

2010 RAVEN SOCIETY CANDIDATE POSITION SURVEY

Please feel free to attach as many pages as are necessary to include your complete answers.

1. Name: **David Ballard**
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2. Website:
3. For which office are you running?

Blount County Commissioner, District 1, Seat B.
4. What is your professional background and current occupation?

15 years experience working with operating and capital budgets, supporting financial, payroll, and human resource applications. Currently employed as a Financial Applications Analyst with UT Medical Center.
5. Please list high school(s) attended and any higher education with degrees earned, if any.

Graduate - Maryville High School, 1984; Graduate 1986 – Hiwassee Junior College (Associates Degree); Served four years U.S. Army, 1986-1990; Graduate 1995 – University of Tennessee, Knoxville (BA Political Science, minor Business Administration)
6. List professional, governmental, community service or other relevant organizational affiliations you have maintained within the past 10 years. List approximate dates of service.

Youth baseball and soccer coach through Maryville Little League and Parks and Recreation. Blount County Commissioner 2006 - present
7. Please comment on how your own background and skills would assist you as an officeholder.

The ability to work and communicate with diverse groups of people.
8. The Raven Society Mission Statement is at the top of this page. Do you support this mission? Why or why not? If elected, what will you do in support of this mission?

Yes, I support the mission of the Raven Society. The rural, natural, and historic qualities of Blount County are what make it unique, attractive, and home.

9. What do you see as the three most critical issues facing Blount County? Being as specific as possible, please tell us how you will address each of these issues.

1) Education funding - with reduced funding from all levels this will be the most critical issue facing the next commission. We have somehow managed to open four new schools in the last four years with no voted increase in the tax rate for the schools. Since many personal incomes have decreased and any additional tax burden would likely result in hardships for area families, a very discriminate review of current budget allocations for both the schools and the general county departments will become a necessity in order to meet current funding levels. 2) Improving current infrastructure - with the reduction in local sales tax revenue, the priority becomes maintaining rather than improving the current infrastructure. 3) Planning - with the reduction in funding for education and infrastructure it is critical that we understand and manage growth in the county to ensure that we do not get further behind in providing adequate services to the tax payers.

10. Rapid development in Blount County has implications for the County budget, as well as for our air and water quality, scenic heritage and community character. If elected, what principles would guide your decisions regarding growth and development?

The enforcement of current zoning laws and the ability to provide resources for supporting the additional infrastructure costs.

11. Do you support the extension of the Pellissippi Parkway (PPE) from Old Knoxville Highway (SR 33) to US 321?

a. **No**

b. Please explain *why* you support or oppose the extension, including any statistics or studies you may know of which support your opinion.

See question 12.

12. If the PPE is eventually built, how will you address the development pressures this potential new road will bring, including impacts on Blount County's secondary roads, schools, public services, air and water quality?

This issue was brought up in a resolution to the commission in 2006 and voted down. The county does not currently have any plans for how to handle the impact of this extended highway. If the state is willing to consider an EIS for this project, the county should have the foresight to develop a local impact study.

13. Which, if any, of the proposals presented by the Growth Management Advisory Committee (GMAC) would you recommend using to raise funds to purchase and preserve green space in the rural parts of the county?

The opportunities to apply for and secure state and/or federal grants for this purpose would probably require an existing local program be firmly established. Considering the effort that the GMAC put into this, I would recommend starting with the donation box on property tax bill, provide enough funding for a marketing campaign in the fall as the tax notices become due and use that as a gauge for how willing the public is to support the idea of preservation.

14. If elected, please describe how you would incorporate the Five Guiding Policies of the county's Policies Plan into your own decision-making process.

Considering that I had to go look these up to review exactly what they were, I feel like all five have been addressed in my responses above. They are very practical and just plain common sense.

15. What is your vision for Blount County in 20 years?

A county that: 1) Provides a strong educational system for its youth. 2) Promotes diverse business opportunities for sustained growth. 3) Enjoys an active and thriving senior community. 4) Protects the natural beauty of the area that makes it unique place to live.