Leading up to this year’s county elections, The Dispatch sent questionnaires to all candidates in contested races. Candidates were asked to provide basic information such as age, political experience and contact information. They were also asked to answer between 1-3 questions, limiting their responses to 150 words.

The answers provided to us are printed in this guide. We only edited the answers for length; we didn’t make any grammatical corrections.

Questionnaires were sent to all candidates, and our staff followed up with multiple phone calls and emails in an effort to get responses from every candidate.

Sample ballots for Lowndes, Oktibbeha, Clay and Noxubee counties are printed in the Saturday, August 5 edition of The Dispatch.
**Sheriff**

**Democrat**

**John Rice**

Education: Liberal Arts - East Mississippi Community College
Political party: Democratic
Political experience: Candidate for Sheriff in 2019
Residence: Starkville
Family: (5)
Email: ros022@gmail.com
Phone: (662) 312-2187

**Republican**

**Shank Phelps**

Education: Graduate from EMCC (East Mississippi Community College), Mississippi State University - Extension, Starkville
Political party: Republican
Political experience:constable District 1, Oktibbeha County, 2012-Present
Residence: Maben
Family: Married with two children, one grandchild and one on the way
Email: shackphelps@gmail.com
Phone: (662) 418-8444

**Tax Assessor**

**Democrat**

**Johelen Walker**

Education: Starkville High, I've studied at Starkville High, graduated from Mississippi Community College, and attended the Mississippi Law Enforcement Training Academy, 1993 (For Women), certified under the Mississippi Office of the State Auditor, 2021
Political party: Democratic
Political experience: Candidate for Tax Assessor, 2021/2022
Residence: Starkville
Family: Married with two children, one grandchild and one on the way
Email: johelenjoeywalker@gmail.com
Phone: (662) 418-2944

**Republican**

**John Montgomery**

Education: Graduate from MSU in the fall of 1999 in Risk Management, Insurance and Financial Management
Political party: Republican
Political experience: Served as Oktibbeha County Supervisor from 2012 to current, Finishing 3rd term
Residence: Oktibbeha County
Family: (5)
Email: johnmco@gsm.com
Phone: (672) 312-0131

**Circuit Court Clerk**

**Tony Rock (Independent)** - Unopposed incumbent

**Chancery Court Clerk**

**Sharon Livingston (Republican)** - Unopposed incumbent

**Coroner**

**Michael Hunt (Democrat)** - Unopposed incumbent

**County Prosecutor**

**Haley Brown (Democrat)** - Unopposed incumbent

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**Term: 4 years, Annual salary: $100,000**

1. What do you see as the primary crime problem in the county and how would you address it?

2. How effective have the Sheriff's office's efforts to retain and recruit officers and jailers been? What more can be done?

3. The winner of this race will replace three-term sheriff Steve Gladney. What do you plan to continue from his administration? How would you differentiate yourself from your predecessor?
District 1 Supervisor

**Democrat**

**Ronald Casey**

- **Education:** Attended Starkville High School until 1997 and completed with homeschooling from Old Domion in Kissimmee, FL, GED and also attended EMCC in 1999 and received a basic EMT certificate.
- **Political Party:** Democrat

**Republican**

**Greg Fulghum**

- **Education:** Bachelor of Administration Mississippi State University 2008 (Masters of Public Policy and Administration)
- **Political Party:** Republican

**Ben Carver (I)**

- **Education:** Starkville High School graduate 2003
- **Political Party:** Democrat

**Sammy Wade Jones**

- **Education:** EMCC and Graduates of Old Domion, Kissimmee, FL, GED and also attended EMCC in 1999 and received a basic EMT certificate.
- **Political Party:** Republican

**Erik Young**

- **Education:** School graduate 2003
- **Political Party:** Democrat

**I would like to address the county facing and how you would address them as supervisor?**

As previously stated, Oktibbeha County must further improve road and bridge conditions counties. Also, if elected, there will be significant job creation in the near future. Oktibbeha County Residents routinely drive to other counties to work. And while a place to live, we need more local manufacturing jobs. Oktibbeha County residents deserve more diversity of employment options. I believe with the addition of the SDL aluminum plant, you will see an expansion of new industry opportunities in the near future. The next decade will be an exciting time to live in the County.

**What other challenges do you see the county facing and how would you address them as supervisor?**

The county roads are in such poor condition. This, along with the current amount of unnecessary spending there will be an increase in the number of vehicles. I think the lack of budget resources will be a big challenge. I think the lack of budget resources and infrastructure needs are two of our biggest challenges. If elected, I will work to address these issues. The community and the County to capitalize on these opportunities.

**I would like to address issues such as paving on county roads.**

The county can work more effectively with the city by cross training. Meeting that the city allows the projects that the city considers a priority and the county allows the city to see what projects the county considers a priority. This collaboration will work for the common good of the people and for the community as a whole. I will also work to address issues such as paving on county roads. The county roads are in such poor condition. I think the lack of budget resources and infrastructure needs are two of our biggest challenges. If elected, I will work to address these issues. The community and the County to capitalize on these opportunities.
**District 1 Supervisor (continued)**

I believe that the county should have the ability to independently take charge of infrastructure projects within its boundaries. While I understand that unforeseen situations can arise and some dollars may need to be spent, I believe that the county should have the authority to make these decisions. This will enable the county to prioritize projects based on the needs of the residents.

Unfortunately, the state of relations between Oktibbeha County and Starkville needs improvement. Although the County and City are separate entities, they are both stakeholders in the success of the county. It is our duty to work together to ensure the well-being of all citizens.

Additionally, the County seems rudderless with regards to economic development. In recent years, we have seen many towns and cities in Mississippi implement various organizations to work on local problems. These grants are an attempt by the state to direct funding to localities. Through effective communication with the City of Starkville and the Town of Sturgis, we can apply for these grants.

I support the idea of creating a five-member Board of Supervisors. This would prevent favoritism. It also gives each board member a chance to improve its road or bridge. However, we need to consider the impact on the county as a whole. It is not efficient to divide funds among all districts, especially those that are in closer proximity to the city. The board members must work to ensure the board is taking the best possible action for the county.

Money is always tight and I do not want to see the county facing an increase in property taxes. To bring the county one tax step closer to the city, we must be intentional and seek opportunities, rather than waiting for them to come to us. I believe with my education and experience (including the time I have spent working in employer contributions to the state retirement fund), I can make the right decisions.

Through better communication plan prioritizing roadway and bridges based on conditions and traffic patterns while anticipating growth and connectivity needs. We have considered a $30 million plan to prioritize county-wide needs to ensure our roads and bridges are updated. For far too often we put in a temporary band-aid on our roads and bridges, without addressing the root of the problem. Funding should be used where they can be most affected when it comes to roadway improvements based on current conditions and traffic usage. We also need to be making long-term plans for the growth of Starkville and its impact on the county as it continues to increase traffic and how those plans are set.

I believe that the County Supervisors should work with both the Mayor and City Council to address issues affecting all residents of Oktibbeha County, such as public safety, fire protection and schools.

The five-member Board will enable the county to repair its roads and bridges, without addressing the root of the problem. Funding should be used where they can be most affected when it comes to roadway improvements based on current conditions and traffic usage. We also need to be making long-term plans for the growth of Starkville and its impact on the county as it continues to increase traffic.

With the increasing population in Oktibbeha County I would like to see in employee contributions to the state retirement fund. I have always taken the time to look into future needs and plan for the future. This County can and should plan for the future.

I support the idea of creating a five-member Board of Supervisors. This would prevent favoritism. It also gives each board member a chance to improve its road or bridge. However, we need to consider the impact on the county as a whole. It is not efficient to divide funds among all districts, especially those that are in closer proximity to the city. The board members must work to ensure the board is taking the best possible action for the county.

Additional duties will include, but are not limited to, seeking additional state and federal funding that may be available.

In my experience the best method to do is by working together with other agencies within the county, city, and university.
Q&A

**District 5 Supervisor (continued)**

**Term:** 4 years, **Annual salary:** $47,000

### Democratic

**Joe Williams (I)**

**Age:** 71

**Education:** College Graduate

**Political party:** Democrat

**Political experience:** 12 Years as District 5 Supervisor, previously served on the Oktibbeha County Economic Development Authority Board for over 20 Years. Presently serving on the Golden Triangle Waste Management Board.

**Residence:** Starkville

**Family:** Married, two children

**Email:** marty@martyhauglaw.com

**Phone:** (662) 312-3558

**Political experience:** 12 Years as District 5 Supervisor, previously served on the Oktibbeha County Economic Development Authority Board for over 20 Years. Presently serving on the Golden Triangle Waste Management Board.

**Education:** Graduate of Coastal School of Law

**Juris Doctorate from Florida State University, Starkville**

**Age:** 55

**Political party:** Democrat

**Political experience:** 12 Years as Justice Court Judge

**Residence:** Starkville

**Family:** Single

**Email:** marty@martyhauglaw.com

**Phone:** (662) 312-3558

I recommend that the board continue to maintain the present method of paving roads. The present method gives each citizen an opportunity to be equally represented by the work of the supervisor that they elected. The citizen is now able to hold their supervisor accountable, and not the whole board based on a 3-2 majority vote. The present method also gives each supervisor an opportunity to develop and complete a 4-year road plan which is required by state law.

The board of supervisors is presently working effectively with the city when assistance is requested. The board has always agreed to assist the city with projects within the city limits. The board presently has an agreement to assist with the Improvement of Spring Street crossing of Hwy 12, and onto Blackjack Road. Additionally, the board just shared in the cost of paving Hospital Road. The board has provided funds and entered into many interlocal agreements with the city. The above are just the most recent ones.

The county faces challenges of having enough funds to pave State Aid Roads. Too many county dollars are presently used to pave State Aid Roads. As a supervisor, I will continue to request that the state provide more funds for paving State Aid Roads, thereby maintaining county dollars to pave county roads.

The county faces a challenge with not having public wastewater sewage in the county. As a supervisor, I will continue to work for federal and state dollars to provide public sewage for county residents.

The county faces challenges of having jobs that are appealing to young adults while starting a family. As a supervisor, I will consult with economic development agencies that could suggest solutions to address this challenge. The county faces challenges in helping senior citizens during cold and hot weather and providing a healthy meal to seniors who need it.

**Q & A**

1. What makes you the best candidate for Justice Court Judge?

I have been practicing law for 20 years and have trial experience in every trial court in two states. Further, I have experience presiding as a Judge in both Sturgis Municipal Court for 5 years and in Oktibbeha County Justice Court for 8 years. I am from Oktibbeha County, and I am raising my children in Oktibbeha County, and I want to do everything I can to make it a safe environment for all of our children to thrive.

It is an amazing oversight by the Legislature that no legal degree is required to be Justice Court Judge. Many courts suffer from having elected judges that have no legal training or experience. Without knowledge of the law through actual legal training and experience, it is unlikely that Justice can be administered fairly and consistently.

**Q & A**

1. **What makes you the best candidate for Justice Court Judge?**

I am the only candidate that is a lawyer. I have been practicing law for 20 years and have trial experience in every trial court in two states. Further, I have experience presiding as a Judge in both Monroe County Court for 5 years and in Oktibbeha County Justice Court for 8 years. I am from Oktibbeha County, and I am raising my children in Oktibbeha County, and I want to do everything I can to make it a safe environment for all of our children to thrive.

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**Q & A**

1. **What do you consider to be the biggest challenge in the Justice Court system?**

Our Courts’ biggest challenge is maintaining credibility in the minds of those who come to Court. Throughout the years, credibility in Justice Court has greatly diminished, and along with that comes lack of faith by the citizens of the County that their case will be heard fairly. Every day, I strive to use my knowledge of the law and integrity to ensure that everyone who comes before the Court believe in Court is treated fairly and honestly. If citizens believe they cannot have their issues heard fairly by a knowledgeable judge, they then take matters into their own hands which has a heavy cost on our community.

**Republican**

**Les Lindley**

**Age:** 72

**Education:** Political party: Republican

**Political experience:** 12 Years as District 5 Supervisor, previously served on the Oktibbeha County Economic Development Authority Board for over 20 Years. Presently serving on the Golden Triangle Waste Management Board.

**Residence:** Starkville

**Family:** Single

**Email:** wjoe36700@gmail.com

**Phone:** (662) 312-3558

**Political experience:** 12 Years as District 5 Supervisor, previously served on the Oktibbeha County Economic Development Authority Board for over 20 Years. Presently serving on the Golden Triangle Waste Management Board.

**Education:** Graduate of Coastal School of Law

**Juris Doctorate from Florida State University, Starkville**

**Age:** 55

**Political party:** Democrat

**Political experience:** 12 Years as Justice Court Judge

**Residence:** Starkville

**Family:** Married

**Email:** wjoe36700@gmail.com

**Phone:** (662) 312-3558

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**Justice Court Judge District 1**

**Term:** 4 years, **Annual salary:** $47,000

**Tony Boykin (Democrat) - Unopposed incumbent**

**Justice Court Judge District 2**

**Term:** 4 years, **Annual salary:** $47,000

**Larnzy Carpenter (Democrat) - Unopposed incumbent**

**Justice Court Judge District 3**

**Term:** 4 years, **Annual salary:** $47,000

**Q & A**

1. What makes you the best candidate for Justice Court Judge?

2. No legal degree is needed for this position. How will you ensure knowledge of the law when hearing cases?

3. What do you consider to be the biggest challenge in the Justice Court system?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Justice Court Judge District 3 (continued)</th>
<th>Term: 4 years, Annual salary: $47,000</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q &amp; A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Republican

#### Brian Michael Linder
**Age:** 38  
**Education:** Liberal Arts from East Central in Decatur IL and BA of General Business Administration with a minor in Criminal Justice from American Legion Post 13 in Starkville  
**Residence:** Starkville  
**Family:** Married, two children  
**Email:** Brianmichael.linder@gmail.com  
**Phone:** (662) 312-9530  

I have had extensive experience in law and have a strong background in law enforcement. I have been a police officer for over 12 years and have served as a detective and a captain. With my experience, I believe I have the skills and knowledge to be a successful Justice Court Judge.  

### Democrat

#### Will McNeel
**Age:** 38  
**Education:** Liberal Arts from East Central in Decatur MS and BA of General Business Administration with a minor in Criminal Justice from American Legion Post 13 in Starkville  
**Residence:** Starkville  
**Family:** Married, two children  
**Email:** mcneelwill@aol.com  
**Phone:** (662) 323-4900  

I have had extensive experience in law and have a strong background in law enforcement. I have been a police officer for over 12 years and have served as a detective and a captain. With my experience, I believe I have the skills and knowledge to be a successful Justice Court Judge.  

### Constable District 1

| Q & A | | |

#### Democrat

#### William Ford
**Age:** 55  
**Education:** High School Diploma  
**Political party:** Democrat  
**Political experience:** None  
**Residence:** Starkville  
**Family:** Married, three children  
**Email:** william@sheriff.oktibbeha.ms.us  
**Phone:** (662) 425-1402  

I have over 25 years of Law Enforcement Experience. I've been a Shift Supervisor for the past 20 years. Whether it was working in the jail as a Jailer or on the road as a Deputy, I have years of experience with serving papers, which is primarily a Constable's job. I am very dedicated to my job as a Deputy, and I would be the exact same way if I'm elected as District 1 Constable for Oktibbeha County.  

#### Republican

#### Joe Morse
**Age:** 55  
**Education:** High School education  
**Political party:** Republican  
**Political experience:** None  
**Residence:** Starkville  
**Family:** Married, two children  
**Email:** jmorse@sheriff.oktibbeha.ms.us  
**Phone:** (662) 425-1402  

I have had extensive experience in law and have a strong background in law enforcement. I have been a police officer for over 12 years and have served as a detective and a captain. With my experience, I believe I have the skills and knowledge to be a successful Justice Court Judge.  

### Q & A

#### Republican

#### Kenneth Watkins
**Age:** 38  
**Education:** Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice from Mississippi State University  
**Political party:** Republican  
**Political experience:** None  
**Residence:** Starkville  
**Family:** Married, two children  
**Email:** kennethwater@yahoo.com  
**Phone:** (662) 312-9530  

As a life-long resident of Oktibbeha County, I have seen the challenges that our community faces. I believe that I have the skills and experience to be an effective and dedicated constable for District 1.  

### Q & A

#### Republican

#### Brian Michael Linder
**Age:** 38  
**Education:** Liberal Arts from East Central in Decatur IL and BA of General Business Administration with a minor in Criminal Justice from American Legion Post 13 in Starkville  
**Residence:** Starkville  
**Family:** Married, two children  
**Email:** Brianmichael.linder@gmail.com  
**Phone:** (662) 312-9530  

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### Q & A

#### Democrat

#### Will McNeel
**Age:** 38  
**Education:** Liberal Arts from East Central in Decatur MS and BA of General Business Administration with a minor in Criminal Justice from American Legion Post 13 in Starkville  
**Residence:** Starkville  
**Family:** Married, two children  
**Email:** mcneelwill@aol.com  
**Phone:** (662) 323-4900  

I have had extensive experience in law and have a strong background in law enforcement. I have been a police officer for over 12 years and have served as a detective and a captain. With my experience, I believe I have the skills and knowledge to be a successful Justice Court Judge.  

### Q & A

#### Republican

#### Joe Morse
**Age:** 55  
**Education:** High School education  
**Political party:** Republican  
**Political experience:** None  
**Residence:** Starkville  
**Family:** Married, two children  
**Email:** jmorse@sheriff.oktibbeha.ms.us  
**Phone:** (662) 425-1402  

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### Q & A

#### Republican

#### Kenneth Watkins
**Age:** 38  
**Education:** Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice from Mississippi State University  
**Political party:** Republican  
**Political experience:** None  
**Residence:** Starkville  
**Family:** Married, two children  
**Email:** kennethwater@yahoo.com  
**Phone:** (662) 312-9530  

As a life-long resident of Oktibbeha County, I have seen the challenges that our community faces. I believe that I have the skills and experience to be an effective and dedicated constable for District 1.  

### Q & A
Republican
Shannon Williams
Age: 54
Education: 1996 Graduate of Mississippi State University
Political experience: 1 term as District Attorney
Political party: Republican
Age: 54
Education: 1996 Graduate of Mississippi State University
Political experience: 1 term as District Attorney
Political party: Republican

Born and raised in Oktibbeha County, I have devoted over half of my life to the citizens of Oktibbeha County. I started my career in law enforcement as a deputy sheriff and eventually a lieutenant at the Sheriff's Office. Throughout my career, I clearly worked with the Justice Court, Circuit Court, Youth Court, all of which closely align with those duties of the District Attorney. These duties included serving as an advocate, replacing, writing documents, drafting search warrants, circuit subpoenas, indictments and testified in different capacities in those courts as well. With 25 years of certified experience, am capable and qualified to carry out the duties of Constable, Dist 1.

Residence: Sturgis
Family: Married, three children
Email: shannonwilliams1@gmail.com
Phone: (228) 639-3409

District Attorney
Scott Colom
Age: 52
Education: Juris Doctorate
Political party: Democrat
Political experience: 4 terms as District Attorney
Family: Colom
Residence: Columbus
Phone: (601) 329-5011

I think the difference between punishment and diversion depends on the nature of the crime, the recommendations of the victim, the criminal history of the person, and the best options for rehabilitation. In my eight years as DA, I prioritized prison for violent crime because violence destroys families and communities. My office has a 95% conviction rate for indictments and over 85% for juries. I personally led the prosecution of 26 violent criminals and gotten guilty verdicts in 24 of them with 1 hung. When it comes to non-violent crime, first offenders, I prioritize rehabilitation. For people suffering from substance abuse, I typically offer pretrial diversion services that try to connect them with rehabilitation services or job placement or educational services. For people suffering from advanced drug or substance abuse issues, I work with the Drug Court to determine if they have services that could be helpful.

The first problem with recidivism in Mississippi is our prison system does not have the space to provide enough opportunity for rehabilitation. Too often what I hear from inmates is that they had to do everything in their power just to survive. Until MDOC is properly funded, the best way to reduce recidivism is to focus on young people. Over the next four years, I plan to work with the Youth Court to identify juveniles on the wrong track and partner with non-profits, and other community members. I also plan to work with the schools in my district to find resources and assistance can be provided to get them the guidance they need to reach their potential. This will involve the involvement of community partners like churches, non-profits, and other community organizations.

The role of victims’ advocacy in the district attorney’s office is of paramount importance. Victims of crimes often experience significant trauma and emotional distress, and it is crucial for the justice system to prioritize their rights, needs, and support throughout the legal process. Here’s how I have prioritized victims over the previous four years. My office was the first in the state to provide grief counseling for survivors of gun violence to help these survivors work with other to learn how to live with the loss of a loved one. We were also the first to provide resources to victims of violence to help them deal with the long, arduous grieving process. Finally, my office has also prioritized victims of property crime to help them recover the financial loss some in lives caused them.

Q&A
1. How do you view the balance between punishment and diversion in the criminal justice system, and what do you believe is the district attorney’s role in striking that balance?

2. What efforts can the district attorney’s office make or support over the next four years toward reducing recidivism?

3. How important of a role should victims’ advocacy play in the district attorney’s office, and in what ways would you promote that over the next four years?

Democrat
Curtis Randel
Age: 57
Education: 2011 Graduate of Mississippi College (Logistics Technology), 2010 Graduate from the South Mississippi Law Enforcement Training Academy, FISBA
Certified, University of Southern Mississippi at Camp Shelby (Courtroom Testimony & Report Writing for Law Enforcement), Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (Active Shooter Training), Mississippi Law Enforcement Training Academy, FEMA Certified, University of Southern Mississippi at Camp Shelby
Political party: Democrat
Political experience: None
Family: Single
Residence: Columbus
Phone: 228-388-0057

I have 14 years of Law Enforcement experience trained to uphold the laws of Mississippi. Experience from three different agencies right here in the great state of Mississippi.

*Hattiesburg PD*
*Passaquoa PD*
*Starkville PD*

Christian believe with a heart for the people.

40 year retired ship builder (Management)

If given the opportunity “District 3” I promise to serve, protect and respect the community with compassion, as all law enforcement should.

I am Ronald Hannah candidate for Oktibbeha County District 3 Constable, and I approve this message.

District Attorney
James Lindsey
Age: 54
Education: Juris Doctorate
Political party: Republican
Political experience: Worked as Deputy Sheriff and Constable for 41 years
Residence: Sturgis
Family: Married, four children, 3 grandchildren
Email: nolalindsay1@gmail.com
Phone: (228) 386-0479

I feel well qualified in Law Enforcement with over 200 schools and classroom training. I have a great desire in Law Enforcement to serve and help people in need that we may live together in peace as a civilized society. Everyone will be treated equally and fairly. I will work with respect and honesty for everyone. I will take it personally that I want to do a job for a reason. That’s why I still here. I would appreciate your vote.

If you are a member of Friendship Baptist Church? Thank you for this opportunity.

Republican
Ronald Hannah
Age: 56
Education: 2011 Graduate of Mississippi College (Logistics Technology), 2010 Graduate from the South Mississippi Law Enforcement Training Academy, FISBA
Certified, University of Southern Mississippi at Camp Shelby (Courtroom Testimony & Report Writing for Law Enforcement), Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (Active Shooter Training), Mississippi Law Enforcement Training Academy, FEMA Certified, University of Southern Mississippi at Camp Shelby
Political party: Democrat
Political experience: None
Family: Single
Residence: Columbus
Phone: 228-388-0057

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I am Ronald Hannah candidate for Oktibbeha County District 3 Constable, and I approve this message.

Q&A
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2. What efforts can the district attorney’s office make or support over the next four years toward reducing recidivism?

3. How important of a role should victims’ advocacy play in the district attorney’s office, and in what ways would you promote that over the next four years?
Republican

Jase Dalmopy

Email: jasedalmopy@msstate.edu

Education: Mississippi State University, J.D. in 2016

Political experience: None

Office: Starkville

Phone: (662) 327-1088

State Representative District 37

Andy Boyd (Republican) - Unopposed incumbent

Term: 4 years, Annual salary: $23,500

State Representative District 38

Cheikh Taylor (Democrat) - Unopposed incumbent

Term: 4 years, Annual salary: $23,500

State Senator District 15

Rob Rossenber (Republican) - Unopposed incumbent

Term: 4 years, Annual salary: $23,500

Republican

Alan Sibley

Age: 37

Education: Old Dominion University

Political experience: Conservative Activism

Residence: Madisonville

Phone: (662) 617-3744

Q A

1. How can the state best use the influx of revenue it received from federal sources during the pandemic?

I would like to see that revenue returned to the people by allowing for the reduction and/or elimination of various taxes.

2. What are the priorities for the district in your next four years?

A. Creating actual economic growth and prosperity by growing businesses locally.

3. What is your position on expanding Medicaid?

Ultimately, expanding Medicaid is not the answer to the problem. My belief is all government assistance programs should be designed to lead to self-sufficiency instead of government dependency. Medicaid currently is a precursor to fully socialized medicine and needs to be reformed. The cost of healthcare is astronomical because of a lack of competition among the pharmaceutical, insurance, and corporate healthcare companies.

Barth Williams

Email: barthw@msstate.edu

Education: University of Mississippi School of Law (2016)

Political experience: None

Family: Married

Phone: (662) 617-3744

The state received 1,800,000,000 in ARPA funds. I had the privilege to serve on the Senate APPC committee which was responsible for allocating these funds. He created a rating grant for which cities and counties could request their respective share of these funds. These dollars went to water and sewer projects throughout the state. Also, we have allocated 374,000,000 for rural water projects. These expenditures are greatly needed for our state infrastructure and overall wetness in various counties. We have committed to spend $22,000,000 on water and sewer projects in district 15 on water and sewer projects. Since I have been your senator I have worked hard to ensure that the communities I have gone into essential infrastructure in district 15. As long as I am given the privilege of representing the people of district 15 I will continue to fight to fund these under-funded areas in our district.

Public Safety is priority one. From proper funding for law enforcement and first responders to legislation that protects our children. I have introduced and passed legislation that protects our children and will continue to do so. Also, I have worked to bring projects to our region and am always willing to bring new projects to district 15. Government should be there to coordinate everyone and get out of the way and let businesses do what comes that are done.

Education. I have been part of the largest teacher pay raise in history $750 per teacher. We must continue to put education at the top of the priority list.

If you are asking am I in favor of extending health care to non working Mississippians am no charge I am not in favor. If you are asking I would discuss legislation that would provide health care for WORKING Mississippians before the insurance and verification of employment before I am in favor. We are facing many challenges in our Health care system in Mississippi. From accessibility to affordability. I think we should discuss any option that can improve on any of these challenges. When we improve any of these the need for the need for health care for ALL Mississippians. To eliminate an option is simple to lose than misunderstanding is an injustice to all.

Angela Turner-Ford (Democrat) - Unopposed incumbent

Term: 4 years, Annual salary: $23,500

 AGAINST THE ISSUE

District Attorney (continued)

1. How do you view the balance between punishment and diversion in the criminal justice system, and what do you believe is the district attorney’s role in that balance?

A balance between punishment and diversion simply doesn’t exist. Cases must be assessed and processed on a case by case basis. Drug abuse cases and cases involving first time offenders of non-violent crime qualify for some form of “diversion.” All others must be sentenced according to its resolved upon the severity of their crime, their likelihood to re-offend and what type of threat they pose to society (usually evidenced by their criminal history). There is a fine line between placing the interests of a trial before the interests of your community.

2. What efforts can the district attorney’s office make or support over the next four years toward reducing recidivism?

It’s not the district attorney’s role to ensure that individuals do not re-offend. All I can do is to give a qualifying individual a second chance (continuation program) so that we will not get a convicted felon, which puts them in the best possible position moving forward. I would like to be more actively involved in the community, particularly in our schools and youth courts, so we might curb some of these crimes on the front end. More of our kids need to know who the district attorney is, what he does, and the reality of punishment awaiting them if they break the law. Not to scare them, but to educate them on really before they make a decision which could ruin their lives.

3. How important of a role should victims’ advocacy play in the district attorney’s office, and in what ways would you promote that over the next four years?

I believe victims advocacy is vital in the criminal justice system. I believe that prosecutions do a duty to the victims of crime, and make them feel as if they could possibly live the circumstances that affected retribution in the form of a lengthy, or permanent, jail sentence. Other times this invoives making them financially whole. My office will provide and top of special assistance needed, including assistance with蛹ies and state and federal grants for victims. My primary focus will be putting criminals who create victims in a position where they fear the retributions as much that they never do it again, and in some cases, they won’t be able to.