County Council Questionnaire

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Each of the following questions includes a 100 word limit

Briefly describe why you are seeking public office:

1. First, I am seeking this office because the incumbent is a bully and has failed the residents of Greenville County for far too long. His lack of leadership regarding COVID19, and his shooting down every opportunity to institute a mask ordinance has cost more than 300 lives in Greenville County. As someone infected with COVID19 with lingering issues, I know that it is serious. We need leadership, not backroom deals. I will pull back Kirven's curtain of secrecy and end the cutting of corners costing affecting the safety and lives of our neighbors throughout the county.

Briefly describe a significant accomplishment that would reflect your ability to lead our community:

I am a servant leader with a Master of Public Administration from Clemson University which has educated me on the process and methods of how government is supposed to work for the people, not just big land developers. I am also former volunteer EMT * vol 911 Dispatcher with over 3500 hours of service.

The evidence shows that I am the opposite of what Mr. Kirven embodies - from my values and appreciation of life, the planet, to the sheer existence of my neighbors. I value openness and transparency and the opinion of others.

If elected, after your first 12 months on Council, what do you hope is your most significant achievement?

In the first 12 months, we will recommit to serving our citizens, not secret backroom agendas.
*Hire a full time Director of Sustainability
*Together with City of Greenville, create a joint Office of Sustainability/Resiliency, commit to 100% clean energy by 2030 (& more)
*Create new department: "Greenville County Cyber Corps" - a team of young idealistic computer programmers to modernize and drive efficiency where it does not exist today
Greenville County is home to nearly 500 nonprofits, ranging from small community centers to large institutions that provide health care, housing, food support, education, arts programming, and so much more. Most recently available data show that nearly 90,000 people in our state are employed in the nonprofit sector and one in three South Carolinians volunteer in a nonprofit organization. Nonprofits and the foundations, companies, and individuals that support them are vital to Greenville County.

**Tell us about one of Greenville County’s non-profits that you think is doing important work in your community, and what you have done to support this organization’s mission?**

As someone who has volunteered/worked with nonprofit organizations since I was 12 years old, then launched a 501c3 from scratch in 2013, I am proud to call myself an ambassador of nonprofit organizations everywhere.

*Mill Village Farms: worked to bridge several organizations & launched SC’s first roof top farm.*

*Climate Reality Upstate chapter: Drove our mission to educate the public on the impacts of climate change, pushed GVL City Council to pursue 2MW solar.*

*Greenville Woodworkers Guild: shop supervisor/assist members with shop safety and spreading the word about the Guild’s mission to educate/share the art of woodworking throughout the community.*

**How could County Council and Greenville non-profit community better support one another in our shared goal of improving the lives of people in Greenville County?**

Greenville County needs to recommit to people, by investing in the lives of its citizens. This means that Greenville County Council must make affordable housing and public transit a mission critical priority and fund these projects and partnerships accordingly. Establishing a line item to contribute to the Greenville Housing Fund and make inclusionary zoning a priority as well - this is a civil rights and equality issue. The malfunctioning state house should not stand in the way of Greenville County to do the right thing.

**Housing**

*What would you do to encourage the production of more affordable homes for these families? What would you do to support to local Affordable Housing developers, including community organizations and private developers (e.g., incentives such as density/parking bonuses, reduced fees)?*

County Council MUST commit to investing in people and investing in the future of homeownership. Fund a line item for the GHF. Incentivizing builders to construct diverse communities, and build the homes to U.S. Green Building Council standards which will reduce long term ownership costs. Lastly, in 2016-2017, we learned that GC was last in upward mobility nationwide - if you were born into poverty, you had a 4% chance of getting out of poverty in Greenville County.

*It should not be lost on the citizens of Greenville County that this occurred on Butch Kirven's watch.*

**Transit**
Describe the role you believe transit plays in our community’s future growth and success and what role should County Council play in supporting public transit demands?

Let me be clear, building more roads is not the answer to fixing our traffic and transit problem. *The $121 million that the state wants to spend to build a bypass around Woodruff Road is not the answer. *Committing to Public Transit means that we must systematically expand Greenlink and include Park & Ride Shuttles to our areas largest employers. *Establish a Commuter Rail Infrastructure (beginning from GSP Airport to Downtown and from Fountain Inn to Traveler’s Rest). *If a road is replaced or rehabilitated, two additional curbed lanes must be constructed for cyclists and pedestrians.

Growth

How will you balance the interests of private property owners with the community’s broader vision for how to manage growth across the county (i.e. the future land use map)?

Investing in people also means investing in the future of our most finite resource - land. We can partner with conservation organizations to purchase the land development rights from owners in areas of special interest. The land can be protected from development and possibly even cultivated into a rich and profitable farm using advanced practices like Regenerative Agriculture- RegenerativeAg not only helps the planet by sequestering carbon, but the farmer will earn a sustainable living. Together with the City of Greenville, create a universal Tree Protection Plan that protects and increases property values.

Arts

How do you believe the County can further support the arts now – during our economic crisis – and in the future?

As a woodworker, there is nothing more satisfying than having an idea in your head, and figuring out how to make it come to life. Art is what makes us human. Art connects us all. Having been born and raised in Rochester NY with what my childhood memory believes was a museum or public display of art on every corner; public art positively impacts a young person’s mind. We must make public spaces available throughout the county for artists to display their works for all to enjoy. Nonprofits are the backbone to grow the arts AND the essential trades.

Municipalities
What steps will you take to ensure open communication between these diverse entities, many of whom are independent of Greenville County Council governance authority?

10. We Must Grow Together! I was reminded of this rift between the city and county when the city rightfully forced the county to include affordable, inclusive housing in the billion dollar University Ridge re-development project. Seriously? Had County Government been more open and in touch with the community, discussing the issues with the City and other town leadership, we would not have major issues like this flare up. Nothing will change in the communication between government agencies and how the county treats the smaller municipal governments if the District 27 incumbent stays in power. Secrecy kills Democracy.

Citizen Engagement

Greenville County Council represents more than 10% of the population of South Carolina. With that comes an incredible diversity of thought and experiences shared by our citizens. Do you seek input from people with different perspectives? In what way and to whom do you turn for input? One of the priorities of the Greenville Nonprofit Alliance is an increased involvement of non-profit leaders and board members in shaping policy at the local level. If elected, how will you ensure local non-profit leaders have the opportunity to provide a voice in the decisions being made throughout the county?

I am committing to hold local bi-monthly town-halls. This is a new opportunity for citizens to share their concerns. I am not one to shy away from asking others what their thoughts are on a particular topic. As a non-profit leader, I welcome the insight and opportunity to walk in the shoes of local nonprofits to better understand their needs and how we can work together to benefit all citizens.

I can assure you this, the current chairman has little concern with transparency/openness/needs of nonprofits; if Greenville County’s Council leadership remains the same, nothing will ever change.