



February 2020

Candidate for Election: City of Gainesville Commissioner

Note: Responses Will be Made Public. Please limit your responses to 100 words (the published response will be cut off at the limit).

1. Candidate's Name: Candidate's Name: **Scherwin L Henry**
2. Email Address: henryscherwin@gmail.com
3. Campaign Website: in progress
4. Education: **Educated by the Alachua County School system; Williams Elementary, Lincoln High School, Class of 1970; graduate of the Univ. of Florida, B.S. in Food Science, Class of 1983.**
5. Occupation: **Sr. Biological Scientist**
6. Employer: **Retired.**
7. Previous Employment: **University of Florida, Interdisciplinary Center for Biotechnology.**
8. Three Qualities Leaders Must Possess and Why?
 1. **Leadership**
 2. **Integrity**
 3. **Honesty**

Leadership does not mean you're the one who is always seen and has to do everything. Leadership brings out the best qualities and talents of those around the one that leads. Being a good listener is also a great trait of leadership. Integrity is a "must" quality. Integrity speaks of one's character. Integrity is the moral compass of a person. Integrity will keep a person consistent in their actions and words. If integrity is the moral compass then honesty is the vehicle by which one's integrity is put to the test. Honesty is truthfulness, in that one's word represents who they are. For a person holding office, honesty is very important. As the saying goes, "Your word is your bond." Honesty breeds trust.



9. Civic Involvement: **former mentor with “Take Stock in Children” (6 yrs); Leadership Gainesville Class XXV graduate; Focus on Leadership Class X graduate.**

10. Board(s) I’ve Served On and What Prompted Me to Serve On Them:

1997 Feb. - 2003 Jan. - Founding member, Treasurer, and past Chair, East Gainesville Development Corp – To facilitate economic development in east Gainesville.

1997 May - 2003 June - Member and past Chair, City of Gainesville Citizens Advisory Board for Community Development – To understand the process of how the Federal Block Grant dollars are received and distributed by the City of Gainesville.

2000 May - Member, City of Gainesville Charter Review Committee – I was appointed by the city commission at the recommendation of Commissioner “Chuck” Chestnut.

2000 Sept. - 2002 Oct. Member, Metropolitan Transportation Advisory Board –To learn about transportation issues affecting our city and county.

2004 June - 2005 June East Gainesville/University Alliance – To work to create a better relationship between the City of Gainesville and the Univ. of Florida.

2009 Jan. - 2009 Dec. - Chair, Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization – served as Chairperson during my tenure on the Gainesville City Commission.

2009 June – 2014 June Mentor, Take Stock in Children – To serve as a mentor to middle school and high school youth.

2017 Nov. – Present - Member, School Advisory Council, Eastside High School – To assist in improving the learning and academic of Eastside High School.

2018 Nov. – Present Board member, Neighborhood Housing and Development Corporation – To learn more about housing issues.

2019 May – Present - Member, Alachua County Library Trustee Board – To make decisions to support the operation, outreach, and expansion of our county’s library system.

2019 May – Present - 2019/2020 City of Gainesville Charter Review Commission – To suggest changes to the City of Gainesville’s charter.



11. Have you ever served in elected public office? If yes, how many years total have you served in elected public office?

Yes. I have served in elected public office. I was elected and served two terms as the District 1 Gainesville City Commissioner from May, 2006 – May, 2012.

12. Why are you running for this office?

I believe it is imperative that our city prepares for its future as we move into the next decade. I running for office because I want to be involved in the planning of that future. My vision for the City of Gainesville is to bring about opportunities for all citizens to improve their quality of life for their families and themselves. The redevelopment of our downtown and the promotion of economic development in east Gainesville must be a part of Gainesville's future. I want to work to bring about quality housing and improve the city's housing stock for working and individuals. We, the commission must decide on viable options to put our regional utility on solid financial footing by reducing its debt.

Note: Responses Will be Made Public. Please limit your response to 100 words (the published response will be cut off at the limit).

13. What do you perceive are the three most important concerns facing the City of Gainesville and what would be your top priorities, if elected?

The three most important concerns facing the City of Gainesville are:

- 1. The redevelopment of our center city core, namely downtown.**
- 2. Bringing economic development opportunities to the east Gainesville community.**
- 3. Increasing the amount of affordable housing.**

My top priorities would be to:

- 1. The redevelopment of our center city core, namely downtown.**
- 2. Bringing economic development opportunities to the east Gainesville community.**
- 3. Increasing the amount of housing stock for working families and seniors.**
- 4. Reducing the debt load of GRU.**



12. Significant achievement and opportunity gaps exist in our community. Recently, the City Commission and the Alachua County School Board agreed to a county-wide goal to achieve 100% reading proficiency for all children by the end of third grade within three years. Do you support this goal? Do you have other ideas to help close the gap?

Yes. I support this goal. I do have reservations concerning 3 years being a realistic goal. At the Diversity event, it was said the timeline was 5 years. Other ideas to help close the gap would be to give the children the educational support beginning at the toddler and kindergarten grade levels. Secondly, we must somehow have the parents support and involvement for any early learning initiative to be successful. Thirdly, we must find the best curriculum that will help the teachers and students work together to close the reading gap.

13. The City of Gainesville has worked to reduce homelessness by emphasizing rehousing. Soon, Dignity Village will be closed. Do you support the City's recent efforts? Why or why not?

I don't support the city's recent efforts. I don't support the recent efforts because to my knowledge the city's efforts did not follow the original concept of what Dignity Village was supposed to be. Also, the dollars allocated for Dignity Village were not sufficient. Dignity Village was supposed to emphasize not only rehousing of the homeless, but was supposed to bring in partners from the social services arena such as mental health assistance, job training, veterans assistance. In my opinion, the city and county rushed Dignity Village into existence without sufficient planning.

14. The City restructured its Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) last year in its ongoing efforts to revitalize Gainesville's urban core. What steps do you think are necessary to encourage live-work-play downtown?

The steps that are necessary to encourage live-work-play downtown are to make our downtown family-friendly. We need to provide the amenities such as retail, small business development, family entertainment, and jobs to encourage families and individuals to want to live downtown. Our downtown is a prime area for mixed-use development. Data shows when a city has an energetic, vibrant, and walkable downtown that translates to a healthy city. I thoroughly believe downtown redevelopment will complement the redevelopment of the east Gainesville community.



15. What do you feel the City's economic development priorities should be over the next four years?

Over the next four years, the City's economic development priorities should be to create new revenue streams. We should prioritize downtown redevelopment and east Gainesville community redevelopment, especially the N. E. 8th Avenue and Waldo Rd. corridor, as well as Hawthorne Road. We must increase our housing stock for working families and senior citizens. We need to and should work to decrease GRU's debt service. We must do better when it comes improving to our transportation system. The City of Gainesville should also pursue more eco-tourism opportunities.

16. Why should members of the business community support your candidacy?

The business community should support my candidacy because I realize how important the business community is to our economy. I've always been an advocate for the business community, especially the local and small businesses. As I served as the District 1 Gainesville City Commissioner, I worked hard to ensure when the Commission passed policy that would affect the business community that it was fair, and that the policy would help and not hurt the business community, and most of all would not be a financial burden. The business community is the foundation of our city's economy.

I hereby certify to the veracity and completeness of the information herein and that no other party other than myself completed this questionnaire.

Original or Electronic Signature

Scherwin L. Henry