every argument, no matter who presents it.

Q4. What would you do to ensure safety for all people in your courtroom?

Fawcett: Everyone who enters the Charlotte Zietlow Justice Building must go through a security checkpoint. No weapons of any kind are allowed. In addition to those procedures, I work to create and maintain a calm & compassionate atmosphere for litigants & lawyers. This helps to reduce anxiety or fears of the parties. I take time to ensure the parties have an opportunity to address the Court. Giving them time to speak results in the person feeling heard & often results in a greater acceptance of the result. I use a measured, clear & calm speaking tone particularly with pro se litigants, who may be nervous & unfamiliar with court procedures. Creating this atmosphere, where they feel comfortable and heard, reduces the number of angry outbursts.