

2020 GwinnettForum candidate questionnaire

NAME: Jasper Watkins III
PARTY: Democratic
SEEKING: County Commission, District 3

1. Why are you seeking your office?

In 2016, over 49% of Gwinnettians had enough trust in me to get-out-to-vote, and with your continued support, I am the 2020 Democratic candidate for the Gwinnett County District 3 Commissioner seat. I am running because our district deserves bold leadership to discuss and put forth the measures to improve and solve the immediate issues facing our region. With my leadership skills as a former Executive Army Officer, Business Leader, and Consultant, I have incorporated a more holistic approach to leadership that will improve and protect the current and future quality of life for everyone in District 3.

2. What do you expect to accomplish if elected?

I expect to maintain a strong financial position that is balanced against needs to ensure our continued sustainable growth and economic development to improve the quality of life. My primary focus will be to address our current and future pandemic financial needs, land-use issues, and infrastructure projects. I believe the county government should provide for and ensure that essential services are maintained, with regards to the public's safety, health, and welfare with the assurance of sustaining our positive fiscal posture. These are public safety, economic, and quality of life issues that are on the forefront.

3. What distinguishes your candidacy?

As a father, registered pharmacist, licensed nuclear pharmacist, minority small business owner, and retired army officer. As a community leader, I am a Rotarian, member of several organizations: Medical Reserve Corps, Gwinnett Chamber, VFW-American Legion, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Grad chapter, Berean Christian Church Veterans Ministry, to mention a few. So, as you can see, I have and am devoting my life to serving my community and defending our nation. I have a reputation for identifying and solving complex problems, being a diplomatically assertive and a goal-oriented leader, able to make hard decisions and being sensitive to the mission.

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

I still feel that having efficient modes of Transportation is imperative to end the traffic congestion and growing our economy. The widening of roads to alleviate gridlock during peak hours is no longer a 21st-century effective solution for our traffic issues. Expanding our

current transit system by developing and implementing a comprehensive bus rapid transit system and eventually bringing rail into Gwinnett County are all optional transit choices that are needed to attract more tech jobs, improve commuter service, and ease traffic congestion in Gwinnett. The economic benefits of bringing efficient Transportation to Gwinnett County is paramount.

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

First, I would take an assessment of our leading business clusters and ensure that loan programs are available from all available sources and guarantee they get to the “anchor” businesses to stabilize the economy in the immediate area.

We will all need to pull together working groups of business, community leaders, and experts to develop short to medium-range plans. What we do as a community over the next 12 to 18 months can ensure that our city and metro economies get up and running again while protecting themselves against similar scenarios in the future.

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

JASPER WATKINS III is a retired US Army Lieutenant Colonel with more than 35 years of federal healthcare leadership experience and ten years at the executive level of federal and state pharmaceutical enterprises. He is a registered pharmacist and licensed nuclear pharmacist with proven senior-level expertise in policy formulation, state coalition building, public, and legislative relations. During the 9-11 attack on the Pentagon, he supported the placement recovery operations of injured active duty / DOD civilians at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, and immediately after Hurricane Katrina, his pharmacy provided pharmaceutical support and medical resupply for operations in the area.