

Candidate: **Jerry Donald**

### COUNTY COUNCIL QUESTION

1. This Council will be tasked with appointing a Charter Review Committee, what charter changes do you support? What type of committee members will you be considering for appointment?

**ANSWER:** I think a mix of those who wrote the Charter combined with some municipal leaders and other community leaders would be the best.

2. [We didn't get to this question at the forum:](#) Based on your respective campaign commitments, what specific growth policies and regulations do you plan to introduce?

**ANSWER:** By growth, do you mean economic growth or housing growth (I realize some housing growth is necessary for economic growth)? If you mean economic growth I have supported strongly funding our Office of Economic Development which works hard to bring new businesses here. I have supported strongly funding the BOE because a poor education system will not be much of a business attraction. As for housing, most of the growth is being done by municipalities and in parts of the County that were approved before I took office. With twenty thousand houses in the pipeline I see no need to approve major new housing development in the Frederick County.

3. Livable Frederick, now going on three years of preparations, has been both criticized and lauded for how it evolved. As a Council candidate, what is your perception of Livable Frederick, and what would you want to see in order to gain your support?

**ANSWER:** I like the Livable Frederick Plan. A great deal of effort went in to getting large amounts of public participation in it.

4. What areas should the County Staff/Planning Commission begin with their first Community and Corridor Plans, following Livable Frederick?

**ANSWER:** Council districts two and one will see much of the growth, especially two due to previous decisions made before the Council and Executive took office. Three and four are mostly in the City and five doesn't have much growth outside of municipalities.

5. What approaches would you take to garner support for legislation that you are introducing?

**ANSWER:** I first would discuss it with the Executive and staff. Then I would ask for it to be placed on a workshop agenda so the Council can ask questions. That is how I have gotten all five of my bills into law. I have yet to introduce legislation that has failed because I try to address concerns before the final version of the bill is written.

6. If elected and you knew you had full or enough support what one piece of legislation would you introduce day 1?

**ANSWER:** A dedicated funding mechanism for our trails and bikeways plan.

7. The County Executive has the primary duty of preparing and presenting a balanced budget to the Council. The Council is restricted to reducing planned spending. Do you have priorities that you'd like to present to the County Executive for inclusion in future spending plans?

**ANSWER: I have met with the Executive every year before she presents her budget (not all Council Members have done this, although she invites all members to meet with her). Of course roads, schools and public safety are priorities, but if you want a specific thing I would like to see, it is an increase in our 9-1-1 call takers. We are short staffed there and need to increase our numbers.**

8. What specific initiatives will you be pursuing to support our small businesses in Frederick County?

**ANSWER: I support fully funding our Economic Development staff, which does a great job helping to attract and keep small businesses in the County. One thing I did to help small business in my District is to introduce a resolution supporting Brunswick's Enterprise Zone and to increase funding for our Main Street programs.**

9. When it comes to business-friendly policies and regulations, are there specific programs, services and regulatory changes that you would undertake?

**ANSWER: I would like to see us look at home based businesses, a growing trend in the economy. We may need to reduce or increase regulations (or increasing some and decreasing others, depending on what we find).**

10. In your discussion with the business community what have you found to be the greatest challenges facing the business community constituents?

**ANSWER: Arcane liquor laws in the State of Maryland. The Governor needs to put together a group to look at liquor laws and streamline them. Some are purely designed to keep out competition.**

11. If elected, what would you do to improve/enhance the relationship between the County and the Frederick County General Assembly delegation?

**ANSWER: The relationship will depend on the personalities of those we elect. I have tried to work positively with the delegation over the past four years and I think my record is strong in that area. Feel free to ask them, both Republicans and Democrats.**

12. Are there any specific solutions or ideas you have identified to support accelerating the needed widening of US 15 and I-270 projects.

**ANSWER: I, like everyone elected in Frederick County (I think this one is unanimous) have asked the State for these things and I have attended many meetings to do so. The last plan I saw to widen 15 by adding lanes on the inside seems to be the most cost effective.**

13. The first County Council has been seated for almost 4 years now, and has had to maneuver through establishing certain 'norms', 'processes' and 'rules of order' to administer their agenda. What is your

observation of the first council and if elected what would you propose to further refine the legislative process in the County?

**ANSWER:** My observation is that we had a very narrow majority that worked together to move Frederick County forward and I am happy to stand on that record. We had some members who seemed dedicated to make sure things did not work with the new form of government. The biggest refinement would be to elect people, whether Democrats, Republicans or Unaffiliated, who actually want the Council to successfully handle its business. If we don't elect people of that mindset then it won't matter what the legislative process is.

The Yes or No Questions: Please take this opportunity to go beyond the simple answer of Yes or No.

One of the key initiatives the Chamber learned from the Greenville SC trip was a Citywide TIF, that was purposeful, and led to strategic investment of longer term infrastructure needs for all types of development.

**1. Do you support Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) mechanisms to support infrastructure necessary to bring forth...*Residential Opportunities...* (YES/NO)... in Frederick?**

**ANSWER: YES.** I support TIFs under a narrow set of circumstances, such as using the increased tax revenue in an area to fix infrastructure issues.

**2. Do you support Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) mechanisms to support infrastructure necessary to bring forth...*Employment Opportunities (Yes/NO)*.....in Frederick?**

**ANSWER: YES.** see answer #1

**3. Do you support Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) mechanisms to support infrastructure necessary to bring forth... *Mixed Use Opportunities (YES/NO)*...in Frederick?**

**ANSWER: YES.** But it depends on the mix in the mixed use. Mostly housing with a few business sites, then no.

Related to financing of Infrastructure, but not utilizing a TIF as described for prior questions:

**4. Do you support broad-based taxes and fees to pay for school infrastructure needed as a result of enrollment changes?**

**ANSWER: YES.** We do that now. It is a myth that the impact fees and mitigation fees pay the whole cost of new schools.

5. Do you support broad-based taxes/fees to support constructing specific transportation projects?

**ANSWER: YES and NO.** Depends on what the project is. If it is only for one area (example, the bridge going to JTP), then no. If it improves a road that many people use across Frederick County, then yes.

Relative to County Operations/Separation of Powers

6. Do you support a completely separate staff for the County Council in order for the Council to have independent-or-autonomous review and analysis of legislative initiatives that come before them?

**ANSWER: YES.** It will eventually happen, but now we have a mix of at-will and non at-will employees and I don't want to change that because I like the staff we have and many of them do not want to be at-will. They are doing a fine job under what, at times, can be difficult circumstances.

Over the last four years the County Executive has introduced as much legislation as the Council. Further if you look at the Council bills, many are as a result of an administrative policy or issues that required the Council to take up as a result of administrative actions.

7. Do you think the Executive Branch is attempting to address too many legislative initiatives as opposed to running the administrative arm of the County, or is this the right approach?

**ANSWER: NO.** The fact that the administration puts together so much legislation is because that is where the staff is who can often see legislative needs at the ground level. For example, if Economic Development sees a need to change County laws to attract or retain businesses, it will be an administration bill.

The Frederick County Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) has been in existence for nearly 30 years. During that time, there have been specific adjustments to how it is administered with the most recent significant changes occurring in 2008. Now, in 2018 with a rapidly changing economy, demonstrated shifts in county demographics, and housing choice preference from both existing/resale and new home buyers, combined with programmatic decisions affecting capacity in different ways throughout the County.

8. Do you support a comprehensive review and analysis for best practices and enactment of a better approach that will lead Frederick County's Growth Management into the next decade?

**ANSWER: YES.** Things like this should be reviewed periodically to keep it up-to-date.

The council addressed a number of bills brought forth to them affecting business development and land use;

9. Do you support a more targeted approach to updating certain code/zoning changes, rather than dealing with issues on a piecemeal basis?

**ANSWER: YES. The attempt to legislate a solution to the Bussard Brothers situation is a good example.**