

Q and A: Paulding County Commission candidate Taurus Madric-Morris

- Tom Spigolon
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Taurus Madric-Morris

The Paulding Neighbor asked all candidates in races for Paulding County Board of Commissioners in the May 22 primary the same two questions concerning economic development and budgeting.

Taurus Madric-Morris of Powder Springs, Democratic candidate for Post 3, gave the following answers:

Q: As a commissioner, you will be considering an annual budget that funds basic government services like law enforcement and transportation. Yet you also likely will hear calls for not increasing taxes despite possibly needing increases to maintain or increase current service levels. How do you plan to balance the need to properly fund government with desires for no tax increases?

A: In the illustration of the desire for no tax increases versus at least maintaining current service levels, you need the patience, insight, and wisdom to analyze both sides. Paulding County recently increased its taxes last year, there should not be additional increases any time soon. I will expend all options, from analyzing the budget, evaluating services, possibly adjusting current allocations, and researching federal and state grants. I will do my homework, look at both sides, and make my decision each time based on what I believe to be in the best interest of this community, for the immediate future and for the longer-term stability and well-being of our citizens.

Q: If a public entity wants to attract economic development to an area, it almost always must negotiate with a private employer privately. Yet, government entities in Paulding and neighboring counties have faced sharply critical public reaction in recent years because of a perceived lack of transparency in such deals. Is it possible to attract new employers desiring privacy and be transparent at the same time?

A: Transparency in government is more important to the stability and prosperity of a community than deals cut in secret, including those done for alleged “economic development reasons.” I understand there is competition for new businesses and new industries, not only between states but also between communities in a state. I think most people recognize that negotiations frequently require “keeping confidences.” And I think most of the negative reactions from citizens in our community and in some neighboring communities has been due to the perception of secret arrangements being made without regard to the welfare and well-being of our neighborhoods, without accountability for fiscal and development decisions, and without a commitment to open government and transparency as much as possible.

I understand and do not oppose there being contacts and negotiations that recognize a company’s interest in maintaining confidentiality in certain areas, but I would rather not gain a new business or industry if the price was the surrender of transparency in local government at the expense of our citizens.