

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

CANDIDATE: James Cabiness

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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
 - Land development – Strategic Growth Areas – Hubs around light rail
 - Oceanfront development, 31st Street Laskin Project has corridor to city.

- 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.
 - Big proponent of public/private partnership thinks Town Center has been a huge success.
 - Great for citizens and tourists.
 - Increased tax revenue is very important.
 - Big proponent of TIF's, helps redevelop lower income area and attracts business.
 - In favor of innovative technology-believes it is key.

- 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?
 - Light Rail. Researched it and visited Portland.
 - Will improve environment and more efficient, faster way to get from place to place.
 - General Assembly is doing a good job working with us.
 - Light rail is important to strategic growth areas.
 - Press General Assembly for more funding.

- 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, we are Hampton Roads and looked at as a region.
 - Economic Development Department doing an excellent job with Warren Harris and his team.
- 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)?
- Very important and Virginia Beach.
 - Top 2 issues on his platform are education and job creation, need to prepare the workforce.
 - Virginia Beach should take the lead and partner with the rest in the region.
- 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?
- Most important item is to solve radar issue. We need to reach compromise on this issue.
 - Most important to work with military. City leaders need to be open and respect needs of military. Prior planning should have been done.
 - Partnership with military to move radar is important. City should not foot entire bill.
 - Very important to work with military to retain carriers.
 - We need to diversify our economy and build up our tourism.
 - Can't be so dependent on the military so that our economy is based on the military decision makers.
 - Build tourism to balance military, which could decline here.
- 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?
- Definitely a priority, for Norfolk and Virginia Beach to be successful.
 - Ultimate goal is from oceanfront to airport.
 - Talk to and work with citizens to build support for subsidies. Believes citizens will support once educated on benefits.
 - We need to fund with HRT and seek state money.

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?

- Adjust revenues to meet budget and spending priorities.
- Dome site, light rail, Laskin Road – would consider fees or taxes to increase revenues.

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?

- Should stay in the hands of the General Assembly.
- Our city should focus on providing core services such as safety, police, etc.

11) Do you feel there is waste in the city budget? If so, please site specific areas where you would reduce funding.

- Don't believe there is wasteful spending.
- Right now expenditures are on target.
- Tighter control in credit cards.
- Studied both school and city budgets.

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?

- Need to research, not familiar.

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

- Yes, he thinks the tax structure is fair today.
- Small businesses feel they are overtaxed.
- Start up fees and taxes limit the number of employees hired.
- Most business owners probably would like a lower rate.
- Can't adjust until economy improves.
- For now they should remain the same.

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

- Doing a great job.
- Very difficult job.
- Takes a lot of heat.
- Oversees a large budget and services to 435,000 citizens.
- Very supportive of City Manager Spore.
- Been fair and honest.

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?

- Bring people together to deal with problem.
- Does not support our right ban but establish appropriate regulations.
- Should be a compromise resolution.
- A goal to put issue back on the table.
- We should not hinder development or growth of business.
- Understands those that are opposed.