

# Candidates For Council Concerned About Growth, Services

Planning for the future. Better infrastructure. Expanded services. Fiscal responsibility. Jobs. Environmental responsibility. Unity.

Six of the 10 candidates for three seats on the Long Beach Town Council have all this and more on their minds as the Oct. 5 primary approaches.

Profiled below are incumbents Jeffrie D. Ensminger and Danny Leonard, former councilman Kevin M. Bell, and first-time candidates Frances T. Allen, Helen Cashwell and Doris Hertel. (Candidates Timothy L. Jones, Dan Windsor, David S. Drummond and Carlton (Gene) Frazier did not return candidate questionnaires.)

Frances T. Allen cites unity as the top issue facing the town this coming term, something she said will require "a major effort" by everyone in the town. She supports periodic town meetings for the sole purpose of hearing from citizens.

Allen, 65, is retired from the Richmond, Va., Department of Recreation and Parks, where she served as recreation supervisor from 1971 until 1985. She was graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University with a bachelor of science degree in 1973. She also served as city recreation program director and Hopewell Girls' Club director for six years.

"I want a government that seeks input from all its citizens, evaluates the information and works through compromise to create a community that reflects and protects the diversity of the needs and concerns of its citizens."

She said the town needs to address the issues of stormwater runoff and wastewater management in combination, not as separate issues, incorporating environmental issues with growth and development.

Allen wants to see the budgetary process examined to ensure the town will be able to perform needed functions such as street paving and providing a new water storage tower without unnecessary fees and taxes.

"I have attended most town meetings for

several years and understand the governing process," she said. As evidence of her commitment, she intends to accept no salary or health benefits if elected.

Helen C. Cashwell said she wants to represent the majority of citizens who have not had a voice in the business of Long Beach. Age 66, she is a retired director of computer operations with U.S. Air. She earned a bachelor of arts in business administration from Park College in 1976 and studied computer science periodically from 1946 to 1962 at West Texas State College. Previously she served as director of a special board to the mayor of Greater Kansas City to develop an equal employment opportunity policy and served three years on the advisory board for Forsyth College.

Her pet issues for the coming term: eliminating the \$5 automobile tax and providing stickers for residency proof when returning to the island after evacuations; staying out of the dredging business (if needed, have the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers do it) and discontinuing group insurance for elected town officials.

"I have the business experience, education and knowledge to make good decisions based on all citizens' needs and desires," she said, not representing any special interest groups and listening to issues that concern residents and visitors on a daily basis. She said she has an understanding of local government in North Carolina and the ability to comprehend what is allowed.

Kevin M. Bell served as a town council member from 1987 to 1991 and wants to return because he believes his experience and training would be "a tremendous asset" to town residents.

He supports a second bridge from the island both to help in case of evacuation and to relieve increasing traffic problems; wants to see streets, including Yacht Drive, paved to help relieve traffic; and says new water system storage is "a must" in case of an

## LONG BEACH

emergency.

Bell, 34, owns a heating, air conditioning and carpet outlet with state licensing and has completed the state's damage assessment course as well as numerous continuing education courses related to his business. He has served as a director of the Brunswick County Home Builders since 1989 and is past chairman of the Long Beach Community Watch Program. He has 16 years of management experience in various jobs.

"I am a person that understands and will listen to the needs of the people," he wrote.

Doris Hertel has no previous experience in public office, but has lobbied the state legislature regarding educational concerns and landlord/tenant laws. She said she is seeking office because she believes residents have a responsibility for insuring that the town is governed by people who share their concerns.

She has owned her own accounting business for 10 years and advises clients in their business decisions. She has attended the University of North Carolina and University of Nevada and cites past leadership experience in professional and charitable organizations. She was recently elected to teach Sunday school.

Hertel wants Long Beach and other towns lobby state and county governments to offer additional incentives for businesses to locate here, providing more employment opportunities and boosting the economy.

Also, Hertel said she feels the town needs to expand programs and recreational facilities for children. She envisions recruiting parents to supervise activities, getting children more involved in the community and starting a program to allow high school students to work in local businesses to gain experience before graduation. The town needs sidewalks, street paving, curbs and gutters, among other things, she said, and

Long Beach should ask the state and county to help pay for them.

"I am committed to our community and what is best for our community and all the residents, not a special interest group. I have the experience as an accountant, owner of a business, parent and as a woman."

Jeffrie D. Ensminger said he had seen a lack of effort in preparing the town for the future until four years ago, when he was elected to council.

Since then, he said, "we have made considerable progress in re-establishing a sound budget with an adequate fund balance, and we are now able to concentrate on improving our infrastructure. It is imperative that these programs continue, that we no lose our momentum, that we not return to the old ways of spending for today without planning for tomorrow."

He is a former U.S. Marine and a retired Charlotte Police Department officer with an associate degree in criminology from Central Piedmont Community College and advanced certification. In addition to his town council experience, Ensminger, 49, has served on the National Board of Directors, Fraternal Order of Police since 1989 and on the Brunswick County Emergency Services Coordinating Committee since 1990. He formerly served on the Citizens Review Committee of the Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Department.

Ensminger said it is council's responsibility to implement a sound budget that provides services, while maintaining the lowest possible tax rate and a reasonable fund balance, not sacrificing any one for the other.

He advocates managing growth through zoning that encourages single family growth not multi-family housing. Having a "somewhat limited" commercial zone for new business should help in maintaining the town's relaxed lifestyle.

Ensminger says it is "almost unthinkable" that a town the size of Long Beach should have dirt roads in 1993. On council he proposed the plan to speed up paving by

rolling over property owner assessments to the next year's paving budget rather than returning them to the fund balance, which should allow paving of all streets by the end of 1997 if continued, he said.

An added qualification, he said, is his experience seeing government from all sides, as a private citizen, public employee and elected official.

A self-employed building contractor, Danny C. Leonard wants to continue on the town council because, like Ensminger, he feels the town has progressed over the past four years.

"I feel that in the four years I have served on this council we have established a financial stability and implemented programs that, if continued, will keep the Town of Long Beach moving forward and will make it a cleaner, better place for all its citizens to live and enjoy," he said.

Paving of all town streets should be very high on the council's priority list, he said, with completion in the next five years if the current program is continued.

Construction is scheduled to begin in 1997 for a second bridge to Oak Island, which he considers vital for the safety and welfare of residents. He believes the town should pursue the project and see that it is completed on schedule.

The need for additional water storage is an issue that needs to be addressed and resolved during the next two years, he said. Current storage is inadequate because of the town's growth in population, and the need will only become more critical as the town continues to grow, he said.

Leonard cites his 15 years of business experience and his council experience and working knowledge of town government among his qualifications.

"I feel that I have demonstrated the ability to honestly address the issues, accept criticism and disapproval, but still make positive decisions in the best interests of the town as a whole."



ALLEN



CASHWELL



HERTEL



ENSMINGER



LEONARD

## Three Candidates Vying For Mayor

BY SUSAN USHER

Growth. How to manage, shape, limit, nurture it. How to provide needed and/or wanted services and remain an affordable, desirable place to live.

While these are problems faced by all communities to some degree, debate over such issues seems to always be at its most volatile at Long Beach, a town with strongly opinionated voter factions and a history of mistrust and misperception when it comes to town government. At the heart of recent debate, a central sewer system plan voted down in March because of concerns about actual need, impact on future overdevelopment and cost. The town moved ahead with purchase of a mainland tract suitable for a treatment plant site, planning ahead in case voters change their minds.

Election year 1993 has three candidates seeking the mayor's post, and 10 candidates vying for three seats on the town council. On Tuesday, Oct. 5, in the only municipal primary election in Brunswick County, town voters will narrow the field to two candidates for mayor and six for commissioner. Those top vote-getters will go on the ballot for the Nov. 2 general election.

In the running for mayor are three local business people: incumbent Joan P. Altman, who was elected in 1991 after serving a two-year stint on the town planning board; John (Johnny) W. Vereen III, who is seeking a return to office after having served four years (1981-85) on the council and three terms as mayor (1986-87, 1988-89, 1990-91); and Rupert Riley, who has no previous political experience.

Riley said he is running for mayor because he would like to restore representative government to Long Beach, establish fiscal responsibility and restore public confidence in the town's elected officials. The central sewer is his key issue. "Residents of Long Beach clearly told the elected officials that they do not want a sewer system," he wrote. "We should respect their decisions and put this subject to bed."

Self-employed 10 years as president of a sales company, Riley, 72, is a 1942 graduate of N.C. State University with a bachelor of science in textile management. He also has a combined 20-plus years of experience in sales engineering, sales management and management in the textile industry.

Riley also wants to eliminate, he said, use of town funds to pay medical insurance premiums for elected officials their families, and he said a study should be made with the goal of eliminating executive "secret" sessions by the council.

He cites his integrity and management and budget experiences as fac-

tors that make him most qualified candidate for mayor.

Altman, 40, is seeking a second term as mayor because she wants to continue providing "representative, responsible, representative leadership," and to provide "positive representation" for Long Beach in contacts with other local governments and state and federal officials.

A building contractor, she earned a bachelor's degree in biology in 1975 from the University of Virginia and is self-employed as a building contractor. She is a tutor trainer and past secretary of the Brunswick County Literacy Council, and is serving her third year on its advisory board. She is vice-regent of the Brunswick Town Chapter of the National Society, DAR.

She sees responsible leadership, managing growth and addressing taxes and fees as top issues for the mayor during the coming term.

"The mayor must help town council members work together effectively to represent all citizens of the town and be willing to face difficult and controversial issues as they arise," she wrote, and needs to approach each issue with a thorough understanding based on knowledge and research.

She said Long Beach must prepare to accommodate growth by planning for increased pressures on infrastructure such as streets, water system and recreation areas. Protection of natural resources should be a priority in decisions relating to growth. She advocates protecting the town's single-family residential beach atmosphere, and would not support efforts to change town zoning to allow higher density development.

Taxes and fees must be adequate to cover the cost of services required by the town, she said, and attempts to set an unrealistic tax rate by balancing the budget with the fund balance reserves can jeopardize the town's financial strength. She advocates looking for innovative means of using tax dollars more effectively, such as consolidating services with other Brunswick County municipalities.

As evidence that she is the most

qualified candidate for mayor, Altman said she has demonstrated her willingness to devote the time and energy necessary "to be an effective, positive mayor" for Long Beach, fully supports the town manager form of government and is dedicated to providing the town's people representative government.

Vereen comes from a family that has always been involved in politics, taught him public service is a privilege and responsibility, and taught him to have compassion for others. "What better way to do this than through public service?"

He sees the need for more responsible government, restored stability to the tax system and managed growth.

Vereen, 39, is currently manager of an auto parts and supplies store. He earned a high school diploma from Carolina Military Academy. In addition to his previous town service, he served on the Brunswick County Airport Commission (1981-87, chairman, 1986-87), and as Democratic Party chairman, Oak Island Precinct 2 (1981-1991).

Vereen pledged to make government more responsive to problems related to individuals. His goal is to "strive for a deeper understanding in government for those problems on an everyday basis and to restore the personal touch so that people know government cares about them."

He said he wants to restore tax system stability with closer control over management, and pointed out that in 10 years he never voted for a tax increase. "With my past government experience, there are ways to keep the system in check. My opinion is not based on guess, but on fact, because this is the way we operated in Long Beach for the previous 10 years that I was a councilman and mayor."

As for growth, Vereen doesn't want over-commercialization and overdevelopment of the island, and said "orderly growth is healthy and essential to any community," with a steady influx of residential homes and commercial services needed for continued economic stability. Other-



ALTMAN



VEREEN



RILEY



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