

COALITION FOR A BETTER MEMPHIS
Shelby County Commissioner Candidate Questionnaire
Election Date: May 4, 2010

Name: Joe Baier

District for which you are running: District 1 – Position 3

Section 1: Qualifications and Background (2 questions)

Section 2: Vision and Strategies (4 questions)

Section 3: Improving the Education System (4 questions)

1. QUALIFICATIONS AND BACKGROUND

- 1. Describe your qualifications for holding the office of Shelby County Commissioner. (Please answer in the space below and attach a resume.)**

I have spent the last 35 years gathering experience as an accountant, a leader in two Fortune 500 and one Fortune 100 companies. I have built the most successful Breast Center in America when you consider reputation and outcomes along with national accreditation. You couple this with my being a partner in a Money Management firm that was named "The Best of The Best" by all the rating services in 1998 and it is easy to recognize that I have the experience to serve the people of Shelby County.

- 2. What events or experiences caused you to decide to run for this office?**

A number of influential Republican leaders asked me to run for County Commission against Mike Carpenter because of his voting record as a County Commissioner. For many years and like most citizens, I have been very concerned with the direction our leadership has taken Memphis and Shelby County.

I fully understand that we will not change our community overnight but we must develop a plan of action to turn our city and county around for the sake of all of our citizens.

NAME: _____ JOE BAIER _____

2. VISION AND STRATEGIES

1. In your opinion, what are the three greatest issues (problems or opportunities) facing Shelby County in the next four years?

1. The threat to consolidate Memphis and Shelby County without dealing with the present problems of the city first. I would be in favor of consolidation only if I am convinced that it would improve the quality of life for all of our citizens.
2. High taxes on business and citizens
3. Our crime rate.

2. Shelby County's debt is seen by many people as a threat to county government. How would you propose that the county pay down its debt? How would you prevent additional debt in the future?

Revenue has to exceed expenditures to pay down on the debt. A conservative business like approach to expenditures would help in reducing debt in the future.

3. The Memphis City Council has taken steps over the last few years attempting to shift the burden of funding both city and county schools to Shelby County residents. What are your views regarding the best way to fund public education of Shelby County and Memphis children?

My good friend and business associate Charles McVean has proven that there are some good alternative ways to the educational problems in the Memphis City Schools. Better student cost less to educate. My sister is the #2 Director for DeSoto County Schools. They pay their teachers about one half what the Memphis City School teachers make with the results of better educated students. This is the result of leadership.

Since the Shelby County Commission provides funding for the Memphis City schools, the first thing we need is to have some oversight provisions dealing with the Memphis City schools and abolish ineffective leaders.

4. Some people believe that urban communities should adopt policies that encourage what is called "smart growth." Do you believe Shelby County should have a general policy about new residential and commercial developments? If so, what should that policy be?

Smart growth is good for the community and has a positive effect for everyone. I am for smart growth similar to what they have in Fayette County in that it also allows the citizens more participation into the development of their community and not just developers, special interest groups and certain government leaders.

NAME: _____ JOE BAIER _____

3. IMPROVING THE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT

- 1. What do you regard as the greatest obstacle or barrier to economic growth in Shelby County today? What can the County Commission do to reduce that impediment?**

The greatest obstacles or barrier to economic growth is the lack of a safe environment for the citizens to work, worship, raise their children, play and retire plus an untrained work force.

- 2. What is your philosophy about offering incentives to companies that are considering major new investments or job expansions in Shelby County?**

Each case should stand on its' own merit and we should welcome the opportunity to give the proper incentives to companies wanting to locate in Shelby County.

- 3. What is your view regarding the best way to address financing of The Med and the need for public health options?**

Quite like the school system, the Med needs leadership. Business management is non-existent. I understand the day to day operation of running a medical facility. St. Francis is much larger in terms of procedures. It cost \$ 300,000 a day to run St. Francis while it cost \$ 1,000,000 a day to pay for the Med. The inefficiencies in the Med paint a picture that most business people would fully understand.

Obviously we need a public health option without creating a clearing house for patients abusing the system. I would recommend crating remote clinics that would send the more serious patients to the Med. This is a model that works well for the Mayo Clinic in which I have first hand knowledge.

- 4. When you complete your service as commissioner, what do you want your legacy to be?**

Joe Baier was a commissioner that worked tirelessly to serve the citizens of Shelby County to the best of his ability. With his help, the county was moved into a more positive direction and his leadership was greatly responsible.

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