

# Voters To Choose Between Approaches To Growth

Long Beach voters go to the polls Tuesday to choose among candidates with distinctly different ideas about the role town government should take in relation to the growth and direction of the community: pro-active or reactive, hands-on or laissez-faire.

The decks were cleared in an Oct. 5 primary, leaving two candidates for mayor and six for the three seats available on the board.

First term Mayor Joan P. Altman faces a challenge from Rupert Riley, who has no previous experience in public office.

Seeking seats on the town board are Frances Allen, Helen Cashwell, Jeffrie Ensminger, Danny Leonard, Kevin Bell and David Drummond. Bell and Drummond did not return the *Beacon's* candidate questionnaire.

Altman was elected to the office in 1991 after serving a two-year stint on the town planning board.

Like several other candidates, Riley is affiliated with a local government watchdog group, Concerned Citizens of Long Beach, formed more than a year ago to fight and successfully defeat a March 1992 sewer bond referendum. Sewer is still one of the reasons Riley filed for the mayor's race.

"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."

While Altman intends to abide by the voters' mandate in the sewer bond vote, she doesn't think sewer is a dead issue, but rather an inevitable issue because of small lots on the island and the prospect of continued growth regardless of whether the town has a sewer system or not.

Views on the sewer issue relate to other concerns regarding if and how the town should plan for continued growth and whether it should spend tax dollars now to improve infrastructure and services.

## MAYOR Riley

Rupert 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.

Riley said he wants to eliminate use of town funds to pay medical insurance premiums for elected officials and/or 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 factors that make him most qualified candidate for mayor.

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

## Altman

Joan Altman 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. She thinks the mayor needs to approach each issue with a thorough understanding based on knowledge and research.

She is seeking a second term because she wants to continue providing both "responsible, representative

## LONG BEACH

leadership," and positive representation for Long Beach in dealing with other governments and public officials.

A self-employed building contractor, Altman holds a bachelor's degree in biology from the University of Virginia. 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, Daughters of the American Revolution.

She said Long Beach must prepare to accommodate inevitable growth by planning for increased pressures on infrastructure such as streets, water system and recreation areas.

However, she advocates protecting the town's single-family residential beach atmosphere, would not support efforts to change town zoning to allow higher density development, and believes protection of natural resources should be a priority in decisions relating to growth.

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.

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 representative government.



ALTMAN

## COUNCIL Allen

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

"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 wants the town to address the issues of stormwater runoff and wastewater management together, not as separate issues, incorporating environmental issues with growth and development.

She 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. "She intends to accept no salary or health benefits from the town if elected."

Allen 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



ALLEN

## Joyner

Philo "Phil" Joyner is retired from quality management at duPont. He is a high school graduate and attended Johnson C. Smith University.

"I am very interested in improving my community using ideas and experiences gained in my many travels, and my ability to listen," Joyner said.

He lists as main issues cable television rates, recreational facilities and tax rates.

"I have visited many towns and cities and have learned from their successes, and believe that some of their ideas can work in Southport," he concludes. "I'm retired and now have time to put the peoples' ideas to work for community improvement."



JOYNER

## Three Southport Seats Are Sought

In Southport, Mayor Norman Holden is unopposed.

Running for two Ward I seats are incumbents James Brown and William Crowe and challenger Paul Darrell Fisher. Brown and Crowe did not respond to the *Beacon* questionnaire.

### WARD I Fisher

Paul Darrell Fisher is a retired U.S. Army colonel and a self-employed consultant.

He is a graduate of Southport High School, The Citadel, the British Joint Service Staff College and the U.S. Army War College.

He held command and staff positions in the Army and is currently vice president of the Southport Lions Club.

"I have served my nation for over 30 years in various command and staff positions, including two years in combat," Fisher said. "During my career, I was responsible for the welfare of thousands of soldiers and millions of dollars in real property. I desire to continue to offer my hometown my leadership and management experience."

He lists as priorities establishing

sound short and long-range programs to meet citizens' wants and needs; to take a conservative approach to the budget to ensure that citizens get the best product for their money; and to preserve Southport's quality of life.

"I have an understanding of the aspirations of the citizens of Southport," he said. "Moreover, I can bring a solid and varied background of experience in planning, programming and budgeting so essential for progress now and in the future."

### WARD II

Running for one Ward II seats are Leonard H. Moore, John D. Gorman II and Phil "Phil" Joyner. Moore did not respond to the *Beacon* questionnaire.

### Gorman

John D. Gorman II is a semi-retired manufacturer's representative. He holds a bachelor's degree in business administration. He is co-chairman of the Southport Waterfront Development Committee and is a FEMA appointee, Brunswick County Emergency Management.

Gorman says "the 'new' residents of Southport need a voice" and lists as priorities preservation of the town's historic homes and water-

director for six years.

## Bell

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.

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

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 emergency.

Bell 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.

## Cashwell

Helen C. Cashwell said she wants "to represent the majority of citizens who have not had a voice in the business of Long Beach."

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 how local government operates in North Carolina.

Cashwell 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.

## Ensminger

Jeffrie D. Ensminger wants to help continue the considerable progress he said the town has made during the four years he served on the governing board—progress he didn't see before.

"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 not lose our momentum, that we not return to the old ways of spending for today without planning for tomorrow."

Council's responsibility includes implementing a sound budget that provides services, while maintaining the lowest possible tax rate and a reasonable fund bal-

ance, not sacrificing any one for the other, he said.

Ensminger 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, he said.

It is "almost unthinkable," he said, 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.

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 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.

## Leonard

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.

"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."

The self-employed building contractor cites his 15 years of business experience and his council experience and working knowledge of town government among his qualifications.



ENSMINGER



CASHWELL



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