The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization encouraging informed and active participation in government. It influences public policy through education and advocacy. We never support or oppose any political party or candidate.

For more information on the organization, membership, and activities, please visit http://www.lwvknoxville.org

Publication brought to you by the League of Women Voters, Knoxville/Knox County

City of Knoxville Mayoral Candidate Guide

With 2011 Election Information

Dear Voter,

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan community resource for citizen education and fair and open elections. In that spirit, we offer the citizens of the City of Knoxville this City Mayoral Primary Election Voter Guide, and hope that it helps you make that important choice for your next mayor.

Choosing your leaders carefully is important because decisions made in Knoxville can improve or detract from many aspects of your daily life - personal safety, property values, quality of new jobs, recreation and cultural options, support for your business, supportive services for you or your family, housing choices - all of which makes a city attractive and better functioning for everyone.

Whether you vote early September 7 to 22, or enjoy the traditional Election Day excitement on September 27, let's all celebrate being a citizen of this country and vote! We've included lots of information to help you vote inside. Please share this guide with your friends, family, and co-workers (especially first time voters!) or send them go to our League of Women Voters website to find it online. After the forum, you'll also find a link to replay this live broadcast on our website.

Thank you for caring about the future of our city,
Jamey Dobbs, President
League of Women Voters of Knoxville/Knox County

Making Democracy Work through the League of Women Voters Observer Corps

Our Observer Corps program provides a valuable service to the community by reporting on decision and actions that impact our community. A trained, local League observer becomes the eyes and ears of the League by

- attending local governmental meetings,
- noting what happens on report forms that are made accessible to the League and the public, and
- calling for the League to take to take action when necessary.

The presence of League observers lets officials know that someone is watching to ensure that government agencies are fulfilling their responsibility to be transparent and accountable to the citizenry. More information about the Observer Corps is available at lwvknoxville.org/observer.html.

Mark Padgett: "Growing the economy. I can't emphasize enough how important it is that Knoxville's next mayor concentrate on improving the local economy. We can no longer count on assistance from state and federal government to sustain us. We have to generate more revenues at the local level to make sure the city can provide for, and improve, its citizens' quality of life. There are three ways we can do this: raise taxes, annex, or improve the economy. I've pledged to always focus on the latter because it is the best solution for everybody. A healthy economy will increase Knoxville residents' quality…" [response exceeded limit]

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2011 Municipal Election Calendar

Primary Election:

Sept 7 First day of Early Voting
Sept 20 Final day to request an absentee ballot
Sept 22 Final day of Early Voting
Sept 27 ELECTION DAY

General Election:

Oct 10 Final day to register to vote
Oct 19 First day of Early Voting
Nov 1 Final day to request an absentee ballot
Nov 3 Final day of Early Voting
Nov 8 ELECTION DAY

Source: http://www.knoxcounty.org/election/2011elections/2011_city_knoxville.php

Bo Bennett: "My campaign is centered around the ideals of integrity and community. I have the integrity to do what is right, and not just what is convenient. I will hold to this value when considering the second point of my campaign: community. There has been too great a disconnect between the government and the people that elected that government to serve them. I will be active in attending community meetings all over the city and finding out what problems face our citizens. I will also be leaning heavily on the City Council to do the same. We cannot serve the people…" [response exceeded limit]

Madeline Rogero: "My administration will focus on growing a diversified economy with profitable businesses and good jobs. We will promote a greener Knoxville that grows while preserving our environment. We will support a lively downtown and thriving commercial core, along with great, connected neighborhoods. A vibrant qualify of life is important for those who live here and for the businesses that we want to retain and attract. We will promote arts and culture; parks, greenways, and bike lanes; and historic and natural resources preservation. Finally, we will be an inclusive city that provides solid stewardship of taxpayer dollars and reliable, efficient services."

Question #5

"What will be the primary focus of your administration?"

Joe Hultquist: "My goal is to make Knoxville the best city in the United States. I think that's the right goal. Any less, and we've set the bar too low. I believe our city is well positioned to experience a renaissance through the remainder of this decade. Pragmatic, visionary leadership is necessary to get us there. I intend to provide the leadership that's needed for that renaissance to become a reality. That means having a vision for what Knoxville can be - a seamless city, where every part of the city is valued by all, and no area is seen as inferior..." [response exceeded limit]

Ivan Harmon: "Making Knoxville a cleaner safer city and Work to help streamline city government."

Ballot

This election determines:

- City Mayor
- City Council, District 5
- City Council At Large, Seat A
- City Council At Large, Seat B
- City Council At Large, Seat C
- Municipal Judge

In a special election, State Senate District 6 is on the ballot as well. This special election will run concurrently with the City of Knoxville elections held on the same dates. Therefore, eligible voters will be allowed to vote in both elections on the same ballot whether if be during Early Voting or on Election Day

To see an official sample ballot, please visit the Knox County Election Commission website at http://www.knoxcounty.org/election/pdfs/sample_ballot.pdf

Source: http://www.knoxcounty.org/election/2011elections/2011_city_knoxville.php and http://www.knoxcounty.org/election/2011_special_election.php

Voter Information

To check if you are registered to vote:
https://tnmap.state.tn.us/voterlookup/

To pursue absentee voting and find the appropriate forms, visit:
http://www.knoxcounty.org/election/absentee_voting.php

To see a list of current polling locations, please visit:
http://www.knoxcounty.org/election/pdfs/polling_locations.pdf

To find out where you vote or who represents you, enter your address into the KGIS database at:
http://www.kgis.org/Portal/OnlineData/VotingLocationSearch/tabid/42/Default.aspx

If you are interested in the candidates' petitions, documents, and financial disclosures, please visit:
http://www.knoxcounty.org/election/candidate_info/index.php

Bo Bennett: "The Magnolia Corridor and the Downtown North plans are two of my favorite projects that have been slated for completion by the city. There is much room for business growth in these areas, as well as increasing connectivity to downtown. My administration will make these of top-tier priority as we move forward. The only way to guarantee that these plans are to be carried out is to make them a priority, and I can say that as Mayor, I will do that."

Madeline Rogero: "Knoxville has both man-made and natural boundaries that physically isolate many neighborhoods and people. These boundaries disrupt the grid network that promotes connectivity in urban environments. In East Knoxville, urban renewal further disrupted the social fabric and downtown connection. The new Transit Station is a creative way to "grow" new space downtown and connect eastward by spanning the Parkway gulf. Proposed improvements to Magnolia Avenue will help. Connectivity is more than physical, however. We must be intentional about including all residents in our civic life and ensure equitable city services and access to jobs, a good education, and great neighborhoods."

connectivity between our communities and neighborhoods. We've come a long…" [response exceeded limit]

Joe Hultquist: "The Smart Fix 40 project is a clear example of poor design and planning that has left a huge negative impact on East Knoxville. Magnolia Avenue in particular doesn't connect well to downtown at all. Some of those mistakes will be very difficult to fix, but I intend to do what I can to do just that. The Magnolia Corridor Plan contains a series of recommended gateway projects, including the Hall of Fame and Magnolia Gateways. I believe good access, and the perception of good access, are critical to the vitality of an area. I will make it a priority…" [response exceeded limit]

Ivan Harmon: "We need to work to move the magnolia corridor plan forward. In doing so, it is vital that we work with the small business owners in search for innovative ideas on how to improve business conditions in the area."

Candidate Guide

About this Guide

All candidates accepted the written conditions of participation in the Candidate Guide and were informed in a personal letter of the following: "Your answers will be printed verbatim, with no editing, grammatical or otherwise. Answer each question in 100 words or less and be specific. Inform the voters of what you plan to do if you are elected."

The material in this Guide was compiled by the League of Women Voters of Knoxville/Knox County. This material may not be altered or reprinted without the permission of the League. Each candidate's reply has been printed as submitted, except by editing from the bottom when a candidate's reply exceeded the agreed upon word limit.

The candidates listed are those whose names appear on the ballot as of August 30, 2011. The candidates' responses are listed in rotating order with the response order for the first question chosen randomly.

Question #1

"The employee pensions and mandatory employee raises are straining the city budget. Would you address this problem by reducing benefits, reducing the workforce, raising taxes, or taking some other approach?"

Ivan Harmon: "I realize that pensions all across the country have become a great deal of concern in a lot of cities. However the pensions for the city of Knoxville haven't stained the city budget and have the employees a 2.5% raise. Look at the cities financial situation and you can see the remarkable job the administration and pension board has done."

Question #4

"Projects like Interstate 40 and James White Parkway have left East Knoxville somewhat isolated. How can we improve connectivity between East Knoxville and Downtown?"

Mark Padgett: "Again, it goes back to smart and comprehensive development. We have to ensure that infrastructure projects are designed to address the needs and challenges of the entire city, without sacrificing quality of life in a particular section or neighborhood. I want the entire city to be more connected, both physically and culturally. I want to improve connectivity from our parks and greenways to our neighborhoods and downtown. I've also pledged to make Knoxville the most bikeable, walkable, and runnable city in the Southeast. Meanwhile, I want to improve the cultural

Ivan Harmon: "I have a great working relation with the county mayor and county energy department. Having served on county commission has helped me to understand the city and county storm water ordinances. If elected, I hope that my administration will be able to address and solve our cities downstream flooding problems through cooperation's with the county government."

Bo Bennett: "My administration will work closely with Mayor Burchett's office in all issues that affect both levels of government. The recent storms have taken a toll on this area, and I commend the city employees for their hard work in cleaning up in their wake. Under my lead, open communication between the city and the county will be paramount, especially when the citizens of the city are affected by those actions taken by the county."

Bo Bennett: "We are currently waiting on the City Pension Taskforce to return with some of its suggestions on how to best address the city employee's pension plan. I believe that it is unjust to reduce the benefits to those employees already covered under the current plan. We, as the city, signed a contract in agreement to pay those benefits, and I believe we should own up to our promises. In the future, I would consider some alternatives such as a longer vesting period before employees can receive full retirement benefits. I eagerly await news from the pension planning committee."

Madeline Rogero: "The City must minimize taxpayer liability while offering a competitive salary/benefits package to recruit and retain quality employees. A Pension Task Force is studying the issue, so it is premature to determine an outcome. I support that process and will work with Council and employee groups to take appropriate action. Any proposed charter changes must be approved by city voters. Rather than judging other benefits individually, employees' benefits should be comprehensively reviewed regularly to insure that the overall package is fair and competitive and in line with the Mercer Plan which aims to pay salaries/benefits based on market averages."

Mark Padgett: "We need a combination of creative and innovative solutions for this complex problem. I believe a rising tide lifts all ships, which is why I'm going to focus on growing our economy – it's the best way to afford the services and programs we all care about (see also answer #2 and 5). In order to make sure the city government is able to recruit and retain the most talented employees, Knoxville must offer competitive salaries and benefits. However, the current pension model is unsustainable, and reform is not something the city or its pensioners can afford to ignore. This is…" [response exceeded limit]

Joe Hultquist: "I will ask City Council to immediately move toward changing the pension system from defined benefit to defined contribution for new hires. I will also undertake a comprehensive review of all city departments and services, insuring that no essential services are cut out or reduced, but also driving increased efficiency in governmental operations. There are several ways that can be done, including introducing competition (compete-out, not privatization) into parts of city government. I will work with City Council to replace the mandatory 2.5% pay raise with a program that rewards employees based on performance, and is based on benchmarks and…" [response exceeded limit]

taxpayer liability for flood and water issues, and support environmental and economic sustainability."

Mark Padgett: "The key is working closely with the county to promote smart infrastructure investment and responsible development. According to The Knoxville News Sentinel, KUB loses 31 percent of the water it produces each year to underground leaks, which is largely due to deteriorating infrastructure. That story is pretty consistent throughout the nation: from roads and dams to bridges and wastewater systems, our infrastructure is crumbling and in desperate need of repairs and modernizations. I don't believe all spending is created equal: infrastructure investment creates jobs and economic growth and improves our safety and quality of life. At the same time we…" [response exceeded limit]

Joe Hultquist: "The 2001 Urban Growth Plan, which is mandated by state law (PL 1101) requires the county to bring its storm water regulations up to par with the city's. That was supposedly done while I was still on City Council, but there is still some debate on that. I will do whatever is necessary and within my power as mayor to make sure the county fulfills its part of the agreement. Also, the new NPDES regulations from EPA/TDEC require stringent runoff management, keeping the first inch of any rainfall "event" on site. Those requirements exceed what the county is doing no…" [response exceeded limit]

Question #3

"Generally speaking, the city is downstream from the county. How will you deal with flooding and water quality issues in the city that are exacerbated by activity in the county?"

Madeline Rogero: "We need consistent regulations and strong enforcement in the city and the county. New EPA and state regulations will result in tighter and more consistent requirements for both. Because each watershed's situation is unique, there is not a single solution. The city is analyzing each watershed and will need to tailor solutions that address quantity and quality issues for each one through capital projects and area-specific regulations. In addition, we need to promote/require low-impact (green) development and business practices that will ultimately save money for businesses, reduce

Question #2

"What specific plans do you have for growing Knoxville's job base and business activity?"

Bo Bennett: "I believe that we can make a significant dent in Knoxville's unemployment by returning to support businesses that already exist in the city. If we, as the government, can help these businesses grow, even just to the point that they each can hire one additional employee, we would have almost eradicated Knoxville's unemployment. Government cannot create jobs, but we can provide an environment where businesses are encouraged to flourish, and as Mayor, I intend to do just that.
One of my ideas is expanding the "Homemaker" program through the Office of Neighborhoods. I want to allow some of the empty…" [response exceed limit]

Madeline Rogero: "To address complaints that "it's hard to do business with the city," I will create an Office of Business Support (modeled after Mayor Haslam's Office of Neighborhoods) with a Business Advisory Council and a Business Liaison to help businesses navigate city offices and advocate for policies/regulations that are not burdensome. We'll strategically use TIFs and infrastructure improvements to drive development. Our strategy will be existing business expansion, start-ups, and strategic recruitment. A high quality of life is an economic strategy: arts/culture; parks/greenways; historic/natural resources preservation. We'll focus on growing the outdoor recreation industry as part of the Urban Wilderness initiative."

Mark Padgett: "Being a good mayor means proper city management and demonstrating fiscal responsibility – but I believe that Knoxville's next mayor should also promote a culture that supports businesses which already call Knoxville home, encourages local entrepreneurs, and proactively recruits responsible companies to expand or relocate to Knoxville. Knoxville needs to keep taxes low; keep regulations reasonable and easy to understand; streamline our building codes; and empower our business community to do what they do best – create good-paying jobs. I'm going to focus on three key areas…" [response exceeded limit]

Joe Hultquist: "My goal is 500 new businesses that will survive the first four years, and five thousand new jobs, all within the first four years of my administration. That's a challenging goal, and the vagaries of the economy make it impossible to say for sure what will happen or what can be accomplished, but I believe that is possible. There are several things that come into play there. First, we will create a great environment for business development. I believe that we can't separate economic development and land development at the local level. They go hand in hand. Businesses locate based …" [response exceeded limit]

Ivan Harmon: "Utilizing our resources such as The University of Tennessee, Oak Ridge, and TVA and by holding our Chamber and Partnership accountable. It will also be important to work with our small business to facilitate growth and success. I would specifically help them in the planning processes of the cities departments."