

2010 CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
Prepared by the Virginia Beach Roundtable

CANDIDATE: Dave Redmond

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1) What do you believe to be the top three most pressing concerns to the business community in Virginia Beach?

- Transportation – we are in a crisis, will adversely affect economic development if we don't address this.
- Economy – We cannot take for granted our 3 economic pillars – military, tourism, and agriculture. We must increase our efforts to retain the military assets we have.
- Regulatory environment – how businesses have to interact with the city, better service for city.
- What I want to bring to council is a customer friendly approach to government services.
- Should make it easier for buses as they provide jobs and income.
- Goal is to fire up our economic engines – we need to work to develop a dynamic environment and more robust economy.

2) For incumbents, do you think the votes you have taken during your service on Council have addressed or contributed to those concerns? Please give examples.

N/A

3) Do you support or oppose the use of public-private partnerships such as those created to develop Town Center, the Sandbridge Beach restoration, the 31st Street Hotel and as have been suggested for future projects in strategic growth areas? If yes, what public financing options do you feel appropriate for such projects? Financing tools might include: Tax Increment Financing, Special Service Districts, Enterprise Zones, Innovation Zones (technology) and BID's.

- Yes, supports when certain conditions apply that will broaden the tax base that attracts investment.
- Understands the SGA's and how they should be financed.
- Has spent 4 years on the Planning Commission.
- Each mechanism can be successful but we must use the one that best fits the project.

- 4) What do you believe should be the City's transportation priorities for the near term and assuming the General Assembly's continued unwillingness to provide sufficient funding resources for these projects, how do you suggest the City fund critical transportation needs?
- Finish projects already underway- Princess Anne Road/Nimmo Parkway widening, Witchduck Road, Laskin road Gateway.
 - Need stimulus to finish. Transportation funding is a state responsibility.
 - Light rail is coming to our western border.
- 5) Should Virginia Beach continue to participate in the regional economic development alliance to increase our ability to reach out to national and international companies?
- Yes, need to take the lead. Virginia Beach has a lot to gain and we should participate in regional efforts that create synergy.
 - Virginia Beach is the largest contributor and has the largest constituency.
- 6) How important is regional cooperation to the future of Virginia Beach and do you support participation in such regional initiatives as workforce development (Opportunity, Inc.), military infrastructure (HR Military and Federal Facilities Alliance), regional policy development (Hampton Roads Partnership), and regional planning (Hampton Roads Planning District Commission/MPO)?
- Worked 4 years with Hampton Roads Partnership. Our leadership and participation in regional organizations is critical to the success of Hampton Roads as a region and the city.
 - Need to emphasize Virginia Beach's strengths and work with other cities.
- 7) What are the most important steps the City can take to enhance its relationship and communication with the military and ensure retention of military commands in Hampton Roads?
- Need to work with Hampton Roads Military Alliance. It is an appropriate forum to communicate with Washington and with various commands.
 - Need to recognize military needs, especially their transportation needs.
 - Focus on preserving and improving quality of life in the city.
 - Education – need world-class schools. Good for business recruitment and military retention.
 - Parks, libraries and recreation centers are important to the military.

- 8) Is the extension of the light rail system from the planned terminus at Newtown Road east to the Beach District a priority and how should it be financed?
- Yes, the issue is here and now.
 - The EIS is the start of the process to acquire federal funding. It is a huge asset.
 - This intact right of way from border to border is a valuable asset.
 - Enormous value to looking at the study. Need the study to determine financing.
- 9) Do you believe the city's budget process ought to budget expenses to meet revenue goals or adjust revenues to meet budget and spending priorities?
- Determine what the available resources are, and then adjust budget to revenues.
 - There will always be unmet needs. We must prioritize.
 - Believes real estate is stabilizing the revenue stream.
 - Three years ago we had a surplus and the city listed some of the unfunded priorities.
- 10) Should the General Assembly empower localities to: provide defined contribution plans in lieu of defined benefit plans, give flexibility to modify retirement service and age qualifications, and to require employee participation in benefit packages as may be deemed appropriate by the local governing body? Why or why not?
- Yes, for two reasons. We have a ticking time bomb with unfounded liabilities. The current program is unsustainable. Need to address it. In favor of exploring creative solution with flexibility. We could make sound decisions without being unfair. Don't like placing burden on our children and grandchildren.
 - We need more creativity on how we design benefit packages.
- 11) Do you feel there is waste in the city budget? If so, please site specific areas where you would reduce funding.
- Yes, we have many boards and commissions and in some areas we may have full time staff supporting some that we may need to review to see if needed.
 - In favor of considering some cuts across the board.
 - Need to look at line items at the budget process.
 - Have to look at what revenue you will have and prioritize to determine what to eliminate.
 - Everybody's got to give a little, might be easier than getting rid of a whole department. Could exempt some departments from an across the board reduction if needed.

12) Do you concur with the recommendation of the City's Blue Ribbon Tax, Fee and Spending Task Force that a "City Budget Study Commission" should be established to assist in the development of the annual budget? If yes, what should be its composition and mission?

- No. My fear about commissions is adding another layer of process when we already have a thorough process.
- We have an exhaustive budget process, 16 public hearings, etc. We could benefit from engaging stakeholder groups for input without needing a commission.
- Council members should handle budget process.

13) Do you believe business is fairly taxed in the City? If not, what specifically would you change?

- No, do not feel business is overtaxed.
- In the current environment, not sure we can afford to reduce any tax.

14) What is your opinion of the City Manager and the job he is doing?

- Worked with him for 10 years – the fact that Virginia Beach has a AAA bond rating is a testament to the great job Jim has done and continues to do.
- The way Virginia Beach has developed and matured under Jim's leadership, would keep him as long as he wants to be there.
- We have 17,000 employees, 2 billion budget, his salary is not too much.

15) Do you support City Council's outright ban on all LED signs for future consideration or use by private business, schools, churches, non-profits and others?

- No, I voted against it on Planning Commission. I worked hard on some compromise measures.
- Voted for compromise.