

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

Name: John Wilkerson

District for which you are running: District 4 – Position 2

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Section 1: Qualifications and Background (2 questions)

Section 2: Vision and Strategies (4 questions)

Section 3: Improving the Education System (4 questions)

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<b>1. QUALIFICATIONS AND BACKGROUND</b>
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1. Describe your qualifications for holding the office of Shelby County Commissioner.  
(Please answer in the space below and attach a resume.)

**My Qualifications stem primarily from my professional career as a certified public accountant. My career as a C.P.A. included the examination of financial records as to their correctness, tax returns preparation and advice, including advice to clients to use their financial resources wisely.**

**My experience also included audits of Governmental entities.**

**I also served two years as an elective City Commissioner.**

**See Attached Resume.**

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

**My observations of past and present county commissioners and their lack of knowledge required to understand the operation of a large government body and enact and enforce the proper legislation.**

NAME: JOHN WILKERSON

**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?**

**The bonded indebtedness including interest through maturity was over \$2 billion dollars at June 30, 2009.**

**School financing and proposed changes in Shelby County by Tennessee Legislature.**

**The proposed consolidation of the city of Memphis and Shelby county.**

**Last, the effects on all three of current economic conditions.**

- 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?**

**The operations of the County schools should be reviewed and unessential items eliminated. Reduction in expenditures should be applied to debt.**

**New Bonds should not be issued unless current bonds are retired in a similar amount.**

**New non essential projects should be postponed.**

- 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?**

NAME: JOHN WILKERSON

**Shelby County schools and the City of Memphis schools should both receive the same amount per student of county taxes levied for schools.**

- 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?**

**I believe the County should have laws to encourage green growth, however due to lack of knowledge, which I will acquire when elected, I have no specific policy to propose at this time.**

### **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 general economic condition which Shelby County has little effect upon are a part of the large national recession.**

**The greatest detriment to economic growth in Shelby County is the City of Memphis and it’s image.**

**The Shelby County commission can work with Memphis city government for a better public appearance to outside investors.**

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

NAME: JOHN WILKERSON

**I believe the waver of property taxes for an Initial period of time is good.**

**Firm contractual agreements should protect the county in any such agreement that is made.**

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

**This is a legal problem. Before anything else is done some way should be found that surrounding Tennessee counties and the States of Arkansas and Mississippi all pay their fair share.**

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

**That Shelby County will be more efficiently run than at present. The efficient operation will provide needed services to county residents and provide a surplus each year that should retire the bond debt.**

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