

Election 2009

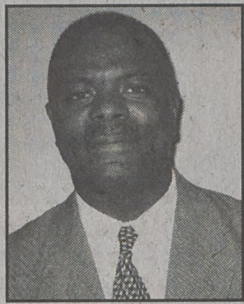
KM CITY COUNCIL



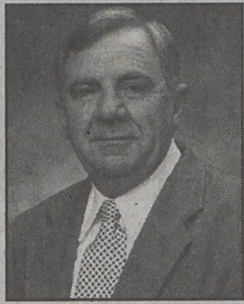
**DEAN SPEARS
AT-LARGE
Incumbent**
BIO: Dean Spears has served on city council 12 years, including terms in Ward 4. Life-long resident of Kings Mountain, he is a retired building contractor, served 4 years in the US Navy and 30 years in the US Navy Reserves. Educated at Kings Mountain High School, Gaston College, Cleveland Tech, he is married to Betty Waterson Spears and they have a son, Mike, and daughter, Robin Spears Spicer and three grandchildren, Meagan, Stacey and Jarred. He attends First Baptist Church.



**GINA COLLIAS
AT-LARGE
BIO:** licensed to practice law in both North and South Carolina; licensed NC real estate broker; married for 19 years to Dr. Dean Collias; has three children: twin girls age 12 and 6-year-old son; Dean and Gina are originally from Charlotte and met in high school; Gina has served on the Moss Lake Commission for three years, on the Downtown Incentive Grant Committee since 2005, on the Land Development Committee (establishing the next 10 year land use plan for the city), and currently serves on the Board of Directors for the KM YMCA; in 2001 she spear-headed efforts to build the community playground next to the YMCA.



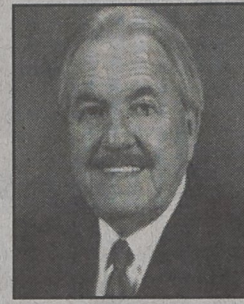
**CURTIS PRESSLEY
AT-LARGE
BIO:** A life-long resident of Kings Mountain, Curtis Pressley is married to the former Evelyn Roberts and they have three sons, Jerdon, Belton and Devin Pressley and reside at 711 Oakland Street. They are active members of Mount Zion Baptist Church. A graduate of Gardner-Webb University with a B.S. degree in Management Information Systems, Pressley, is employed by the North Carolina Education Lottery in Charlotte.



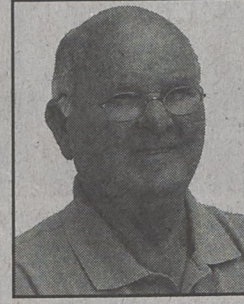
**MIKE BUTLER
WARD 2
INCUMBENT
BIO:** Mike and Kathy Butler reside at 806 Rhodes Avenue. They have two sons, Bryan and Jason, and three grandchildren, Havan, Sophie and Ethan. Mike is the owner/operator of Butler's Auto Service, 205 E. King St. The Butlers attend First Wesleyan Church in Kings Mountain. Mike participated in the give-away of the free furniture and shoes held over the past few years, which helped over 5,000 people. He is now participating, along with Roger's BBQ, in the collection of coats for the children in need at East School.



**BRENDA ROSS
WARD 2
BIO:** Kings Mountain native, Brenda Ross has been married to Jerry Ross 50 years. They have three children Mrs. Tammy Thornburg and husband, Lanny; Toni Ross Putman and Tim and Debbie Ross, all of Kings Mountain and eight grandchildren. A homemaker and former Customer Service Representative for Grover Industries, she is a member of the Kings Mountain Board of Adjustments. She is an active member of Grace United Methodist Church.



**JERRY MULLINAX
WARD 3
INCUMBENT
BIO:** He is a Kings Mountain native, son of the late Jeanette and Carl Mullinax. Retired, he is Site Manager of Battleforest Apartments in Kings Mountain and conducts a Gospel Music radio program on Station WCSL Cheryville Wednesdays at 3 p.m. and Sundays at 1 p.m. and formerly conducted a gospel music program on KM Radio Station WKMT for four years. He is a Hospice volunteer, served in the US Army two years during the Korean Conflict. Father of three sons, Tim, Todd and Tony Mullinax and grandfather of three.



**TOMMY HAWKINS
WARD 3
BIO:** Kings Mountain native, lifelong resident for 65 years. Married to Kay Baity Hawkins, three daughters, Kimberly Arenas of New York, Zena Johnson of KM, Tonya Carroll of Pawley's Island, SC, 5 grandchildren. He attends First Wesleyan Church; five year member of the city planning and zoning board and board of adjustment; spent 40 years building a reputation as a professional hard-working businessman capable of making the right business decisions to promote Kings Mountain.

Where do they stand on the issues?

The Kings Mountain Herald asked all of the candidates, currently running for the three open seats on the KM City Council, their views on things such as involuntary annexation, attracting new businesses and other issues they believe the council will face in the next few years. Each question is followed by the answers from each candidate, whose names are listed in bold beside their statements.

Q) What do you think are the big issues that the council will face in the next few years?

WARD 2

Butler - Economic development, infrastructure upgrades which includes building a new water line into town, marketing our town, keeping tax rates and utility rates as low as possible and maintaining a quality of service for our citizens. Water is the city's most valuable resource and we will continue to work for additional impoundment which will also be an important economic development tool and keep us competitive for new businesses.

Ross - My priorities: to bring small industries to town and to help with job losses by putting our people back to work; have recreation for all our young people, a place where they can play baseball, basketball, swim, etc. without the families having to pay extra for each child to participate in the sport of their choice; and to clean up our town and make it a place people would love to live.

WARD 3

Mullinax - A new 30-inch water line to town is much needed and should be the major project. In the meantime, repairs are being done to the outdated line and any emergency repairs are already addresses.

Hawkins - Balancing the city budget is first and foremost. Keeping our taxes and fees as low as possible. Infrastructure, economic development, keeping our city sound financially, giving all the city employees a good place to work and raise their families, promoting Kings Mountain as a good place to live, work and retire, working with downtown beautification, Gateway Trails, Money is always a big issue.

AT-LARGE

Spears - There is always annexation (involuntary), zoning issues inside the city

and ETJ, downtown development, taxes and utility rates.

Collias - First, City Council should promote the City of Kings Mountain encouraging economic development for recruiting new businesses as well as maintaining our existing businesses. It is critical to provide jobs for our citizens particularly with the global economic downturn. Not only do people who have been laid off need work, but we need jobs and career tracks that attract our young people to stay in Kings Mountain to rear their own families preventing the loss of our talented youth to other communities. Kings Mountain needs to be a community where we live, work, and play.

Secondly, we need to consider the needs of our teens in our community so that they have safe and supervised places to gather. I believe that our teens deserve our focus. The YMCA, the Boys and Girls Club, and the Tennis Association have all approached the city with ideas that would constructively benefit our teens.

Finally, the city needs to implement a plan for curbside recycling within the next five years. Although some people are better about taking plastic to the local waste disposal sites for processing, many people, including the elderly, need our assistance to do the right thing especially with the passage of new laws in North Carolina making it illegal to throw away plastic bottles in your personal trash as of October 1st. I would like to see us have a community group to review how other cities have managed their recycling needs and have recaptured funds for the goods recycled. Then, let us implement a plan that would be the most cost neutral.

Pressley - One of the challenges (to meet) that I would encourage in the near future is providing more recreational activities and places for youth, ways to compensate and keep our youth off the street. I support the organization of a Boys and Girls Club of Kings Mountain and think a facility of this type is needed. I would also include a partnership between City Council and Mountaineer Partnership, 20/20 and Cleveland Chamber in recruiting industry and more jobs for Kings Mountain residents.

Q) Why do you want to serve on city council?

WARD 2

Butler - I want to improve the quality of life for all citizens and when I look back on my time served I want to feel like I have made a difference. I love marketing our town and addressing all concerns that our citizens have. I grew up in this town and I am very passionate about representing the citizens and assisting in their needs. I have loved serving as council member and hope to continue.

Ross - My reason for running for city council is to give the citizens a choice. I want to be a voice for all their concerns, bringing these issues to Council. Working together as a team, we can accomplish great things. I want to be a part of this team.

WARD 3

Mullinax - I have served on City Council 10 years and I feel I know how to be a Council person. My voting record speaks for itself. If my constituents tell me to vote NO, I vote No.

Hawkins - I have run for city council three times and was defeated by narrow margins. I want to serve the citizens of Ward 3 and all of Kings Mountain. I have a passion to be a city councilman and after running three times I hope you know that my devotion to the city is serious. I have grandchildren who will grow up in King Mountain and I want to promote Kings Mountain as a good place to live and work. I think I can jell with other council members and the mayor and work together as a team I am confident that my long experience on the city planning and zoning board and on the board of adjustment will be beneficial as we all work together for the good of Kings Mountain. Working actively in city government for the past five years has helped lay the groundwork for a seat on city council.

AT-LARGE

Spears - I have served for 12 years on city council and have been 1/7th of the decision making of things that were good, bad or indifferent. I would like to serve one more term. I know there are plenty of decisions that council will have to make, I would like to make all those decisions "good."

Collias - I believe that community service is an important value and is part of who I am. I am passionate about Kings Mountain and the people here that I have grown to love and to ad-

mire. I believe in the citizens of Kings Mountain, and that their voices should be heard. I will make myself available and accessible to discuss issues. I am proud to be a citizen of Kings Mountain, and serving on City Council is a natural extension of my commitment to community service by giving back to my community. I have volunteered extensively in the City of Kings Mountain beginning when I was chair of the community built playground next to the YMCA. Additionally, I believe my education as an Attorney with emphasis in land and business development will greatly benefit the City.

Pressley - I was born and grew up in Kings Mountain and Kings Mountain is my home. I love the people. I am thankful for those individuals, who inspired me as I grew up, and I want to serve on city council to give back to my community.

Q) Do you think the city should offer incentives to new businesses?

WARD 2

Butler - Yes, in this economy with the high unemployment rate and the competitive market of attracting new businesses I think it is important to make every effort possible to offer incentives. Every incentive needs to be backed by a revenue source and guarantee of a return on the investment.

Ross - Incentives are questionable with the economy being what it is today. All incentives would have to be closely evaluated.

WARD 3

Mullinax - I have not voted to offer incentives to new businesses. If a new business will tell me he plans to stay here and can guarantee that then I would vote Yes.

Hawkins - Yes. I support the concept of business incentives to help build our local economy and give jobs to people of Kings Mountain. I think there should be some type of incentives for local businesses already in place, especially in this tight economy. Small businesses are hurting and it's up to us to help them.

AT-LARGE

Spears - I do think the city should offer some incentives to new businesses. This would be based on the amount invested and how many jobs they would create.

Collias - Yes, the City of Kings Mountain should offer incentives to new

businesses, particularly small businesses, and we need to constantly re-evaluate that we are truly serving our existing businesses. Incentives can be combination of many things including tax breaks, free advice, and grant monies. A smart way to implement incentives is to have businesses first achieve certain benchmark goals, and only then would the business be entitled to receive the incentives so that the City is not obligated to throw away anything for start up businesses that pack up and leave over night until true job creation has occurred. For example, the City of Kings Mountain has been granted Main Street status which will allow for extra advice and guidance to the city regarding responsible growth. We have the Mountaineer Partnership which is working to strengthen our downtown so that it may thrive. These are resources that will enable us to take advantage of and to learn about private, state, and federal grant monies that the City can use to encourage new businesses without directly costing our city money.

Pressley - Yes, I think incentives are good but don't give the city away to get them. Concentrate on working more with existing businesses and help them create more jobs for Kings Mountain people and more business in town to bring growth.

Q) What do you think about involuntary annexation?

WARD 2

Butler - I think cities have to continue to look at growth and any annexation possibility I am not for involuntary annexation when it only benefits the city and not the people, it needs to be a win win situation for all. You have to look at the pros and cons of that particular annexation and look at the cost of providing services versus the revenue received and the need for services in that area. The City offers many benefits for those annexed including four utilities which are water sewer, electric and gas.

Ross - Annexation is a good thing since it increases our tax base; however, is the city capable of extending necessary services to this population increase? Sometimes bigger is not better!

WARD 3

Mullinax - I am opposed to involuntary annexation and

have voted against. I am not against annexation, per se. It can be a good thing. The city has taken in more than 12 percent in the last six years. I would be in favor of involuntary annexation if the city could provide the services but it is becoming too costly in today's economy. I think we need to concentrate on servicing the areas we have already taken in through voluntary annexation.

Hawkins - I do have some reservations. There have been only six involuntary annexations between 1960 and 1993 and they all occurred in 1991. The properties annexed were Roxford Road, Maner Road, and the Edgemont Drive area. Only 85 voluntary annexations occurred between 1960 and 1993. The largest annexation was in 1960, a total of 424.75 acres when the Kings Mountain High School area was annexed. The city doesn't do involuntary annexations but a lot of circumstances are involved. Normally when you annex someone into the city they should have the same exact city services provided to all citizens of our town. city water, sewer, police and fire protection, garbage pickup, all the services that the city provides. With annexation, they should immediately have the right to vote.

AT-LARGE

Spears - I don't think we should be annexing just to acquire numbers. I think if the area under consideration would be an asset to the city I would give it a lot of thought.

Collias - I believe that voluntary annexation, as opposed to involuntary annexation, is a better method for City growth. Additionally, I believe that the City's growth must be organized with a sound plan for zoning, not spot zoning or spot annexation. I have been working for several years on the Land Development Committee, establishing the next ten year land use plan for the City of Kings Mountain which lays out a responsible growth plan and what ideals the City should want for responsible growth.

Any annexation needs to be consistent with the City's land plans. We also need to be aware that neighboring competing interests from Gastonia and Shelby and the respective counties will try to control as much land as they can near us while we have to simultaneously maintain a good working relationship with these same neighbors.

Pressley - I think we should be very careful to be sure we can provide the services and that what we are annexing is a good mix for the city.