NAME: **Regina Carden**
PARTY: **Democratic**
SEEKING: **Tax Commissioner**

1.Why are you seeking your office?

I am running for Gwinnett County Tax Commissioner because I would like to make significant improvements in the service provided by the office to our community. I would like to take experiences gained during my 36 year career with the Department of Veteran Affairs, to now benefit the community in which I live. Throughout my public sector career upholding the public trust and efficiently managing taxpayer dollars have been at the core of my professional character. As Tax Commissioner I would be committed to ethically and transparently serving the people of Gwinnett.

2. What do you expect to accomplish if elected?

I would start by focusing on 5 key accomplishments.
>1. Develop and implement a customer service improvement plan by engaging customers and staff members. This plan would also include employee satisfaction, since employee satisfaction can impact customer service
>2. Address customer service and enhance efficiency by extending tag office hours.
>3. Enhance awareness of Homestead Exemption options through a series of public awareness activities.
>4. Address language barriers, thus enhancing communication within our diverse community.
>5. Assess technical and operational aspects of the office in order to mitigate inappropriate or inefficient practices and strengthen the work environment.

3. What distinguishes your candidacy?

I have the most fiscal and operational experience out of all current candidates. Having earned certification as a Certificated Government Financial Manager (CGFM) and having been responsible for large budgets (approx. $2 billion) during my 36 year federal career working as a Chief Fiscal Officer and an Associate Director/Chief Operating Officer, I would bring comprehensive experience to this position. I have a reputation for leading with accuracy and integrity, and for resolving difficult challenges. My years of experience in quality improvement, data analytics, customer service and organizational management would allow me to bring thorough leadership. Tested, trusted, and ready.

4. Pick any one issue. Expand on how you will address it.

I would expand tag officer hours. Current tag office hours are not convenient for working customers. This creates a backlog at the one tag office that is open on Saturday. I would stagger the work schedules of existing staff in order to extend tag office hours throughout the week at all location, thus increasing availability with minimal cost impact. For example, some staff members might start work at 8am, 9am or 10am etc. This staggered start time would allow the office to remain open longer, thus better serving the community.

5. Suggest ways to jump-start the economy after COVID-19.

We have lost over 60,000 people in this country within a short period. We will have to recognize the impact of these losses and work to restore civil confidence so that people will feel safe resuming normal activities of life. What COVID-19 has shown us is that foreign production of critical supplies has left us vulnerable. Providing government incentives for specific industries to manufacture in the US, would mitigate this vulnerability and create jobs. Rather than broadly distributing more stimulus checks, funds could be used for targeted recovery that supports families and small businesses adversely impacted by COVID-19.

6. Please give a 100 word summary on your background.

 From Ohio, I am a University of Dayton graduate. My father died weeks before I was born; therefore, my mother instilled in me strong values and drive. I am a 15 year resident of Gwinnett County and my 5 children are products of Gwinnett County Schools. I love Gwinnett and believe in our democracy. My voluntarism reflects my priorities, as follows: a) Election integrity and voting rights - election day volunteer poll watcher b) Democracy - Duluth Complete Count Committee (Census) c) Community - Duluth Fall Festival d) Helping those in need - COVID-19 food distribution and Atlanta Complete Count, (100)…