

NAME: Jim Shealey
PARTY: Democratic
SEEKING: Chairman,
Gwinnett County Commission



Why are you seeking your office?

I want to do all I can do help make Gwinnett a great place to live. Everyday we face many challenges that include a grueling commute to and from work. All this time on the roads leaves very little time to spend with family and friends. Rail transportation is the only way we can get the volume of cars off the road in Gwinnett County to alleviate this gridlock and attract new business to our county. In addition I want to improve the salary of police, fire, and county employees.

What do you expect to accomplish if elected?

My two top priorities are providing Exceptional Transportation to the citizens of Gwinnett County and improving the pay for Police, Fire, and other Gwinnett County Employees.

I want to work to bring light rail to Gwinnett County. We know that 63% of residents said they would welcome light rail in Gwinnett County and 50% of residents said they would be willing to pay for it.

Secondly, as chairman, I want to ensure that our police, fire, and other county employees are paid at a salary that is competitive and consistent with those in other counties.

What distinguishes your candidacy?

I believe that building a rail infrastructure is key to the future success of our county. We are bogged down in traffic in Gwinnett and companies are moving to places where employees can easily commute to work. We need to be creating and building a solid relationship with industries as well as attracting new industry to our county. We need a solid infrastructure that includes rail, in order to attract more industry

We need to use the funds generated from a TSPLOST to provide funding that the county would need in order to create the infrastructure for rail in our county.

What are the key issues in your race?

We need to utilize the funds generated from a TSPLOST as an investment into the future success of our county. Also, ensuring that we have enough money budgeted to provide for the safety and protection of our citizens is a budget matter that is of equal

importance. We cannot afford to jeopardize the safety and protection of our residents by cutting back on the salaries of Police, Fire, and County employees.

Pick one issue. Expand of how you will address it.

Our police officers and county employees are some of the lowest paid in Georgia. In 2015 the county lost 64 veteran police officers, some to other jurisdictions. The County froze salaries of employees in 2008 and when they lifted the freeze in 2016, they only gave police, fire, and other county employees a 4% incentive raise after 8 years of employees sacrificing their salaries to the benefit of the county. As chairman, I want to ensure that our police, fire, and other county employees are paid at a salary that is competitive and consistent with those in other counties.

Please give a 100 word summary on your background.

I am the chairman of the Gwinnett County Democratic party. I am a retired teacher from the Akron, Ohio Public School System. I have been a public servant for more than 35 years. I was elected Ward 5 Councilman in 2000 and served on city committees including Finance, Public Service, and Planning. I chaired Akron Council's Public Safety Committee. I was the chairman of the board of directors for the Nationally recognized CDC, East Akron Neighborhood Development Corporation. I held the Ward 5 Councilman position for eight years. I was appointed to the City of Akron's Councilman at Large position.