



## **2007 Fry's Spring Neighborhood City Council Candidate Forum September 20, 2007**

The Fry's Spring Neighborhood Association sponsored a City Council Candidate Forum on September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2007. The five candidates for three seats took questions on a range of issues concerning the neighborhood, including whether City neighborhoods should be protected from growth in Albemarle County, how traffic on Old Lynchburg Road could be calmed or stopped as well as other issues pertinent to the whole City of Charlottesville. The moderator is John Santoski, President of the Fry's Spring Neighborhood Association.

*The **audio** and **video** is available online on the Charlottesville Tomorrow Weblog*  
[http://cvilletomorrow.typepad.com/charlottesville\\_tomorrow\\_/2007/09/frysspringforum.html](http://cvilletomorrow.typepad.com/charlottesville_tomorrow_/2007/09/frysspringforum.html)

*Complete election coverage is available on the Charlottesville Tomorrow website*  
<http://action.cvilletomorrow.org/cvilleaction/elections.html>

### **INTRODUCTION**

**John Santoski:** Good evening. If I could get everybody's attention, thank you very much. I think we're ready to go here. Well, welcome to the City Council Candidate's Forum being sponsored by the Fry's Spring Neighborhood Association. I'm John Santoski and I'm the neighborhood president and I'll be the moderator for tonight's forum.

Before we start, a couple of things. I guess more housekeeping. First of all, I'd like to thank Peggy King from the Neighborhood Association for her hard work in pulling this all together for us and also the Fry's Spring Beach Club for allowing us to use this nice old building to hold the forum in and just to kind of let you know what we have planned for tonight is that as we go through we'll be taking a break maybe about half way through because I think Sean asked that they need to swap out some equipment at that point, so we'll be taking about a 5- or 10-minute break along the way, but it is informal. If you need to get up and use the restrooms around the corner or whatever else, feel free to do that and the one thing I will ask is that as you're asking your questions, remember to please be respectful and cordial. We do have some limits of about 30 seconds on asking your questions, so we ask you to be brief and concise when you're asking it and we're also asking that we would like to take as many as questions from as many people so that we can we're not going to be allowing second questions until we

kind of rotate through all the questions that people have asked first, so if you'll bear with us on that.

Let me introduce to you the candidates that we have here tonight for City Council. Alphabetic in order, David Brown and Holly Edwards, Barbara Haskins, Satyendra Huja and Peter Kleeman and what we're going to do is we're going to give each of them two minutes to tell you a little bit about who they are and why they're running for Council and then we'll get into some of the questions. We had one question that we sent to all the candidates ahead of time that we asked them to respond to and then after that, we'll be taking questions from the floor, so how about Holly, I'll start with you on the left and we'll just work our way down.

## **OPENING STATEMENTS**

**Holly Edwards (D):** Good evening. I moved to Charlottesville in 1991 to get experience as a nurse at UVA. I had every intention of staying one year, but it was through the caring and advocacy of my patients that I got involved with the community. That evolved into a desire to provide outreach, continued advocacy and provide leadership for many voices that often go unheard. I plan to give voice to issues that are entangled with housing, education, and health care, and I believe that I can be effective because of my experience of providing credible leadership in the community and also I believe I can be effective because I do have a desire to move my commitment of public service and community service to a new level and a different level by serving the community as a City Councilor. Thank you.

**John Santoski:** Mr. Kleeman—

**Peter Kleeman (I):** Good evening. I'm Peter Kleeman and I'm a long-time Charlottesville resident. I've been here about 26 years and most recently, the last 10 years or 11 years, I've been quite active as a citizen involved with planning issues and environment and transportation issues and a fixture at many of the meetings of the City Council, the Planning Commission and Board of Architectural Review and I've sat on the Metropolitan Planning Organization. And in my quest to make Charlottesville a leadership community in many of these areas of interest to me, I've along these years tried to become involved with the decision-making process and looking at alternative ways of meeting our community's goals and I guess I felt some frustration in not being able to get the information I needed and get my voice heard at the right tables and to get the ideas that I think are valuable to bring forward on the table and so I've decided that rather than waiting in the wings and trying, I would step forward and recognize the fact that if Charlottesville is going to be a leadership community, it's going to need some leadership and I am an Independent candidate.

I'm an independent thinker and I'm always proud to come in with an idea that says let's just broaden our thinking. Let's think about where we're headed and

find a better way to get there, so I have put myself up as a candidate and I have some material which I unfortunately did not put on your seats. I'll do that at the break, and I hope you will consider that we are at a critical point in the history of Charlottesville and we need to pick a path that will be sensitive to the needs of the community as well as the changes in our economy and the demands for growth, so I welcome any questions that you might bring in those and other areas and thank you very much.

**John Santoski:** Thank you. David—

**David Brown (D):** I'm David Brown. Many of you may know I was elected to City Council in 2004 and I've had the privilege of being the Mayor during that time. One of the first things we did when I was elected to City Council was we changed the election from being a May election to a November election, so instead of having this race occur next May, May 2008, it's occurring now and we did it for several reasons. We did it because it saves about \$35,000 each time not to have a stand-alone election. We did it because we'll have larger turnout. We'll have more people that we hopefully can get to pay attention to the City Council issues in the City race, but what we didn't think about was the fact how it would play out with the City and the County Board of Supervisors having their elections at the same time.

Campaigns are a great opportunity for issues to be explored, for citizens to voice their concerns, for people to really talk about the direction the City needs to go, what are the problems, what's going well, what needs to change and I think it's a really interesting opportunity to have this discussion not simply be about the City, but to be a discussion that can occur with the same discussion occurring in the County at the same time because if there's any audience I don't have to remind that the issues between the City and County are very intertwined.

Last year we had sort of an amazing thing happen which was the IMPACT Group forming and congregations around the City coming together and addressing common issues, but one of the things I didn't agree with that IMPACT did is Impact asked the City for millions of dollars and they didn't ask the County for anything. They asked the County to form a committee to study it and I think that's wrong because I think that our issues are intertwined.

Affordable housing is not just a City issue. Growth is not just a County issue. I feel as a City and a County we've made some strides to try to understand each other and work together, but we're going to have a relationship with Albemarle County and the better that relationship can be, the more understanding there is and the more we can work together, the better off the entire community will be.

**Barbara Haskins (I):** Hi, I'm Barbara Haskins. I'm running for City Council because last spring the City budget cycle was mesmerizingly appalling. I just— I mean, I've lived here since 1981 and always in the City and, you know, budgets

come and go and you kind of pay attention and stop, but this year I couldn't stop paying attention because things just kept on not making sense to me and the number one thing that really caught my attention was the million dollar set-aside for the new ambulance program that didn't really dovetail with CARS [Charlottesville-Albemarle Rescue Squad] at all so I just started paying more and more attention and I just kept thinking this isn't making sense to me and since then I've spent a lot of time looking at how the City finances itself and takes our money and taxes to do that and the more I've looked at this, the more it feels like it's really a non-sustainable trajectory for the way we do this and as you know, in the City, there's a very limited base for financial revenue to come from. There's some commercial and a lot from homeowners and in the last five to six years, real estate assessments have been double-digit every year and pretty much City Council has taken all that money.

Even in years when we had a \$9 million budget [surplus] our taxes went up again the following year, so besides just feeling that that was intemperate spending, if you look at it, the question becomes how does the City keep going forward with this kind of a structure of relying so heavily on homeowners to finance all the costs of the City? We pay a third more than County taxpayers and so I really—

My hope for my candidacy is that people really start thinking as we've heard some of these things, it's like how are we doing things here. Does it make sense to continue to do them this way or do we need some big changes and if you look at how the City maintains itself as the City fiscally, the issues become town reversion, merger of services with the County at multiple levels or changing the annexation agreement, but I just think that if we keep going this way of leaning heavily on homeowners, it's going to become just impossible for anyone with a fixed amount of money coming in every month to continue to afford their homes.

**Satyendra Huja (D):** Thank you for this opportunity to be here. I've been here a few times before. I'm a resident of this community for the last 34 years; 31 of those as Director of Planning and Director of Strategic Planning for the City and I retired in 2004, but I'm not retired from life, so I'm selective and as part of being active is to being of service to the community.

In my 31 years with the City, I was involved in a lot of things. Many of you probably know, but I will repeat a few of those. I was involved in the Downtown Mall development, trails, housing, neighborhood revitalization, Meals on Wheels, and many other things, but I'm not looking at the past. I'm looking at the future, how we can make this community an even better community and I'm involved in still many activities but if I was to be fortunate enough to be elected to Council, there are four or five areas that I would specially make special emphasis on.

First is protection of neighborhoods. The building blocks of our community, my definition of a good neighborhood is where I would love to live myself and like to

bring up my children and mind you, I'm not going to have any more children. I already got two.

Other areas which interest me is the preservation and enhancement of the environment, more trees, more energy conservation, sustainable development, water quality. [The] third issue which interests me is transportation. I would love to see our transit system be a better transit system, more frequent, direct and dependable, a better bike system. I also would like to work on affordable housing but I agree with David that it is a regional issue. I mean, you need to work on a regional basis for affordable housing and last but not least, the quality of education for each child. Each child needs to be challenged to fulfill their potential.

I believe that I can make some difference in the community and if I have the opportunity, I'll try to serve my best.

## QUESTIONS

**John Santoski:** Well, thank you. We'll go ahead and get started now. Just a couple of things. Remember, you only have 30 seconds to ask your question so, again, be brief and concise and the candidates will have a minute to respond. We have the prepared question, that's right. I'm jumping ahead of myself. Let me ask the first question but just to get back to it for a second, when you do ask your questions, it's a 30-second time for asking your question. The candidates will have a minute to respond at that point, and it just reminded when Peggy rang the bell, we will be ringing the bell when the time is up and give the candidates a chance to finish their thought and then we'll move on from that point, so to the first question that was sent to the candidates. The question was **what two issues do you believe are of particular importance to the residents of Fry's Spring, and if elected, what specific steps would you take to address them?** How about if we start with Mayor Brown here and we'll work our way back.

**David Brown (D):** Well, you know, different parts of the City have different issues. Some neighborhoods have issues with encroachment from Albemarle County's growth. Some neighborhoods have issues with traffic and speeding and cut-through traffic. Some with aging infrastructure such as bridges, some with losing the natural environment to development, some with drainage issues, pedestrian bike safety issues, encroachment from the University of Virginia, but no other neighborhood has the complete package that Fry's Spring neighborhood does.

This is a neighborhood that's under a tremendous amount of stress and so to narrow which issues are most important is difficult but I'll name two. I think the first one is encroachment from Albemarle County. I think Ms. Chase has been gracious enough to invite me on her tour to see all of the developments that are just over the line on the other side of Sunset and out on Old Lynchburg Road and

I think the solution to that is that we have to have a connector. There has to be a connector between Sunset and Fontaine and we have to work earnestly to make that happen.

The second thing I believe that is just a critical issue is pedestrian and bike safety and in particular, pedestrian bike safety and on Old Lynchburg Road because it's a narrow road and I sat in Ms. Chase's driveway the other morning and saw numerous people either walking or bicycling up the very narrow part and I think we need to deal with that.

Hopefully we can deal with it by better traffic enforcement to cut down the speeding, by putting money into the improvements on Old Lynchburg Road. That process is underway but, in particular, it has to have sidewalks and I really like the plan that the Alliance for Community Choice & Transportation came up with to deal with the bicycle issue by seeing if we can't have bicyclists come into Azalea Park, go up a trail and connect onto Monte Vista Avenue so that we wouldn't— because otherwise if you try to think of how you can put bike lanes onto Old Lynchburg Road where it's so narrow to begin with, you really end up with some serious issues.

**Barbara Haskins (I):** I would say two important areas that you would expect something from me. One would be property tax relief. I think that the tax rate—I think the amount people are paying needs to be flat and, globally, there need to be a lot of discussions about how we choose to spend money and how much we want to choose to spend and it's a complicated subject that I'm not trying to cover in two minutes.

The other thing I would say is that I know you all have won a prize as being the best neighborhood association and as I thought about that, I inferred that there's sort of a seamy underside to that as it were because it sounds as if you all have had to become a shadow government and take on a lot of governmental functions in terms of monitoring development, roads, planning, infrastructure and advocacy and my sense of things is that this has left you somewhat skeptical and paranoid about what you can expect from City Hall and City Council and it's one thing to be that way. What do you do about it?

And it seems to me that major players in City Hall need to have a change in how they are rated annually on their performance. I work in a state bureaucracy and people were dragged kicking and screaming into this idea where you actually ask the customers of an individual how did they do. And obviously if you take someone like Mr. Tolbert, he has customers in City Hall with whom he interfaces but every neighborhood association is also his customer and you need to need to change the process— we need to change it so that neighborhood association opinions matter for his performance evaluations and matter for the goals that are set for his performance the following year.

It gets more interesting when you get to City Manager because the City Manager is evaluated by City Council. City Council is not a manager [or] a supervisor. It's a group of five people that are not well positioned to do that well and, again, the way the City Manager is evaluated and coached on performance needs to also change, again, looking for internal and external customers because otherwise every neighborhood association in the City can sit around and complain about things or praise them, it doesn't matter, but nothing will be done differently so I'm talking about sort of structural change, and that's 2, so I'll stop.

**Satyendra Huja (D):** There are many needs in your neighborhood, and at least eight of them I saw on your website, major projects or concerns and I have visited almost all of them thanks to Mrs. Chase who took me around and I think you should be deciding what is most important in your neighborhood and not City Council or the City. I think you can tell what is the most important, but if I had to pick two, there're two things which I think are important.

First, is the replacement of the JPA Bridge, because I think it's not safe. It is a hazardous situation and I think it will— I would support a narrower version of the bridge as you have suggested by the neighborhood because I don't think you need 80-plus-foot wide bridge on that place. This is one thing which I think could be done and these are important concerns in this neighborhood.

Second is improved safety and drainage on Old Lynchburg Road which David mentioned and I would deal with it in four different ways. First, there ought to be a sidewalk on one side at least, the house's side; I think it's the west side, so people can walk safely on that. We also need to improve drainage on Old Lynchburg Road because from all the way from JPA to the City line it's affects on this road.

Two, there're other things which impact on Old Lynchburg Road I think have also been mentioned. One is that I would encourage and assist that the County build the Sunset/Fontaine Connector because I think that will help in your safety on Old Lynchburg Road, but also ask [the County] to provide some viable transit alternatives to people who live south of town so they don't have use their cars, so those things— Those are two areas which I think could be worked on.

**John Santoski:** Thank you. Mr. Kleeman—

**Peter Kleeman (I):** I agree with Mayor Brown. You have more than two issues that could clearly be identified but I would like to focus not so much on the issues or the details but on sort of a strategic idea about what I would suggest could make some of the solutions available to this neighborhood as well as other neighborhoods in the City and to get the City to work more in concert with the neighborhoods.

First of all, growth is the biggest pressure, I think here as well as in other neighborhoods in the City. Unfortunately, here you're kind of on the edge and the people who are encroaching on you are not in Charlottesville. This is with the County, so my feeling is that things the City can do, besides working closely with the County, is to really identify what the growth potentials are in our City, and what the desirable growth is within our City.

You're as well aware as I am of limitations of water resources in our region, sewage capacity, transportation corridor capacity, school issues come and go, but there's major infrastructure issues that we do not deal with directly. I would suggest for the City's role in solving some of these problems is doing an inventory of what sort of capacity do we have, what is it going to cost us to expand that capacity, under what circumstances is it worth making those investments. Do we really want to expend those kinds of capital dollars to bring more people into some neighborhoods that if we can't improve all of the infrastructure, we're just going to be asking for new problems in new areas, so I feel it's just a matter of inventorying that the City has as its potentials and then making sure that's built into the zoning of the various parts of the City, what our Comprehensive Plan which is developed in conjunction with the neighborhoods and at least part in conjunction with the neighborhoods, but we would actually have a plan for getting from where we are today to where we want to be without overburdening any particular neighborhood or any particular area of infrastructure. How does this happen?

The second issue I think that really is of concern is communication among neighborhoods and the City. I'm a member of the North Downtown neighborhood, and I know that neighborhood, as this neighborhood, has difficulty communicating their ideas to staff, to Councilors. Just being part of the decision, being at the table from beginning of a concern whether it's a development project, transportation project, environmental issues, stream protection issue, as a Councilor, I would certainly encourage all my colleagues to ask that any of the interested stakeholders in a community are invited to participate, from day zero of the project, that they get on the mailing lists, they get all the data and they can provide the input that they need to help solve the problems locally as well as globally. Thank you.

**John Santoski:** Holly—

**Holly Edwards (D):** The neighborhood has inherited issues that have been bequeathed to them by the County. The two issues that are most important— traffic volume and speed, and the Sunset-Fontaine Connector. What I'd like to provide regarding neighborhood issues I have labeled the three E's: E1—ears. Actually listen to the concerns and encourage a process that allows transparent government and liaison between the City, staff and the community. I support the idea of having a person in that role. E2—equity. Everyone everywhere has the same merit and value. The entire City is no better than the poorest

neighborhood. Everyone's voice has merit and value. And E3—evaluation. Is what being planned being implemented in a timely fashion and, most importantly, is there follow-up and is their plan working. My three Es—ears, equity, evaluation.

**John Santoski:** Okay. Thank you. We're going to go ahead and open up the questions to the floor at this point and you can direct your question to one candidate if you so choose. We will allow the others to also answer if they would like to or you can direct your question to all of the candidates and we'll just let each one in turn take your question, so do we have any questions coming. Mr. King, right here.

## **AUDIENCE QUESTIONS**

**Audience Question 1:** My name is James King and I've been [watching] the City for a long time doing planning and I notice on the website there's a thing called the Strategic Vision 2025 and I'm sure you all have...committed this Vision to memory and you know how you want to implement it or how you want to change it. I'd like to know from each candidate, I want a response from each one, whether you think the vision is adequate with respect to protecting and improving residential neighborhoods, not commercial or industrial neighborhoods, but residential neighborhoods, and making sure that the traffic is separated in corridors and arteries and never cuts-through, therefore that always will come, for example, in our neighborhood only through Fontaine Avenue and 5<sup>th</sup> Street and never through Old Lynchburg Road or Sunset Avenue or Stribling Avenue. **I'd like a response from each person—how you will make sure that given the 2030 Vision which you'll be asked to vote on, this protection of the neighborhoods will be implemented.**

**John Santoski:** Anybody want to tackle that first? Mr. Kleeman—

**Peter Kleeman (I):** I have read the Strategic Plan or I guess it's the Council Vision is what is 2030 and then there is appended to that a strategic plan and I share some of Mr. King's concerns about the long-range plan and I believe that they're in general terms and I think they are laudable, the goals are hard to say they're bad ideas. The question is how do we achieve them and in the Strategic Plan that's pinned to this vision, it's a very short-range plan and if you look at that plan in detail, you'll see that most of the dates and the target activities are things that are happening now or next year, so we have a one-year incremental strategic plan to reach a 25-year vision. I think that's a mismatch and one of my feelings is that we as a community need to get together and not say that we have this very long-range plan and we're going to evaluate getting there by where we are today and where we're going to be tomorrow. We need to have intermediate goals.

I think just as Mr. King has pointed out, we need to say if we're going to grow, how are we going to protect certain neighborhoods from becoming the conduits for a flow between where people are going to live and where they're going to work and where they're going to shop and we need to have more strategic ideas about where we're going to be starting in 2007, where we're going to be in 2012, where we're going to be in 2017, where we're going to be in 2020-whatever, before we reach 2030. We just don't have the ability to leap from now into the future, and I think that's what's necessary.

**John Santoski:** Ms. Edwards—

**Holly Edwards (D):** I decided to frame the preservation of neighborhoods through the eyes of my children. I have two sets of twins, so when I look around the neighborhoods and I think about the plans, I want them to be able to say, "Mommy, I want to go outside and play" and if I'm in a neighborhood and they can say, "I just want to go outside and play," is it a neighborhood that's safe. Is there grass for them to play in? Will they really have enough dirt to make mud pies? Is there too much traffic that they can't ride their bikes, so when I think about the 2025 Vision, I'm accountable to the little people that are calling me Mommy now, so as I think about that, that's how I'm framing the ideas for the future.

**John Santoski:** Thank you. Mr. Huja—

**Satyendra Huja (D):** I have looked at the Strategic Plan. I haven't memorized it yet, but there are some traffic problems for the City, not only here, not only on Old Lynchburg Road but many other places and there are solutions to some of those problems. Unfortunately, there are not solutions to every problem. I wish I could say that there was one, at least a viable solution.

A few years back I recommended to City Council to close Sunset and I was not sorry to do that because there was no other option. It was in my mind the last option to do when we close up the streets, so what happens when you do close up the streets, they go from one street to another street, to other neighborhoods and impact another neighborhood also, so we need to channel our traffic on the major arteries, the major collector streets and minimize, through traffic calming, through providing adequate streets or collector streets. I think those are things which we can do, but I think I would work with those things, but I'm not sure I can change it all so quickly.

**Audience Question:** I should be optimistic on that, but I'm not.

**Barbara Haskins (I):** I guess what I would say is I become concerned when I hear words like never and always and forever and things because it's very hard to endorse absolutes and I try not to go down those pathways and I had read that plan and it's 50-some-odd pages and it's interesting to sit here and think, gee,

what was the part about neighborhood streets, so I'm not so sure how much that's memory or the things that interested me versus the under-emphasis of it in that plan. I can tell you a lot of parts but not that part.

Again, these are complex problems and my biggest theme I think which you'll hear over and over from me is, does it make sense to be the City? A lot of these issues are about the County and County development, and does it make sense for us to remain a discrete political entity? And railing at things or trying to work cooperatively with people on the other side of a political boundary and how far can you go with that. You can do—

We can talk about micro solutions about traffic calming, as you mentioned, with speed bumps. I have them where I live. They seem to work. They narrowed things on Park Street, but consumers are— Drivers, in this case, always are expedient and barring a closed street, people will choose the route that makes sense to them so unless there're alternatives, they're going to continue to take things like Old Lynchburg Road and that's just the way it is and we can't force at this point the County to do anything. All those developments were put in place without connector roads and when you go to the developments, what you hear about is cul-de-sacs are bad and that you need multiple cut-throughs to decrease condensation of traffic so you're sort of promoting the opposite points of view and I think they both have upsides and downsides.

**David Brown (D):** Well, I participating in creating the Vision Statement, the 2025 Vision Statement, and it was at a City Council retreat and it was really an effort for us to really think in different categories what would be an ideal city in 2025 and I'm pretty comfortable with the statement that came out, both about neighborhoods and about having a green city and having educational opportunities. The Strategic Plan part is the part of trying to identify steps to get there and that is a work in progress and it's going to be a work in progress because— And I think Peter made some good points, you know, you can't suddenly say these are exactly the steps we're going to take to try to get there.

I think the bigger question being asked really is about safety and quality of life on streets as more and more streets are subject to cut-through traffic and on City Council, the Greenbrier neighborhood is very alarmed by the amount of cut-through traffic that's now going between Rio Road through their neighborhood to get to the Bypass because people are avoiding 29. People who live in the Meadows neighborhood are very alarmed about cut-through traffic. We can name a lot of places, and in fact, I kind of thought maybe I should challenge this audience and say how many people here don't have a favorite little cut-through that when traffic's backed up, you can just drive over here and cut left and turn right and now you're where you want to go because that's the nature of people because we're congested, so the bigger picture is to have efficient transit that takes people off the roads and to have roads that connect to places people want to go.

**John Santoski:** Thank you. All right, another question. This gentleman right here.

**Audience Question 2:** Yes. My name is Larry Jones and I live on Middleton Lane right at the corner of Lynchburg and Middleton Lane. The counters were up there today and they counted traffic for 24 hours. There were 4,200 cars coming through there within 24-hours. Within one hour's time, there was a man was standing there watching and counting the traffic at 104 cars going through the stop sign in one hour and the main thing I want to know what you all plan to do if we can't stop 4,200 cars coming there in one hour, what are we going to do when this thing becomes full-blown and fully developed and all the condos [and everything] out there and people living in them. We've got 4,200 cars now and they haven't been begin to fill up out there and I've heard a lot of back and forth, you know, and I want to know what each and every one of you are going to do because that is a major concern. Albemarle County uses that road there for their trash trucks, their police cars come up and down that road. We have four or five trucks coming up and down the road delivering to people from all the condos from all over the place down there. I want to know what you're going to do. If you lived on that corner, you would be as aggravated as I am.

**John Santoski:** Thank you. We'll go ahead and give them a chance to respond. Ms. Haskins, why don't we let you start first this time?

**Barbara Haskins (I):** I don't even know what it would be like to live on that corner. It sounds consistently horrible.

**Audience Question:** It is.

**Barbara Haskins (I):** You know, a while back, the City— And again, this is a problem. What do we do about the County short of closing the road and scooting people elsewhere? There's only so much that can happen under our control. At the County thing last week we attended, the County talked about how there just isn't money for the roads, so the connector is a fabulous thing, but who makes the money appear for that connector road that would take some of the traffic off? We don't control that at all. I know a while back the City voted to really make Old Lynchburg Road one of the places where the traffic fine is unbelievable for speeding. I haven't heard of anyone getting tickets on that road since they passed that and you could probably do something very similar with the stop signs but all that would do make you less furious as you watch the 4,000 cars go by not running the stop sign. I don't know if you need some short-term solutions like speed bumps and the last thing I've I wondered, I am not a traffic engineer—trust me on this—but I wonder if Old Lynchburg Road were one-way if that would force people to think much harder about the routes they're taking? It's a total inconvenience for you all and I understand that, but you're already completely inconvenienced, so I don't know.

**Satyendra Huja (D):** I was standing with you the other day when I came to visit Mrs. Chase and we saw all the cars going through there. I can understand your concern and things are not hopeless. I think if there is some traffic calming, is there a connecting road, maybe less traffic, but also with fines, additional fines that have been made, that may help. I don't know if this—the alarms say the new technology of cameras at intersections, is it allowed?

**John Santoski:** At red lights.

**Satyendra Huja (D):** At red lights. Okay. Not at stop signs. So, anyway, there are things which can be done but especially mostly in traffic calming or reducing or slowing down the traffic. That's all you can do. I don't think you can change the number unless the connector road is built or the transit idea is used.

**David Brown (D):** I mean, we have issues with traffic in a lot of parts of town. I mean, Old Lynchburg Road is certainly one of them. Park Street is one. Locust Street is one, you know, increasing some of the Greenbrier neighborhood streets are one. One of the things we need, a common denominator is, we need better enforcement of our traffic laws and in order to get better enforcement, we need a fully staffed police department and we don't have a fully staffed police department. Almost nobody has a fully-staffed police department because the pool of trained police officers— The pool of people of young men and young men who want to become law enforcement officers has declined—

**Audience Comment:** They're in Iraq now.

**David Brown (D):** And they're in Iraq now. I mean, they're making a lot of money being in Iraq now, so we have to find ways— One of the things I think we need to do and I supported it last year and I think we need to do it again this year, is find more ways to make our police department attractive, more attractive than its competitors, so that we can be fully staffed and we can put more enforcement out there to enforce our laws.

I agree with a lot of the solutions that Mr. Huja suggested. I think the big solution, and it's one I believe we can do, is a connection between Sunset and Fontaine and I think everyone's in agreement we need it. We just need to have the political will to do that. I think it may take some genuine cooperation. I believe in order to make that road work, we'll need to have the City and the County come together and create a transportation district so we can create our own stream of revenue in order that we can issue our own bonds because if we wait for the State to come up with the money to pay for a new road, we'll be waiting for a long time.

**John Santoski:** Thank you.

**Holly Edwards (D):** I know that the County supports the Sunset/Fontaine Connector, but I don't know how much of a priority that is. But I can offer a spirit of consistency to make sure it remains on their radar screen, because that has to happen.

And regarding the stop sign, I echo the sentiments about the police force and how we need to have—I don't know—a nationwide recruitment for police officers. I think that cities everywhere are struggling to have adequate police, but having adequate police to be able to create a culture in the city where running a stop sign is just the wrong thing to do and because we don't have that culture created, it's so easy to run the stop signs.

**Peter Kleeman (I):** I hope you don't mind me standing. I'm much more comfortable. I think what the major issue is really an issue of what direction we as a City are planning to go in. Are we going to be continuously having more and more traffic and more and more intersections of this type? I live on Hedge Street which is a nice shortcut link between Park Street and McIntire Road and I understand what cut-through traffic is about and most of the people who are cutting through don't want to drive through my neighborhood just like they probably do not want to drive by your house. They would rather get where they're going some other way, as I do. I live downtown. I leave my car home. I get most places on foot. I can get there by bus. And we need to provide these same options to these other people who are cutting through neighborhoods because they do not have that choice.

I believe that the essential solution in both the near term and the long term is to get people out of their cars, give them adequate alternatives, the idea of having October as being a free transit month, getting people to understand where buses can take them, how convenient that is. You don't have to worry about putting your car or wondering whether it's two hours up and I've got to go move it and parking it in a garage some place. People will then say if I can live in town, I don't need that extra car. We can then have a much more integrated, active, dynamic society in which we all participate without everybody driving past everybody's intersection. I know that I have probably never driven by your intersection because when I go to this neighborhood, I don't bring my car so it turns out that there are solutions that are both near-term and long-term solutions.

**John Santoski:** Thank you. Another question—

**Audience Question 3: We've just found out that the Rivanna Water & Sewer Authority long-range plan is going to cost \$142 million, so my question—do you agree or disagree and why is the price tag for this plan done all at once is unjust for City residents whose water usage is dropping and if the City imposed dramatic rate hikes, they would be forcing City residents to be paying upfront for 50 years of County development projected to double the population of Albemarle County? The second part**

**of this large question is would you pledge to conduct a thorough, on-the-ground environmental impact study of the 142 acres of City-owned land now designated as the Ragged Mountain Natural Area if that has not been done to this point before releasing the land to be flooded, destroying a majestic forest, wildlife habitat and hiking trails?**

**Barbara Haskins (I):** It's hard to believe this is just one question. I would agree with the first part about it definitely is forcing City residents to pay upfront for 50 years of Albemarle County growth and when we heard the candidates for County offices speaking last week, it's actually— It's not a shell game, but there's a lot of funny business that goes down in terms of developers offering to pay for sewer hook-ups when the development is 80% developed which is so far down the road in a lot of these places and it sort of looks like handing things over to the developers in the County where they're not really coming up with the money when they're still around to come up with the money, you know, they could be disappeared, bankrupt, dissolved by the time some of these payments are due and it's a very, in my mind, not a good way to do it, to just let people off the hook—we'll call you in 20 years for the payment, so, yes, I completely agree that costing it out this way socks it to the City and we have endless boundary issues with the County over solid waste water, whatever.

Then moving onto the second issue. This one I have a philosophical problem with because, again, in this campaign there's a lot of things that, well, who's against affordable housing, who's against majestic forests. Nobody's against any of these things, but there were many many many person hours that went into developing the idea of selecting the place for the reservoir, and so, to second-think it at this point of so many person hours of work, I think is a kind of a habit that we tend to have, and I don't agree with that kind of habit, so philosophically, I do not support rethinking it at this point. I'm still in favor of majestic forests in general, I mean—

**Satyendra Huja (D):** Well, the first part, as you know, the City's projection has not increased in the last 34 years I've been here, maybe about 100 people or something like that, so I see— And the projections for our population growth is not for a great deal more than what we have now. There will be some growth but not too much. I would think that we should pay a very limited part of the \$142 million dollars if at all because the population— Only proportioned to our use, but not [this whole] population, but our use and I think it's the only fair way to do it. I don't see the reason for the City taking the lion's share. It should go to the County. It's their population.

I'm not in a position to tell you about the second part, but I think the plan has been approved and I have— My understanding is that of all the studies, this was the best option there was. I would be interested in seeing that open space which is going to be lost be replaced by other open space, and hopefully in the City or near the City, so that it'll be usable here. For example, I can think of a few little

pieces of land on the flood plain on the Rivanna River; we could buy that land and use that for more usable open space for our residents because I don't know how many people will go to Ragged Mountain from the City to use it. I know some people do, so my preference would be to replace it, the open space, near the City.

**John Santoski:** Mr. Brown—

**David Brown (D):** It is going to cost a lot of money for the water plan and it's true that the City, you know, we're not growing and in fact, our water use has declined, but there are some other factors that can be considered that I think will mean that the City will invest in a part, a small part of that plan. For example, currently, the Ragged Mountain Dam reservoir is filled because it really doesn't collect a whole lot of water on its own because it's narrow basin. It's filled by a pipeline from the Sugar Hollow Reservoir. That pipeline is at the end of its useful life and will need to be replaced. If we did nothing, if we didn't expand the supply, that would need to be replaced. The pipeline between the Observatory Treatment Plant and Ragged Mountain likewise needs to be replaced and, thirdly, there's some— Or, third, there's some diminishing capacity of the South Fork reservoir due to silting and so we're losing— So there's some areas where even if we did nothing we would have to pay some to make improvements.

A final one is that the dam at Ragged Mountain has to be if not replaced, renovated, but we should not pay more than what we would be paying if we did nothing, you know, so we should be paying a proportional cost of those types of expenses but not be paying based on expanding the water supply. Expanding the water supply is going to be Albemarle County's cross to bear. We're going to have our own issues which is the County has growth; we have existing infrastructure that needs to be worked on.

Part number two— I wouldn't want to do anything that would completely slow up the process because we do need to go ahead and get a better water supply for the region. We need to be moving on it I think as this drought points it out.

**John Santoski:** Ms. Edwards—

**Holly Edwards (D):** I liken my run for City Council as a journey and the journey to Ragged Mountain was a new adventure in and of itself. Because I grew in D.C., I'm an urban child so I was just in awe as to how beautiful it is and so I have to say that because of the problems we're having with our water supply and the drought that we're in now, I find it unfortunate that the City has to pay that much, but given the options that I'm sure we could probably explore more studies, but given the time frame, I think it's best to proceed with what we have in mind now. And in terms of any other studies that could be conducted, this is the time to do it so we can better frame everything better for the future.

**John Santoski:** Mr. Kleeman—

**Peter Kleeman (I):** I view this problem as being a leadership issue for the City. The City owns this land which happens to be in the County. The water resources are run by a special purpose government, the Rivanna Water and Sewer Authority. Then there are the County and the City are players because they are associated agencies and so we have many different things happening, different controls, and my feeling is that City Council, we as a board of directors for the City, really have limited capacity to solve that problem totally, but that doesn't mean we can't take assertive action toward changing the way infrastructure is paid for.

My personal feeling is that added capacity needs due to growth need to be subsidized by that growth. The County is wrestling with this now and the City will have to wrestle with it in the future with their contemplating fixed fees per unit of \$17,500 or some number like that. If you want to get a building permit or an occupancy permit, that money must be paid and invested in the infrastructure that's going to be required to support your living in that area, so my feeling is that there are mechanisms that are being just explored now. The numbers that are being generated I think are coming out of the sky or your other favorite location, so the issue is to get together with these various governments and sit down and say how are we going to share the burden of growth. Are we, the residents who've been here for 25, 50 years, the ones to pay that? They should pay a fair share but the burden should be borne by those that are bringing that demand, that exceptionally high demand and cost, to the community.

**John Santoski:** On that note, why don't we get back. We'll start with some questions again and we have this gentleman right here.

**Audience Question 4: My question is do you support changing the mission and the name of the Department of Neighborhood Development to be the Department of Neighborhood Preservation, and do you see the current leadership of Mr. Jim Tolbert as being a positive influence in which ever of these vision do you support?**

**Holly Edwards (D):** I like the idea of changing the name to better encompass the values in the vision that we have for the future of the community and regarding the staffing, I know the staff has worked hard and there've been a lot of struggles I think especially within that department more so than any other and I think that we need to take the time to look at those struggles, evaluate what they are, and make a plan so that things are working well for everyone and to do that consistently.

**Peter Kleeman (I):** The short answer is yes. A more elaborate answer is that I do believe that Neighborhood Development Services is just too large and it encompasses too many elements that are in conflict with each other. For

example, the idea of growing communities where we're developing housing in areas like your neighborhood and other neighborhoods versus the impact of traffic and how traffic should be handled, I think that those are two separate and competing ideas and we need to have people being champions of how do we improve residential opportunities by one part of that department and that's going to have stresses on the transportation network and then there should be other people, independent, under a different hierarchical level that can actually independently say, well, look, that's a great idea but that's going to cause problems in our transportation network, but we are going to have to be able to work out these differences so my feeling right now is to have one head for too many things that the problems just don't get addressed adequately, so my feeling is that not only should the name be changed and that preservation should be a more important component, but I think there should be an other division totally separately led that would relate to the infrastructure issues related to the development and the neighborhood preservation and they certainly do wonderful things managing the Board of Architectural Review and the Planning Commission, etc., and staffing those, but I just do believe that having smaller, independent entities that could actually expand the number of choices and expand the dialogue and find better solutions is essential and I would certainly work toward that.

**John Santoski:** Thank you. Let's go to Mr. Huja.

**Satyendra Huja (D):** I have some familiarity with the Department because I used to be working in the Department myself. You know, you can name anything any name you like. That doesn't change things very much by changing names. If you're going to change something, I think you need to think what are the functions which it does, and how it does, and how it can do better. I do not agree with Peter that it's too big because when [territory] like VDOT has, they think they ought to plan transportation separate from the land use. They are connected. How the land use— Land use is related to traffic so you need to work together. I don't think we need to separate them but I think we need to do look at how it is functioning, how it can function, how it can be improved. Those things need to work. The name change means nothing because we already had two name changes three or four times as I remember and they haven't done much.

**Barbara Haskins (I):** What I'm hearing embedded in your question is that development has become a toxic word for a lot of people and so I want to immediately cut to the chase on part of my issue is the City has very finite ways of paying for itself and it's on the homeowners because our commercial base is so limited. We have one in four people that live in poverty. We have a lot of renters, so short of restructuring, the entire financial setup for the City the way I mentioned earlier, it's going to be do it to the homeowners or have more development, or both, so, I mean, I understand development's a dirty word but the question is what can we do so it's not so toxic in terms of development.

Now, in terms of that department and Mr. Tolbert, you know, it sounds to me development's a dirty word and preservation has a lot of connotations as well and upside and downside connotations so I was sitting here rapidly trying to think of, okay, well, what I would call it and the first word I thought of was support, neighborhood support, because that's kind of where you're going in the most neutral sense of this, you know, not dragging the heels towards the past, not raising things towards the future, but support's such a boring word. I worked at it some more and then I thought, well, maybe Neighborhood Resources because I understand you need an agency downtown that is trying to sustain and work with neighborhood goals and so that was my answer.

**David Brown (D):** I've never liked the name Neighborhood Development Services. I'm not positive that Neighborhood Preservation is exactly the right name, but I'd be in favor of changing the name to reflect more of what the community wants out of that office. I think a lot of the issues and problems that people have with that office stem from the changes to the zoning ordinance in 2003 which allowed a tremendous increase in by-right development throughout the City, you know, and that was championed by Maurice Cox. I think a lot of good that comes out of having more density in certain areas, but I think a lot of the consequences weren't exactly thought through.

The second thing that happened was independent of that. Housing prices got high enough that people could afford to build on pieces of land that no one ever dreamed someone would build on. These two developments, the pace of development became so high it overwhelmed I believe, that Department and that Department was short staffed and in the time I've been on Council, we've added two people to this Department but I think that at the same time the neighborhoods were tremendously under stress and needing support that Department was probably heading a little bit in the wrong direction in terms of being pro-development and was under staffed. That's it.

I think that specifically Mr. Tolbert has strengths and he has weaknesses and I think that we can have a very good Department there. There's a number of us on City Council— There're a couple of us on City Council, anyway, who feel like what we really need in the City is a position, you know, it's kind of like you're not supposed to talk about new positions, but a position that's kind of like an ombudsman or a neighborhood advocate position, someone who really take concerns from the neighborhood and follows them through and be an advocate as opposed to being someone who's got another role that they frequently play.

**John Santoski:** Thank you. Do we have another question? Ms. Chase—

**Audience Question 5:** Jean Chase, Old Lynchburg Road. I have a question for all of you based upon new technology. **I would like to know if you would support the idea of making Old Lynchburg Road one of the places that you would allow us to put a photo-red camera on the street in order to help with**

**the new technology available to give our police force extra eyes to stem the problem of the high volume high speeding that we are currently having to endure on our residential street and I would like to know if you would support such and allow us to be, if you will, one of the streets that it's possible.**

**Satyendra Huja (D):** That's what I was trying to say earlier when I was answering the previous question. Yes, the answer is very much so if it was legally allowed. I don't know if it's allowed in the State legally or not, but I think that we could try it out on one or two streets and see how it works and if it works, then we could do it more often.

**Barbara Haskins (I):** I don't have any problem with it either if it's feasible. It has to be, as David mentioned, as a red light and you're saying do photo red so there may be some strategic places and I think the tension is maintaining some— I guess you all are feeling so massively inconvenienced that there's nothing now that can make your lives more convenient, so I guess then you'd put the red lights in to massively inconvenience people using that road who are cutting through and then you can maybe also— It's a traffic-calming measure in a sense. You might generate some revenue and it may add a disincentive, increasing disincentive value of taking that road.

The same thing with your intersection right now at stop signs, but if there were a light there, then the photo red could conceivably be used to help just photograph and generate income for all the people who wanted to run the light. That's different than running the stop sign.

**David Brown (D):** I guess I'm getting confused about the question, because are you trying to get speeders or are you trying to get people to stop at a stoplight.

**Audience Question:** I was trying to get speeders. Is the photo red or a camera system available...that could not necessarily be put at a red light but between the first blind curve coming out of Middleton up to the second blind curve at [unintelligible] Road.

**David Brown (D):** If the question is if technology was available that would allow us to monitor speeders without having a police car have to be there, I'd be all for it. Now, I don't know that that technology is readily available or affordable and I'm pretty sure that state law wouldn't allow it. A lot of solutions to a lot of problems state law doesn't allow and if I can digress for a second since I haven't heard the bell yet, for example, one of the things that the City of Charlottesville and the County of Albemarle and the other counties in the Planning District agreed that was our top legislative priority was to get Richmond to allow us to assess impact fees on development.

Currently, we can only get proffers when we change the zoning, in other words, when someone takes the land they own and they say I want to do something with it and now we can get proffers, right, and that's kind of a weird situation. What we want is the ability to say if you're going to develop your property, whether it's by right or not, you have to pay something to pay for the costs of the development. Currently, we can't do that.

Another odd thing that's been talked about tonight is why allow development if you don't have enough water or if you don't have enough sewer capacity. Well, the reality is that in state law in Virginia is property rights trump everything in Virginia right now and so if you own land and you want to develop it by right, by right, it's incumbent upon the community to allow you to do it and if there's not adequate water supply, the community is expected to get it. If there's not adequate sewer supply, the community is expected to provide it. The only time we can turn something down for a lack of water, lack of sewer is when we're rezoning and someone wants extra, so the state really cramps our style.

**John Santoski:** Okay. Thank you. Mr. Kleeman—

**Peter Kleeman (I):** As an advocate for citizen involvement, I am just excited— Here we have a citizen with I think a very intriguing idea [coming] forward today. How that would be implemented I don't know. The technology is not clear to me as to how that would happen, but I think it's an excellent idea. The notion of saying we have a critical problem, this road is a critical problem, no doubt about it. I don't think anybody would disagree with that. I think that it needs a grander solution, but in the short run, I think an idea of even just understanding better what's happening there, even if it's not legal to ticket people or if it's not legal to fine them over those tickets, but just understand what's happening there through technology, we can't have a policeman there all the time. I think that's an exciting idea.

I hope that other people who have other similar situations where it's like one person's corner, they could come up with an idea saying, you know, if there were some way to just understand better what's happening here, we could maybe find a lasting solution, so I think this forum, you know, based on that comment alone opens up an idea for solving a City problem not just on Old Lynchburg Road but probably on some of the other areas and that I would entertain the idea of working with the police, whether it's even with our state delegation to say isn't there a way that we can expand our opportunities to just make our community quality of life better and I think that information is key to improvement so I think that's a fabulous idea. Whether it could be implemented and work—

Hey, we've got a wonderful group of people at the University of Virginia and we have the Transportation Research Council in town. Maybe there's somebody living in one of basement apartments who's interested in this kind of thing and will be excited to move that forward. Thank you.

**Satyendra Huja (D):** ...It reminds me that there is a sign on Rugby Road, a sign that as you drive by it tells you what your speed is, and that's all VDOT, I know that, so I think in the meantime you could try that....

**Holly Edwards (D):** I don't believe there's any better presence than that of the police, so to answer that question, I guess the best case scenario would be to have policemen instead of having cameras as an extra pair of eyes and also I'm not sure about the technology either but it does sound intriguing, but I will say this—I believe in the power of grassroots organizing and I believe that if the neighborhood as an association has a majority of people and the people in the neighborhood, everyone in the neighborhood embraces this idea and if there's a true majority that really believes that this is important and the voices in the neighborhood are being represented and that includes the diversity within that neighborhood then, yes, it is an idea that should be explored because I really do believe in the value of that voice and the value of grassroots organizing.

**John Santoski:** Thank you. Do we have another question?

**Audience Question 6:** I'm Elizabeth Kutchai, I don't live in this neighborhood but I have lived in the City for 34 years and the time I've lived in the City, the population has not grown. The school enrollments have not grown. My property taxes have more than tripled. **Last year, the City magnanimously cut the tax rate by two cents, and my property taxes went up. Why and what are you going to do about it?**

**John Santoski:** Well, Mr. Kleeman, I'm going to give you the chance to go first this time.

**Peter Kleeman (I):** Well, I think that the issue is clearly one of understanding what it is that we pay for and why? And I must admit I've looked at the budget the last few years, and I'm not sure I understand what all of the categories in the budget are. I've spoken with Leslie Beauregard about the idea of isn't it possible for us to divide out in the budget the items that are required by mandate from the state or for whatever reason we must pay these things. We have virtually no choice.

And then there's discretionary funding. We only have as citizens the opportunity to manipulate the discretionary funding and I would very much like to know, and I can't even guess, what proportion of our budget is discretionary and what proportion of it is pretty much mandated, so once we get down to figuring out what are the discretionary elements in our budget, I think we just need to have a community discussion about— Maybe the idea is to say where are we. We've got this distribution of costs. Now, the question is what are our priorities? Are our priorities being adequately addressed? Do we need more funding shifted from something that's not a high priority to something that is a high priority? Is it

possible for us to reduce how much money we spend on all of these things? I don't know.

As I say, it's inscrutable to me and I think working with people like Leslie Beauregard who I think is a wonderful person and easy to work with and interested in doing a good job and having a good City budget, I think those are the kind of people we just need to energize and say— just like having an idea here, somebody who's working on our budget say what is an idea that we could have that would make this more understandable to Liz or to Peter, me, and understand what's going on and why we're paying these things and what is the value of that that we're paying and I think without that information, I just don't know how to address that any more carefully.

**Holly Edwards (D):** And I'll answer my— The my part of this why in the world according to Holly which lives in Belmont who I'm just amazed at the value of my house and I am so impressed and given that I am sure I'm the only person in the room whose family has doubled while the value of my house has more than tripled over the past few years and what I've learned from— I like going to open houses to find out what the real estate agents are saying and from based on their assessment, it's because of the University community that we're living in and being able to buy and sell houses has been relatively easy in university communities across the nation and I think that by next year we're going to see a change in that. I'm waiting for the bubble to bust and I think we all are and I think that living in a university community, the price of the houses and the people that are able to afford to buy the houses have been kind of dictating that, that rise in cost that we've seeing.

**John Santoski:** Mayor Brown—

**David Brown (D):** Well, there are some good reasons why the budget goes up more than, say, the rate of inflation because you were saying well how come— Why would it go up more than just the rate of inflation? Well, those good reasons are pretty much two. Number one is it's the State and federal mandates, so, for example, when No Child Left Behind— I think Mr. Santoski will verify, you know, it puts a lot of burden on the schools. You have to do a lot of testing you have to do regularly, you have to prepare for the testing. It was intended to come with funding to pay for all of that. It came with none.

The State and their Standards of Quality, you know, asked a lot of the school divisions and that was always supposed to come with a certain level of funding. It comes with much less.

The Comprehensive Services Act is a State act that mandates benefits for foster care children. I mean, it's a great idea. It's a great program. When it started, it was predominantly State funding and a small match. Over time, the small City match has grown and grown and grown by millions of dollars and the State

funding has gotten less and less. The State has balanced its budget by giving less money. I could go on with the jail, with remediation the Ivy Landfill. There are lots of costs that exceed inflation, but that's not the whole story and I'm not going to try to pretend it is.

There is a lot of stuff that falls in the category of being discretionary, you know, how much we give to schools is discretionary. Am I done already? Buses, affordable housing initiatives, bike paths, pools, parks, there's a lot of stuff and we can have big community-wide discussions on whether we should continue to invest in pools and have those types of things. I believe we should.

I would've like to have seen us cut the tax rate more last year and I didn't support putting as much money into affordable housing programs. I didn't support the CARS initiative. I lost on those and this year I don't support \$300,000 for cameras on the mall. I'll make up for it next time.

**Barbara Haskins (I):** The nitty-gritty details. The ambulance program, a million dollars, that's two cents on your tax rate, and I find zero justification to do that. Bigger picture—you know, if you read Gary O'Connell's budget every year, part of what he says is, man, the homeowners are really sucking it up here, but he also says we have come to expect to have a level of services and, to me, there's an embedded implication that we couldn't possibly cut things because everyone has kind of come to expect that and I think there would have to be some kind of— Well, my thing that you've received says I'm cutting the tax and do across-the-board cuts, but community-wide, there has to be some discussion that we're willing to get by with less and I think our culture at large is a debt-drive culture, so people aren't used to actually paying or living within their means.

You talked about schools. A few years ago we were paying \$6,900 per student. Now, we're paying \$9,600. That went up in about four years the amount we spent per student. How much are schools a scared cow? How much should we be looking at the way we structure the educational system that we're providing for people? If you're arrested in the City of Charlottesville, we pay the tab for that when you're in the jail even if you're from Greene County, so there's a lot of things that add to our costs which go back to my basic thing is who can afford this?

I mean, besides cutting the tax rate, we're paying more than Fairfax County. We pay a third more than County residents. We don't have the ability to have a commercial tax base. It's all coming from the homeowners, by and large, so unless we make a change, it's going to more or less continue this way. I'll fight as long as I can because I don't think it's— I think that there's just been this attitude and you see this in governments around the country, not just here in the City. Look at all this money. My God, let's spend it, and the data suggests that that's exactly what governments have done, so part of it is just— It's like free money to the government, growing on trees.

**Satyendra Huja (D):** No, money is not growing on trees. At least I haven't found the tree yet. Yes, all of us do [have our own] private lives—we have some resources and we need to try to live within our means, but as Americans, we have a habit of living beyond our means. We don't live on what we have, but what we hope to have and that attitude has been prevalent all over for all of us.

But I would say that as David mentioned, there are some things that you can't control, but there are things which we can control that I think we need to control and should control, but I also remember very vividly, every time we try to cut something, everybody wanted it cut, but not in their neighborhood, not in their program, not in their favorite pet idea, but in somebody else's, so I do think that there ought to be a limit to budget increases.

For example, last time we had, what, a 12% and I mentioned to David and it's not news to him, that I would've preferred more like closer to inflation, 3 to 4%, and that is more manageable, but I think this problem will take care of itself in many ways this coming year that property is going down. You're not going to give that [unintelligible] money so that question of spending that you don't have, so I would be very— I'm fairly liberal in the social issues, but when I come to budgeting and money I'm pretty cheap and if you don't know that, you should talk with my friends.

**John Santoski:** Thank you. Do we have another question? Oh, we've got some hands up here. Peggy, why don't we let you ask a question? Go ahead.

**Audience Question 7:** I have a rather big concern about inadequate oversight by City Council of what the City government is doing in some cases and it appears to me that a very strong example of that Monday night or Monday evening when **the City Manager proposed having a community services czar** whose function would appear to me to be more to stand between the public and members of the City staff and not be a very necessary position. I don't know that anybody's been complaining about what he's proposing to solve. And I know that Mayor Brown asked some questions about it and Kevin Lynch did, but no action was taken and it appears [to be] tacit approval. The item was not formally deferred, [nothing was done], **which [thus] is approval of the City Manager hiring a new person to do something that we don't need. That to my mind is discretionary funds that are going to be missed and I'd like Mayor Brown and any of the others who wanted to comment on that.**

**David Brown (D):** What Ms. King is referring to is that this spring actually in our budget Mr. O'Connell put in money to replace an empty position in his department with a customer care service person and I think— It got some attention during the budget. It got approved. Actually, I was skeptical of it at the time, but I didn't prevail, but it was not completely fleshed out to us what it was going to be. We've had some references to it since then, but now the position's being advertised and I actually asked Mr. O'Connell to bring that up in Other

Business because I felt like given the fact that we're going to have, as Mr. Huja said, we're going to have less money in our budget next year, I felt like we needed to have a clear either endorsement about that position from City Council or not. I actually felt like it was not the time to be adding another position. I think Kevin Lynch was skeptical, but I think the rest of the Council I would say felt like it helped answer some of the questions that were brought up here earlier regarding someone who could help be—

I'm just saying what my interpretation why the rest of the Council was willing to go along with not challenging this position at the time, because Mr. O'Connell pretty much said do you want me to pull the position now. I thought he should. Kevin thought he should, but the rest of the Council didn't, but that's where we are.

Is there adequate oversight? I like to think that was oversight on my part, both it got brought up during the budget session. Council was okay with going forward, although I wasn't, and I brought it back up now so we could make sure that we were all in favor of this moving forward. You can disagree with the process but I think that was part of it.

I think the oversight of individual City departments is actually the hardest part about being a City Councilor because we're part-time. We're not there all day. I think it does take vigilance and I think we all bring different skills to the table in that regard.

**John Santoski:** Anybody else want to comment on that question?

**Peter Kleeman (I):** I think that's a very insightful point. In fact, that City Council is being— I think City Council has been in an awkward position at that point where there're sitting on the dais talking about whether something has been moved forward and advertised and is under consideration as to whether it should go forward or not. I believe that the City Council needs to recast itself into a slightly different structure. I think it needs to act more like a board of directors for the City, that it shouldn't really be micromanaging or doing some of the discussions that I see late into the night as those of you who are up on Monday would notice, that something should not necessarily get to the City Council discussion table with so much still needing to be discussed.

I think we have a fairly large and reasonable professional staff and I know many of the people on the staff because I've been involved with a variety of issues and I think many of these people are not utilized as effectively as they could be. I think they would be thrilled to be given the authority and the opportunity to be true professionals and look at some of these issues. There's a Human Resources Department that could easily go through and look at what the workload for a proposed position would be, what kind of redundancies that might be, is it worth the amount of money that it's going to cost to attract the person

and I guess I don't know whether they were involved or not but I would like to think that the human resources people went through and vetted this position and said, yes, there's a critical need that we need to have someone in this role to meet these needs. If that hasn't happened, if I were sitting on Council, I would be disconcerted and say we're going to have to have a little pow-wow about how Human Resources addresses human resources issues, so I don't think it's something that should be totally done at the City Council level, but the City Council needs to be cognizant of those issues and if these things happen, they need to sit down and say, well, if these things slip through, maybe we need to revisit this process and as a leadership group, they should initiate whatever is necessary.

**John Santoski:** Anyone else want to comment?

**Holly Edwards (D):** As you were speaking, I think what came to mind for me and I'll echo again is the importance of having transparency in our government and that allows everyone to have the opportunity to just have a better understanding of what's going on. You might not necessarily need to have every minute detail, but at least have an understanding of what's going on.

**John Santoski:** Barbara? Mr. Huja? No? All right. Next question. Do we have another? Hold on a second. I have somebody here who hasn't asked one yet.

**Audience Question 8: Does everyone agree that we need an increase in the police department?**

**Holly Edwards (D):** Yes.

**Peter Kleeman (I):** I've had the opportunity to chat with some of the community police officers and I asked them— There's this fellow Tom. If you don't know him, you should introduce yourself to him. He's one of the bicycle police on the Downtown Mall, and he's a great source of information about what the challenges are to the individual police officers and clearly they have lots of things that they have to do and there're lots of spaces I think for— There is a need for police officers in many different things, as we talked about—some traffic enforcement issues and we certainly have crime issues in some neighborhoods and I think also and just in connecting to youth and to the community and being present and actually great representatives of the City.

I'm really impressed with our Police Department and Chief Longo I think is always very quick to say, you know, these are all challenges and the way we can solve this is some in technology and some in people and some in money and information and I think all of them have a very good idea of what their tasks are and I trust the Chief when he says we really need these three or five positions and right now, I know that they're hard pressed to find people and so I think right

now it's clear that we're short but I think, you know, that the idea of having a professional department that they understand what they need, they justify what they need and they make a clear case and sometimes it's very hard to turn them down and say, you know, this just doesn't make any sense, so I think that's a great dialogue between Council and these department staffs and I agree that right now that is the case.

**John Santoski:** Thank you. Yes.

**Barbara Haskins (I):** I think we need to fill the vacancies that are already there. It's very interesting. We have about 147 police officers delegated or on the roster in the City and the County. We have 40,000 people; they have about 90,000 people, so we're paying more for police officers for a smaller number of people and this goes sort of right back to the point I kept trying to make which is this is how we're doing things. Is this how we want to keep doing things where we have this tiny number of people supporting this size police force out of our property taxes, you know, or is there some other way we should be doing this and I understand not everyone wants to get rid of the City but maybe we should be re-looking at the revenue sharing agreement or some way to stop having this small number of people in 10 square miles paying for a lot of services.

**Satyendra Huja (D):** I think we should fill the existing vacant position. I'm not sure we need additional positions, but I think we need to fill them, what we have.

**David Brown (D):** Since I didn't speak very long, you know, we have more police officers in the City because we're a City. I mean, that's just— I mean, rural areas, rural area, you don't need as many officers, and Albemarle County is under a lot of stress trying to meet their needs with police officers as they become more urban.

**John Santoski:** Thank you. More questions? We will take a second question.

**Audience Question 9:** This is the first time I've been involved in anything like this. I read the newspaper, watch the television set, and honest to God, it feels like to me that Albemarle County is pushing some stuff down our throat. I want to see a strong City Council. I don't want to hear a bunch of mouth that don't go anywhere and just hollers and it's just like an echo. I'd like to see some of you people at some of their meetings where we have a table where we can divide up and sit down and talk to each and every one of you, not this kind of stuff. This is fine. This is limited. I don't feel like— I feel like we're doing all right, but we're not getting anywhere and when I read the paper tomorrow or the next day, I want to see what you people are going to do for us, you know what I'm saying. I mean, we're at this end of Charlottesville and we're catching this and we're really catching it and we're really concerned. I can understand how you feel. I know you've got a lot of other projects. This is a very big project and this thing right here can get out of hand in a hurry. **Albemarle County uses our road all the**

**time like it's theirs. The police come up the road at 80 and 90 miles an hour from Albemarle County. I know. I can hear them when they brake the turn coming through the straight-aways. I want to know what you all are going to do about it.** I don't want to see no smiling faces. I've seen them on television. It don't mean a thing to me. I'm going to vote for the person who does the most for me and I'd like to see some of you all at our meetings, not sitting here. You can't get the people to come to City Hall. That's obvious. When the television shines up there, there's nobody there, so you all must talk to one another. Well, we want you all to do something for us, not show your rear end, not smile like you're doing now. Do something.

**John Santoski:** Well, let's give them all a chance to respond. Was there a real question in there that you wanted them to answer or—

**Audience question:** The real question is what are you going to do. I'm going to fight until my old age and I die : I don't know what's going on.

**John Santoski:** Okay. Let's give folks a chance to respond. I'm going to let Mr. Huja start down here.

**Satyendra Huja (D):** Well, first, the most important part is that we're here to listen to what you have, the concerns you have. We're always willing to listen to it, willing to work with you, and, for example, if I was on City Council, definitely I'm not promising I'll come to every neighborhood meeting every month, but when I'm invited, I will be there and even if I'm not invited, I'll probably show up and come to listen to the concerns and issues and not just really listen to it but to follow up on it. Listening is cheap, you know. We need to do something about it and so this can be done and I think I would be more than happy to come to the neighborhood.

**John Santoski:** Mr. King, they're answering your questions right now. We'll let them go to an answer.

**Barbara Haskins (I):** I would say that the horse is out of the barn. I mean, part of the stress on your neighborhood is all the development that's occurred south of here in the County. It's happened. It's done. And, nobody here, I don't think, has the power to make connector roads get built, guaranteed. So, it seems to me, given those two facts, it becomes making Old Lynchburg Road as toxic as possible for people that are using it from the County, at least in the near future until there's some alternative way of people getting around.

**David Brown (D):** I'd certainly come to your meetings and I've been invited and I'm certainly—

**Audience Question:** [unintelligible]

**David Brown (D):** Well, I have come. I don't think you were there.

**Audience Question:** [unintelligible]

**David Brown (D):** Yes sir. I think that's one of the important things, as Mr. Huja said, that Councilors can do is to attend neighborhood meetings. I think I've been to if not every neighborhood meeting, I've been most of them, and I think that the solutions to the big issues and the big issues I identified in the beginning is the encroachment of Albemarle County. I mean, I don't think anyone's going to disagree the solution to that involves us getting them to step up to the plate and make the connectors road that takes immediate stress off and we need to do that and I think it can be done.

**John Santoski:** Mr. Kleeman—

**Peter Kleeman (I):** I think that the City needs to recognize and Councilors, all of us, should we— I guess we're not all going to be Councilors, but three of us will be and the issue is to really accept the fact that we are the heart of the Charlottesville-Albemarle region and we need to take a leadership role and we need to talk to the people who are on the Board of Supervisors and actually work with them. Now, I'm happy to say that I know all the members of the Board of Supervisors of Albemarle County. I have gone before the Board of Supervisors on a number of issues of personal interest and some professionally where I've had clients I had represented and presented my ideas and issues and worked with those individuals and, in fact, I think a collegial relationship with each one of those members does pay off. I think they do care about what happens in the City and we do care about what happens in the County and having the personal relationships with the people who are the leaders in these other jurisdictions I think is key.

I've also participated in some of the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission meetings where we have the people who are supervisors from Nelson County and Fluvanna County and Greene and I know most of these people as well and have worked with on other issues and I believe that Councilors have a whole lot of influence over what goes on in those other bodies as much as they do in the City and it's just a matter of understanding what their problems are, understanding what our problems are and being open to a dialogue of how can we all move toward a better solution.

I think many people in Albemarle County are concerned about the level of growth. There're people like Sally Thomas and David Slutzky who are just as concerned about growth as people in this room and they are looking for solutions and they're looking to convince their colleagues as to what are better ways to integrate new growth with old communities and protect historic areas and the rural areas and to not clobber Charlottesville. I just think we need more people with more ideas who are willing to sit down and talk about them.

I think I've done some of that. I think people like you are the one who, if I had the opportunity to have a meeting, I would invite you to come and talk to those people, too.

**Holly Edwards (D):** Your question was so what am I going to do? I decided to run because local government was becoming a spectator sport for me and I wanted to get involved and this is what I know. I believe that for every Goliath there is a David. There's an opportunity to be the right leader with the right equipment at the right time and I believe that the Council you will select will be the opportunity to be the right leader at the right time because I'm quite sure when David met Goliath, he didn't have a plan right then, but somehow he decided he had those three smooth rocks and that's what he needed and so what you're going to pick from this group are three smooth rocks for the three seats available to be the right leaders at the right time.

**Satyendra Huja (D):** [unintelligible]

**John Santoski:** We're getting near the end of the session. I'm going to take one more question. Colette, I'm going to let you go ahead and ask.

**Audience Question:** Thank you, John. We heard [other questions] earlier and we heard about Mr. Kleeman's kind of dividing it into mandatory— which we all know has to be, as the Mayor talked about, it has to be, you have to provide funds, it's law. And unfortunately the Feds and the State have withdrawn and given us this beautiful big programs and then they've withdrawn their funding so therefore we have to go and say, well, what can we cut in our discretionary funding as Mr. Kleeman referred to, so **I ask each one of you what would be the one thing on the discretionary side of the budget that you would cut** and say in the upcoming budget this is a [mistake] this is a very nice thing, perhaps it is a very worthy thing, but we can't afford it so we're cutting it out of the budget and I'd like each one of you to answer.

**John Santoski:** Barbara, I'm going to give you a chance to start off.

**Barbara Haskins (I):** Well, naturally, I would kill the ambulance program, although the million dollars would have already been spent buying new ambulances and they're hiring eight new staff and CARS was not tweaked. I tend to favor across-the-board reductions. It seems in the long run fairest to me when you have a bad situation you take the percentage of cut and you just do it across the board, so that would be the way I would favor doing it.

**Satyendra Huja (D):** I just want you to know that I do agree with Barbara sometimes, so, of course, I do not know the details of the budget to talk intelligently. I think it's a very serious business to say whom you would you cut or what you're going to cut so I really don't think I can respond to you at this time without studying the budget and I haven't, but it is a detail, [and] I can give you

this answer today, but I would not be opposed to across-the-budget cuts for non-mandatory things.

**David Brown (D):** I'm going to correct one thing. We have not spent the money on ambulances because we've gotten a study group with CARS, the Fire Department, David Toscano's on it, a number of community people, to figure out is there a problem and does some of that money need to be spent and if so, how. Having said that—

**Audience Question:** To save one million dollars?

**David Brown (D):** Right.

**Audience Question:** The whole one million.

**David Brown (D):** It's going to depend on what the recommendations are. I mean, but I think it's a good group of people who can help say if there's a problem, does the City need— because the City doesn't give any money to CARS. The County does. I don't want to spend my time on that, though, because I feel like unlike Mr. Huja, I have been working the budget so I really have to give an answer, a specific answer I feel to this question.

The one thing I would've spent less money on last year and I'll will vote to spend less on this year is in affordable housing. We've put a lot of money, a million dollars a year for five years, we've committed to affordable housing programs. Affordable housing programs are taking one person's tax money and helping other people pay less in property tax and I believe we should do some of that. We should do some of that for the disabled, for the elderly, for the low income homeowners who, say, Habitat homeowners or PHA homeowners who we've helped get into a home, I feel like we have some obligation to help make sure they can stay there, but I believe we put— That's area where I would take some money out because that's also money that could go to decreasing the tax rate.

**John Santoski:** Thank you. I'm going to let Ms. Edwards go.

**Holly Edwards (D):** When I think about the budget, what I'll be looking at for next year and as I've been utilizing the budget as my nighttime reading and trying to better understand it, is to I want to look at how the money has been spent, to see whether or not we're getting the outcomes that we're looking for. I really want to look at the budget in the same way that I do— The same critical thinking that I use in analyzing a care plan for nursing to see whether or not the plan is effective is the same approach that I would be looking at the different categories of the budget, so to say now which areas I would choose to decrease would be based on how effective that area has been over the last fiscal year to see whether or not funding is appropriate for that source or whether or not that funding should go to another areas so that's what I would be looking at.

**Peter Kleeman (I):** I think this is a critical time for making some key decisions about the City's future and based on some of the comments that were made earlier today about the problems with traffic and growth, etc., I look at some of these large expenditure items in the City. For example, the expenditure that's going to be made in building the Meadowcreek Parkway and the interchange. We're talking fifty to a hundred million dollars to be expended in bringing more traffic into our community that personally I have not seen a good justification that those expenditures are really going to provide the needed relief or improve the quality of life in any of the neighborhoods. Some of the neighborhoods will become more cut-through, that there's so much growth that this is a drop in the bucket trying to provide mobility by automobile.

My personal feeling is that money is transmutable or whatever that word might be and it could be sent more toward the issues of providing a higher quality of life through providing better transit. The opportunity to provide connections between the City and the University and perhaps the airport and 29 North without having to use motor vehicles, but we need to take a stand that we're going to be looking toward the future, not implementing ideas from the past and just continue to follow what other cities have done and shown not to work. You look at most of the urbanized cities that were small cities and now large cities, they haven't solved their problems through developing large interchanges, links and roadways, so I think those millions of dollars being expended for something that's not going to improve our quality of life could be diverted for things that will and I think, in fact, there will be a bonus that not all of that money will have to be spent and we will actually have money left over that can be used for other purposes or redistributed back to the community.

**John Santoski:** Okay. Thank you. We're going to be wrapping up here in a minute and we're going to give each candidate a chance to kind of sum up and talk to you a little bit about why you should be looking at them as a City Council representative. As the moderator, I always get a chance to say something if I want to and I just would throw out to the candidates that one of the things that I would hope that they would take away from this is not only with the Fry's Spring neighborhood but with probably all the neighborhoods, is that over the past few years we have really found ourselves to be watchdogs for our neighborhood, that if you look at the people who've been sending emails, who contact Council, who are getting in touch with the Board of Supervisors, going to meetings, we've been really concerned about how the leadership works in getting things done without us having to be the ones to prompt that happening and I think at times we've felt that if we weren't the ones who were bringing it to someone else's attention, that either the developers, the Board of Supervisors, other folks in the community would be— The University, would somehow not necessarily take advantage of us but kind of run over us a bit and we get kind of left, you know, kind of laying in the middle of road and I think—

You know, we think back to things like the property development of Huntley and Cherry Hill and the issues we had, [the thumb], and I know Mayor Brown was very helpful in helping us remove that, but the whole issue of how that came into being and what happened with it, the narrowing of the bridge over JPA when it probably should never have been as wide as it was first planned, you know, our problems on Old Lynchburg Road that go back many many years and then the issue of just the development from the University and the County in terms of Biscuit Run and what will be happening eventually in the rest of the area, so my— I guess—

And I don't need a response to this, but I would hope that you would think about what will your role be in providing the type of leadership that will not only benefit our neighborhood but the community at large to make sure that the people who live here, who work here, who send their children to school here, who are the taxpayers, who go in and buy groceries at the neighborhood store and drive on the streets are the ones who are gaining the benefit of having a world-class city. I think that that's so important to all of us and the reason that the neighborhood association was the Planning Commission recognized with the kind of award it did for being the most active neighborhood association in the City.

I guess on that note I'm going to go ahead and we're going to turn it over to the candidates and let them all make a comment as to, you know, it's really your minute to say what you need to the folks sitting here. All right, Peggy, we'll try to wrap this all up. I'm going to start at the left here and we'll work out way down to the end of the other table.

## **CLOSING STATEMENTS**

**Holly Edwards (D):** I am proud to be a part of this moment. I have, again, likened my journey to City Council as just a unique experience and one of the best parts of that experience has been able to meet people and to learn things that I otherwise wouldn't have the opportunity. I hope to continue to be able to do this and to provide that continuity within Council. The entire community is only as strong as the neighborhoods and this neighborhood is an example of that strength. I applaud your efforts and I guess if there's any one thing that you remember that I've said this evening is that every voice has merit and value. Don't underestimate the power that a neighborhood has and don't underestimate how powerful going out into different neighborhoods and engaging other people can be powerful as well.

**Peter Kleeman (I):** People have asked me—do you really think you can win as an Independent. No Independent has ever won in the history of Charlottesville since it's been a City and I offer myself to you as a candidate because I think you want really someone who is not afraid of doing something that nobody has ever done before. I'm not— I find that a challenge and I think that we have dozens of challenges in the City before us that if we do not look at those things as being

clear challenges and we need to find new innovative solutions that perhaps nobody has done before, I think you need to consider me as a candidate, because that's what I do. I am an idea person. I love the big picture. I love thinking about the new way to look at an issue and I know how to get in touch with people who can help make that work, but I'm also not afraid to look at the minute level of issues.

If you've read *The Hook* from the beginning of the year, I was writing a column called "The Squeaky Wheel." "The Squeaky Wheel" looked at some minute issue that had to do with a tripping hazard in a crosswalk and I talked to the people on the City staff and to others and I said why can't we get this fixed. It's going to take this much to do it. It can happen and, in fact, of the 10 articles I wrote, I think about 5 of them I had positive outcomes, so I offer myself as a candidate that can solve the small problem and visualize the big problem and I think move us all forward and I hope that you'll support me. Thank you very much.

**David Brown (D):** Well, I've been on City Council for the last three-and-a-half ½ years and I feel like I've worked hard. I've tried to be serious about it and conscientious. I've tried to be thoughtful as the issues come forward and I've tried to listen and I feel like that's one of the my skills and it's an important skill.

For example, one of the great things this neighborhood did was to roll up its sleeves and come up with a solution that would result in a narrower bridge going over JPA. That wasn't what VDOT wanted to do but the City pushed pretty hard because you guys had a good idea and we listened to it, so that's important that we listen.

The other comment I'll make is I agree with Peter that it's very important as we move forward that we have a good working relationship, hopefully, with both the County of Albemarle and the University of Virginia. It's kind of amazing we've had a whole evening here without any questions that involved the University of Virginia. I like to think in part that's because relations are a little better between the City and the University and in between the City and the County than they were four years ago. I think that for, example, the South Lawn project emerging, the University's worked hard to try to engage the neighborhood and I think the City has been part of creating a little better atmosphere. Is it perfect? No. It's a long way from perfect, but I think it is important we succeed in that.

**Barbara Haskins (I):** Sort of one specific detail that hasn't come up tonight is I think it's important to have districts for City Council members, not a generic City Council, and I think you all are a really good example of why that works. There's a lot of frustration that leaks out in everything that you say and some bitterness and I think it's a lot easier for a community that wants to stay in control of its destiny when they have one person who's their really go-to person on City Council. I just think in general it's easier to have a smaller relationship, so I

would support changing at-large City Council elections to district City elections. She doesn't like that but that's okay.

Basically, I'm about how do we pay to be the City and why are we doing it this way? I mean, we can choose to keep doing it this way, but I just hope people keep looking at the trajectory because it's going to cost lots and lots of money that's coming out of homeowners' pockets unless something changes and I just want there to be some focus on what money we spend, how we spend it, where is it coming from and what are the alternative ways of financing what we think of as the City.

**Satyendra Huja (D):** Thank you again for this opportunity to be with you. I always enjoy coming here and I hope you'll invite me again and maybe next time you will, I will be on Council if you guys support me. I just want to say that I mentioned earlier that I do have some experiences and I do have some creative— I've shown that I can get things done. It's easy to talk about ideas, but getting them done takes some effort also but I think you have the record of that. I don't want to make you too many promises, but three promises I would like to make to you today and I hope you'll hold me to those three promises.

First, that I will listen to you and learn from you and follow up on your concerns. This young man wasn't excited about today but I'm going to follow up on that if I have a chance.

Second, I will return your calls. If you call me, you can count on that I will get back to you or I'll send an email. It'll be a brief response in an email because I don't want to do a lot of typing. I will work with you and find solutions to your neighborhood concerns by working with you, not against you, and I think I would like to urge you to work on November 6<sup>th</sup> for the Democratic team of three as I mentioned—Edwards, Huja, and Brown. I think we can provide. We are a team and we can do things better and we can make this community much better, so I will welcome your support and I think together we can build a better community. Thank you.

**John Santoski:** And on that note, if we could have a nice round of applause for our candidates.