

## Statements from Websites of 2012 County Commission Candidates

### District 1

#### **Mike Byerly**

#### **Brandon Kutner**

While fundamental responsibilities like providing law enforcement and fire protective services, sanitation and transportation infrastructure go underfunded in this county year after year, our County Commission continues to stifle business development with cumbersome regulations and permitting processes, stunt economic and residential growth and implement land use policies which serves to balance the majority of the tax burden on the middle and lower class citizens who are already struggling to make ends meet. As a County Commissioner, I will work to loosen the restrictions placed on businesses and developers while lowering the tax rates in an effort to attract jobs to Alachua County.

Additionally, more and more land has been omitted from the tax rolls by either extensive conservation efforts or land purchases made by the University of Florida and other tax exempt entities placing a larger burden for budgetary funding on the backs of the working public. We have to rein in spending, cut superfluous and duplicative services from our budget and make sure that our tax dollars are being spent in the most efficient and economical way.

There are a lot of factors that play into job creation for the middle class and the working poor. Some of those issues have to do with the county's current development policies and comprehensive plan which precludes larger companies for establishing good-paying warehouse or manufacturing jobs due to land use regulations.

Why isn't the county commission actively seeking business growth and development at a time when it is sorely in need? We should be out convincing businesses that Alachua County is the place to re-locate. Unfortunately, these companies look at our tax rates and regulatory fees and figure out, pretty quickly, that they can't even afford to think about doing business here.

#### **John Martin**

And the majority just added an element to the Comprehensive Land Use Plan that essentially closed off most of the East side of the county to any development that would provide desperately needed jobs.

I have and will be a champion of protecting our environment. But there must be a balanced approach which allows people to pursue economic opportunity and freedom while at the same time protected our environment and individual property rights. I have always believed that environmental protection and economic development can go hand in hand. In fact, in areas that

have poor economies, there is more environmental degradation. We need to strive for balance in our policies making individual freedom and economic opportunity part of the equation. The BOCC has not pursued policies with the people's needs and rights properly represented.

**Kevin Riordan**

District 3

**Walt Boyer**

- will not support taking more property off of the tax rolls

**Buck Buchanan**

I was quoted that I disapprove of the Alachua Forever land buy-up program. I do. I believe that we have enough areas that are protected through regulations from the EPA, DEP, and DNR to leave plenty of green spaces, wetlands, and forested areas for our wildlife. Why would we need to spend our tax monies on buying up these lands that are not able to be built on in the first place? I don't think taking them off the tax rolls is helpful but do think it is costly and makes certain property owners chosen by the few ever richer.

**Jean Calderwood**

All land development regulations need to be reviewed, revised and simplified. This is one of the most common complaints among citizens and business owners in the County.

Methods of enforcing the regulations need to be reviewed. Citizens complain that enforcements tend to be strong-armed and unfriendly.

**Ken Cornell**

**Robert Hutchinson**

Alachua County needs to step in to protect water resources from those who would over-allocate them and parch our aquifer. We need to become leaders in a water ethic that includes leaving water cleaner than we found it.

For every new regulation that is adopted, we should find another regulation to simplify or eliminate. I will work to streamline County codes and ordinances with the goal to make local government less burdensome to people and businesses. The responsiveness and solution-focused attitude of County regulators will always be a concern of mine.

## District 5

### **Dean Cheshire**

At a local level, we can no longer afford to pursue overly restrictive policies that reduce opportunity and effectively push quality jobs to other places.

Alachua County is our home, and our environment means everything to us. The environment is not just our forests, rivers, lakes, and springs, but is the place we work, play, and live. Our natural treasures must be preserved, and we must also work to preserve an environment where prosperity is a priority. Environmental ideals must always be balanced with equal opportunity for all citizens in our county.

### **Charles Chestnut IV**