

## Questions for TOWN COUNCIL Candidates

**Q1: Each candidate currently running for TC already has been on TC or currently serves on TC; what specifically do you think you can accomplish by serving another term? This is NOT about the past but about the future. What new ideas will you bring to the table?**

**Sue Callaway:**

As demonstrated for the last 10 years - 2 as a volunteer and 8 years serving on the Council, I will continue to bring forward "new ideas." My focus is rooted in any idea's *Return on Investment*. Those are ideas I develop, and most importantly, ones brought forward by the Community Enhancement Committee members, SBPOA, SB Women's Club, Historic Society, neighbors, Town Council, and the many residents who stop me on my multiple walks through Town! I am a person who can make ideas happen when they are fiscally and sensibly grounded in a steadfast goal of enhancing our community, increasing property value and improving owners' and visitors' quality of life.

Question 1 implies voters are "NOT" concerned about a candidate's past. That may be fine for whoever wrote this question but in my life's experiences one's past actions and behaviors are clear predictors of what will happen in the future. My friends and even former disparagers are proud of what I have accomplished for the Town. My record reveals my achievements and shows what voters can confidently expect in the future. If re-elected, I will continue to give 100%. And I promise I will never come up with a "new idea" like our neighboring town did of doubling property taxes!

**Tim Shaw:**

Running a town, even one as small as ours, requires on-going attention to the same-old-stuff most of the time; and that will continue. But, we have challenges facing us that require innovative approaches. Climate change is causing us to have more-frequent and greater-intensity storms making 'nuisance flooding' a frequent problem rather than an occasional irritation. I will continue an effort, begun this past year, to collaborate with adjacent towns to leverage our combined influence for the purpose of getting state and federal attention and funding for flooding mitigation projects. This past year that collaboration played a large part in getting the current beach and dune replenishment funded and approved.

Our canals need to be maintained, dredged and the water quality improved and that will be expensive both initially and on a long-term basis. Rather than placing a large financial burden on our owners the Mayor and I have had preliminary discussions with Senator Hocker about the possibility of his support for our issuing a reoccurring bond that would fund such activities. The town has never made use of this common municipal funding approach which has, to some degree, limited the types and sizes of projects we could undertake.

Road repair and maintenance is a constant issue for the town, especially since state funding for road maintenance has been decreasing. One cause of road wear and eventual breakdown is the use of heavy equipment by builders and contractors. We currently require contractors to pay for repairs when they cause obvious damage, but I think we should look into requiring a road-maintenance fee whenever heavy equipment is being used and put those collected fees into a

reserve dedicated for road maintenance. Another possible source of funding for road maintenance would be to begin requiring parking permits, during the summer season, for all public parking within the town, such as is the case with all of the adjacent towns.

Although crime has not been a major issue within our town, the statistics indicate that it is on the rise in Sussex county as a whole. Many home owners in our town have a range of video surveillance security equipment. I would like to initiate voluntary registration of those homes with our police department so that crime investigations could make use of applicable recorded video and audio.

I do have other ideas, such as looking at the viability of term limits for all of our elected officials, but for the sake of brevity I will leave those other ideas for another time.

**Don Boteler:**

I believe the TC needs more opportunity to brainstorm together about the various challenges that we have before us. Perhaps every (every other?) monthly workshop could be partially (wholly?) dedicated to open dialogue to drive consensus about priorities and problem solving. As an example, we know what is in our Comprehensive Plan, but we could benefit from fresh thinking about the relative importance of the Plan's goals and objectives. I would also like us to work with Joe and the SBPOA on ways to get input from property owners to help inform this process. I believe a more robust and regular sharing of information and ideas among and between Council members and the owner community may be just what we need to develop the clarity and confidence essential to making meaningful financial commitments.

**Wayne Schrader:**

I am not sure that I want to focus on new ideas. We have more than enough old ideas or existing issues that we have yet to fully and completely address. I do not see the wisdom or utility in an exercise that develops so-called new ideas but which fails to pay heed to the fact that we have many issues previously addressed but not adequately worked or resolved. The already existing issues are largely referenced in Questions 2-4.

**Q2: The 2016 CP has been specific in what the Town needs to focus on in the upcoming years. The Property Owners also have been vocal on surveys to the same issues being addressed. Yet for the past several years there has been little success to fund the reserves for Canal Water Quality and Improved Beach Access. Not mentioned in the surveys but highlighted in many TC meetings is the need for street repairs...the re-surfacing done last year was of little help. There has also been no formal plan to designate funds in the reserves for these projects. How do you plan to initiate funding these projects and changing the funding structure as you all have had opportunities to do so in the past?**

**Sue Callaway:**

I have always believed our beaches and unique canals are our Town's greatest and most precious assets. They are what distinguishes us from other Delaware coastal towns. Raising taxes to fund these endeavors however, is not in my game plan. With clear fiscal responsibility and *real* transparency I do think that our funds should be re-aligned and secured to support these areas. For example, this year we wasted over \$109,000 in legal fees on police issues that with proper leadership could and should have been resolved way before it reached this outrageous level - perhaps even over a cup of coffee at McCabes. We should have been willing to put aside our differences and resolve the disagreements. These are taxpayer dollars that could have been channeled into beach access, canal water quality, or road repairs. Having served on the Water Quality Committee for 7 years, I certainly appreciate the impact the canals' water quality has on our *entire* community just as our beaches do on our *entire* community. We need to carefully weigh the merits of new ideas and thoroughly evaluate their *Return on Investment* before proceeding. With structured planning, we can better prepare the Town to fund future major initiatives.

**Tim Shaw:**

The town has, in the past, established some reserve funds into which monies have been accumulated for the purpose of covering foreseeable capital expenses such as replacement of police vehicles and town hall office equipment. But, the town does not currently have any financial approach for funding major efforts such as canal dredging and infrastructure modifications for flood resilience (e.g. elevating power transformers, redirecting flood waters, etc.) or major road repairs. The town receives a small amount of state money for road maintenance each year, but those funds are barely sufficient for essential repairs. The existing funds are structured to handle 'normal' and easily planned-for capital expenses, but they are not adequate to finance major expenses of the multi-million dollar variety. Unless we want to hit all of our owners with a large fee every time a major project needs to be funded we need a different approach. In my answer to the prior question I mentioned the use of municipal bonds as a funding strategy. This is essentially borrowing money and paying it back over an extended time-frame (i.e. 10 years.) This makes the annual cost to each owner a small, easily managed amount. With a bond issue it would be possible to fund multi-million dollar efforts. And of course, wherever possible the town needs to seek matching funds and grants, at the state and federal level, to help defray the cost to the town and home owners.

**Don Boteler:**

I would recommend a series of joint meetings of the Budget and Finance Committee and the Planning Commission for the purpose of driving consensus on how best to allocate existing reserves to the top three or four long term capital expenditures. With solid community input, such an exercise might yield recommendations fit for swift Council action. These amounts

would be the “seed money” that could be preserved and grown on a schedule that matches resources and needs. This is easy to say but very difficult to do. It will require a serious commitment to cost containment and control necessary to generate the annual operating surpluses necessary to build the needed reserves. Also needed is a continued search for new efficiencies in day-to-day operations. Along with a constant focus on cost control and efficiency, we also need a continuous focus on opportunities to grow revenues, short of increasing taxes.

**Wayne Schrader:**

We need to convene a series of meetings that first attempt to liquidate or place a defensible value on the cost of each of the referenced projects or public works. These projects may well be enormously costly or expensive. We need to be in a position to tell our citizens the hard news and be able to explain how we arrived at the values we are going to seek to fund, perhaps. This same exercise can also explore and propose to citizens a range of options that might be employed to fund the projects.

**Q3: Since you all are accomplished individuals and have been asked about your skill sets before, what is the ONE important unique talent you have that our TC cannot be without?**

**Sue Callaway:**

Every current and former Council member has their own set of unique talents and what makes the Council work is that collection of talents, skills and viewpoints. We agree at times, and often disagree. What we need now between the Council and Mayor is more upfront *real* transparency and better fiscal responsibility.

I am an enthusiastic, energetic, responsive and straight forward individual who has demonstrated dedication to the Town and the ability to stand up and speak even when the tide is against me. We need that kind of balance and openness. I am task-oriented and am willing to give the time to convert an idea into reality. I have the ability to work with all kinds of people and to draw people together when working on an initiative or project or when dealing with challenging issues. I love South Bethany. I decided 10 years ago when we made this town our permanent home, that I wanted to spend my time making South Bethany even better. If elected again, I will continue to commit to working whole-heartedly on town issues.

**Tim Shaw:**

I am an engineer and scientist with a solid background in business management. This means that I approach problems in a systematic and well-researched manner and I always attempt to look at all possibilities for the optimal solution. I always try to ensure that the council considers all aspects, consequences and implications of our actions.

**Don Boteler:**

This town is filled with people who possess extraordinary capabilities and impressive backgrounds, including my colleagues on the Town Council. In that regard, I am unable to distinguish myself, with the possible exception of my basic human nature. I start each day with the premise that people generally act in good faith and for good purposes, and thus I do not question what is in anyone's heart, but only consider their words and deeds. I like to maintain an even temperament and contribute to a lowering of the emotional level and tone on those inevitable occasions when the heat of the debate rises unduly and threatens to impair reason and judgment, and produce suboptimal outcomes.

**Wayne Schrader:**

Perhaps my skills in conflict resolution, legal analysis, and advocacy. Also, while it is not a skill as such, I also bring the perspective of a part time resident in a context where all other members of government are full-time residents.

**Q4:**

- **What are the key issues facing South Bethany today? List at least 2.**
- **What are the key issues facing South Bethany tomorrow? List at least 2.**
- **How will your service ensure us that South Bethany moves forward on those issues?**

**Sue Callaway:**

The two overriding current and future key issues will always be the health and well-being of our beaches and canals. They trump other issues because without these assets our town ceases to be what it is today. We also have to pay attention to current Town issues that impact the smooth operation of our Town government. 1) We need to allow our highly qualified Town employees and police officers to do their jobs and carry out their responsibilities. We don't need micromanagement by the Mayor and/or Council. Council's role is to provide fiscal oversight, direction and leadership as appropriate and as elected to do. 2) We need to create an atmosphere within our government that fosters *real* transparency and collaboration among Mayor, Town Councilmembers, Town employees and South Bethany property owners. My past actions have shown that I have encouraged transparency and openness on such government issues. Often harder than others have liked. If re-elected, I will continue to promote a *real* transparent environment.

*Looking Ahead?* Focusing on a solid financial future for the Town and on issues that promote a sound future for the Town's beaches, canals, infrastructure and enhancement. The Town has 3 main revenue sources: 1) property taxes; 2) rental income; and 3) transfer taxes. To keep #1 stable we need to create an environments that stimulates #2 and #3 - making South Bethany a place that people want to live in, buy homes in and visit every year. If we do 1, 2, and 3, we will also continue to offer *all* homeowners an enriched quality of life. A property owner told me just last week, "South Bethany is my happy place!" My past service to our Town shows that I will continue to move forward and work to make this a positive place to be!

**Tim Shaw:**

- Cleaning up our canals and dredging our canals and waterways to keep them navigable and appealing to owners and visitors.
- Repairing the worst of our streets to maintain their safety and usability for vehicle, bike and pedestrian traffic.
- Getting beach and dune restoration completed and restoring the dune grass and pedestrian crossovers. (And possibly looking into a better approach than the mobility-matts.)
- Continuing efforts to eliminate on-going pollution of our canals which exacerbates the annual algae-bloom problem.
- Completing badly-needed improvements to our police department building to address identified potential legal liabilities.

Over the past two years, in my first term on the council, I have made a point of getting involved with local, state and federal agencies and organizations such as ACT, SCAT,

DNREC, The Corps of Engineers, ASBPA and the CIB. I also took a short-course on “Coastal Engineering” so that I could better understand the issues and to learn the terminology. In my first year on council I went to Washington, DC (as part of an ASBPA conference) to speak with and lobby our congressional members about getting our overdue beach replenishment back on track. I am going to continue to work within ACT to put pressure on state representatives to get funding for our flood mitigation projects, since those projects are common to all of the coastal communities. I will continue to work within ASBPA to pursue federal and state support for the major projects the town, and region, need to survive. I live full-time on Ocean drive and so the dune and beach are near and dear to my heart (literally and figuratively), but I will always represent the interests of the entire town and I will continue to look outside the town for solutions to our biggest problems.

Some of the challenges listed above will continue well into the future, but in my response to this specific question I want to address the longer-term.

The future of our town is in jeopardy due to the effects of climate change. As I mentioned in my first answer, we are seeing ever more severe and frequent flooding during Winter and Summer storm events and nothing indicates that this will get anything but worse over time. This impacts the desirability of the town as a tourist destination, takes a toll on our infrastructure and has a negative impact on home values, not to mention insurance costs.

The town, by itself, can do some things to mitigate the impact of flooding. We have already permitted an increase in freeboard for homes and we have funded some limited studies to assess the town infrastructure that will be most impacted by flooding events. But, we need to move forward and develop an action plan and then begin implementation of that plan. Such a plan must include seeking collaboration with, and assistance from, county, state and federal entities because some essential efforts will be way beyond the means of our town, or even the state itself. Tony Pratt, formerly of DNREC, has suggested that the ultimate solution to bay-side flooding is the construction of sea-gates, such as are used in London and Amsterdam, at the Ocean City and Indian River inlets. That can only happen with federal involvement and funding.

Ocean side flooding is abated by our sacrificial dune, but that dune needs to be rebuilt periodically after Winter storms have taken their toll. Part of the same three-year replenishment program is the beach ‘nourishment’ that keeps our beach attractive to our owners and seasonal visitors. Although it doesn’t currently, the deal with the Corps of Engineers and DNREC may eventually require that the town pay some share of the cost for rebuilding and replenishment. The Town council needs to create a revenue plan so that we have the funds to contribute for that rebuilding and nourishment program and I will work within the Town council to find creative ways to generate and accumulate the necessary funds.

**Don Boteler:**

One key issue is the need to fully and effectively implement the policy and organizational reforms of our Police Department, including the charter change that places supervision of the department under the Town Manager. I will work to ensure that the Council continues to provide the necessary oversight and assistance to promote a smooth transition.

Other key issues include improved canal water quality, improved beach access, remediation of nuisance flooding, and completion of street maintenance work. See my answer to Question 2



for ideas on how best to prioritize and tackle these problems and how to build the financial capability to address them.

One last issue I'll mention is that the Town is in the process of transitioning to a new independent audit firm to conduct the required annual audit of the Town's financial statements. I will be working closely with Renee McDorman, the Town's Finance Director, to ensure a smooth transition. This type of change promises to generate some fresh input on our financial system, policies and processes. We have recently strengthened several internal controls based on auditor recommendations and we look forward to receiving additional constructive suggestions from our new provider.

**Wayne Schrader:**

The key issues include the health and aesthetic problems posed by poor water quality, the cost and funding of various public works including beach replenishment and maintenance as well as roadwork. The key issues also include the the need to establish better relationships between the town government and the police department. It is absolutely unacceptable for there to be any ill feeling between the town or its government and its police force. We need to work together as a more collegial and professional Group.