

## **St Tammany Council District 11**

<b>Bonnie Clements</b>	Independent
<b>Kirk Drumm</b>	Republican
<b>Arthur A. Laughlin</b>	Republican

### **1). What aspects of your background have prepared you for the challenges of this position?**

#### **Bonnie Clements**

- I'm an attorney (DC & VA) thus already stand in a position of trust, which I take to heart.
- I believe in accountability and transparency, and established new case law through the administrative and judicial advocacy process, by proving that an administrative agency acted arbitrarily and capriciously.
- I've fostered coalitions to implement changes for improved real estate industry practices and better representation of the general public.
- I've testified on several occasions during public hearings before local boards on development, zoning and redistricting matters and successfully led community groups speaking against proposed uses that adversely would affect property values, traffic safety and quality of life.
- My real estate expertise provides for an in-depth understanding of the development process, with the ability to gauge the most important aspects to focus on in the public's best interests.
- I've returned to Louisiana where I was raised and offer the benefit of many years of valuable professional experience gained while living in the Washington, DC area.
- I'm running as an Independent as I believe the country needs a third party with the voice of reason to emerge amid the polarization between the Democrats and Republicans, particularly prevalent in federal government.

#### **Kirk Drumm**

*Prior to becoming the interim Councilman, after Mr. Stefancik died, I was on the parish zoning and Planning commission for 9 years. I have a good understanding of the functions of land distribution and use. Not all decisions made every one happy, but I do try to place myself in the position of the person making the request and what impact the decision would have on the future of the surrounding areas. I am known as someone who speaks his mind and am known to rock the boat. Business as usual is not the best way to do things.*

#### **Arthur A. Laughlin**

*Three aspects of my background have prepared me for the challenges of the parish council they are my property tax abatement experience, being a realtor, and my tenure with the PTA at my children's school. For the past six years I have helped property owners protest the assessed value of their residential and commercial property. I worked directly with the parish councils across the state. I am also a realtor and I see why zoning is so critical to St. Tammany parish. Finally, my tenure on the PTA has helped me stay connected to my immediate community.*

### **2). How do you balance attracting economic development through tax incentives and exemptions in the Parish with the challenges it brings to existing infrastructure, traffic issues, and quality of life for existing residents, businesses, and property owners?**

#### **Bonnie Clements**

- *I believe that we should pursue redevelopment of the many available existing opportunities before considering new development with such challenges. There are multiple, under-utilized properties with the infrastructure already in place that could be repurposed and re-incentivized with no or limited impact. For example, the North Shore Mall. This takes creative thinking, an appreciation of public demand, and an*

*understanding of the process and professionals needed to go from conception to fruition.*

#### **Kirk Drumm**

*This needs to be answered in separate sections.*

*a). I have no control in attracting different economic development using tax incentives and exemptions. Those fall under the Parish and State Administrations.*

*After the decisions by an entity to consider our area, we the council then look into all the possible scenarios this will bring to the parish. Where will it go, how much land will it need, what environmental impact will it have, what traffic will it cause for our citizens, what drainage problems will it cause that will affect the surrounding area?*

*Other items are the fire department's ability to handle any problems that arise, how will it influence our police, school system and our capabilities as a parish to maintain our responsibilities. I know the question is what I would do. I work with council, administration and the suggestions of the people to find an answer to as many questions that can be found and implemented for all concerned.*

#### **Arthur A. Laughlin**

*Zoning and tax incentives are critical to confront the challenges we face in St. Tammany.*

*I will find a way to slow development in areas where the infrastructure cannot handle expansion and at the same time use incentives to encourage development in areas that need it.*

### **3). Water quality and drainage are issues that impact the safe and healthy quality of life for virtually everyone in St. Tammany Parish. Being as specific as possible, what are your plans to address these issues?**

#### **Bonnie Clements**

*• I'm against wetlands development and any concept of in-fill and concrete pour into natural areas of water absorption protection. We've experienced epic storms already in the first 21 years of this century and need a mindset of conservation for the good of the whole of St. Tammany Parish. I seek to preserve the value of existing properties; our quality of life; the beauty and serenity of our bayous; and our sportsman's paradise.*

*• Under consideration now in District 11 are two ill-conceived, hyperdense developments, Honeybee and Liberty Bluffs, which I firmly oppose. Honeybee is proposed to be developed at the "headwaters" of Bayou Paquet and Liberty Bluffs is proposed to be developed on the banks of Bayou Liberty. Both would dump their drainage into these Bayous; substantially change the character of these Bayous; destroy critical wetlands (77% of Honeybee and 58% of Liberty Bluffs consist of wetlands); increase harmful flooding for all properties along the Bayous and surrounding areas; increase traffic congestion; and diminish the value of existing properties.*

#### **Kirk Drumm**

*This question is an on going situation that is hard to control. Due to decisions by previous councils and police juries, many things were done that have had a disastrous effect on our parish as a whole. I can attempt to control my district and see to it that projects that are requested are well thought out by the person/ business that wants to build in my area. Honeybee is a prime example of a large unwanted project that was in the works before I became the councilman. All was in place and nothing could be done to stop it. I have, however, been in constant contact with the developers lawyer and we have negotiated less harsh and congested changes to the site, larger and fewer home lots, larger green spaces and community area, almost no apartments (800 were allowed), re-designing of the water and sewerage system so there is less impact on the environment. Larger retention ponds to control rain runoff at a slower pace. A traffic circle to help traffic flow, as well as turn lanes.*

*We have maintenance barns that take care of the parish. They are understaffed and over worked. They are good hard working folks. They have priorities and lists that they go by which leaves little space for diversionary work...so I have asked my Koop drive office secretary to check into letting me hire from my*

*maintenance funds a private contractor to clean my 164 miles of drainage ditches, which will include the Bayous, which are an important part of our drainage system.*

*If I can get the ditches cleaned out, the water will flow and fewer instances of flooding will occur. All these items seem small as individuals, but taken as a whole it will have a great impact on our neighborhoods, flood control and traffic.*

*I have had problems with sewage systems and have had to call and discuss with the companies getting out and repairing their systems. Systems are being repaired and up-dated.*

**Arthur A. Laughlin**

*We personally have experienced a negative change in our water quality. This issue is integral to your second question. I will make drainage and water quality key factors in all my decision making. In addition, I will work to repair and improve our existing infrastructure to handle the current increased demand while at the same time working to lower the demand on the systems.*