

# Candidates weigh in on issues, goals, qualifications

**ELIZABETH STEWART**  
 lb.kmherald@gmail.com

Four of the six candidates running for three seats open on Kings Mountain City Council Nov. 5 said, Tuesday night at a forum, they are qualified and see themselves working well with the mayor, seven-member board and city staff.

Three incumbent councilmen – Mike Butler, Ward 2, Tommy Hawkins, Ward 3, Dean Spears, At large, and Curtis Pressley, challenger for the at large position, greeted 60 people at Bynum Chapel AME Zion Church and responded to a half dozen questions fielded by the Cleveland County Chapter NAACP.

Jerry Mullinax, who is challenging Hawkins in Ward 3, and Patty Hall, who is challenging Butler in Ward 2, did not attend. Brenda Lipscomb, chairman of the Political Action Committee sponsoring the event, said both candidates sent regrets.

Doris Williams, parliamentarian for the NAACP chapter, was moderator and Rontonette Franklin was timekeeper.

Butler, Hawkins and Spears said they are running on their records. Pressley has served on the city's planning and zoning board, on the KM YMCA board and county Y board of directors, as president of the Optimist Club and as a team coach.

All four candidates urged people to come out and vote during this off-year election and to vote early at the county board of elections office Oct. 17-Nov. 2, weekdays from 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Nov. 2 from 8 a.m.-1 p.m.

The questions and responses from the candidates:

**1) What have you done in the past that qualifies you for this office?**

**SPEARS** - 16 years on Council and we've done a lot. Currently the big project is the water line rehab and the new line into town from the lake. Remember it takes four members on our board of seven to pass on our recommendations.

**PRESSLEY** - Tough and sound decisions that affected many people on boards I have served on including the Planning Board, YMCA boards, Optimist Club and working with kids.

**BUTLER** - Eight years on council and a businessman for 20 years. I get back to our citizens when they have questions and not only those in my Ward 2. I am proud of what our current board and staff have done.

**HAWKINS** - I have lived in Kings Mountain all my life and served on the planning board five years before I ran for office four years ago in Ward 3. I am proactive, want to market Kings Mountain. And our current board has done a lot.

**2) What do you see as Kings Mountain's most pressing environmental**

**concern and how would you respond to this concern?**

**PRESSLEY** - I see lots of limbs, debris and garbage in some areas of the city and I feel this is a real problem. I will address any issues in air quality and environment and will work with all elected officials and city staff.

**BUTLER** - Our city employees are working to clean up any unsightly areas but there's always a process to get the job done. For 6-8 months the staff is working on wastewater cleanup.

**HAWKINS** - Wastewater is a big issue now and we'll get it done. Our city has some of the best employees dedicated to get the job done.

**SPEARS** - We are mandated to complete a storm water program and are in the process. It will cost a nickel but it will keep our streams clean.

**3) The news media has reported a casino could begin operation in this area in two years. What type of impact do you feel this would have on the city of Kings Mountain?**

**BUTLER** - If it comes the impact would result in more restaurants, hotels and jobs. The city would have to

be ready with water, sewer, police, fire, etc.

**PRESSLEY** - The impact of a casino would be tremendous and in a positive way. 3,000 jobs speaks for itself. I support it. As Mr. Butler says we'll have to prepare with police, fire, services, etc. A good impact.

**HAWKINS** - It will have a huge impact on Kings Mountain and Cleveland County economy if it comes.

**SPEARS** - A great thing economically for the city, a big plus. I probably won't participate in it myself, if it comes, but it will be a big boon for jobs and our local economy.

**4) What are your goals and priorities for the city of Kings Mountain for the next two years and how do you plan to achieve them?**

**HAWKINS** - More quality of life for our citizens, running the major water line from Moss Lake to Kings Mountain, and in the future more water to serve prospective customers and industry.

**BUTLER** - In the next years water will be a priority and repair of water lines and running the new line from Moss Lake to town is current priority. We are already beginning rehab of lines.



Three incumbent councilmen – Mike Butler (back right), Ward 2, Tommy Hawkins (front right), Ward 3, Dean Spears (front left), At large, and Curtis Pressley (back left), challenger for the at large position, greeted 60 people at Bynum Chapel AME Zion Church and responded to a half dozen questions fielded by the Cleveland County Chapter NAACP.

**PRESSLEY** - I agree that water is a priority for the future but we need to prioritize youth needs and more recreation for our youth now. Ride the streets and you will see that our young people need to be off the streets. The YMCA does a good job but they can't handle all the needs of our kids. There are things the city can do and more recreation for kids is my goal.

status quo, our fund balance is 28% and we're doing something right, working together to maintain programs. The YMCA does a great job and they even have 3 year olds playing soccer. It takes four votes – a majority on the board – to get our goals in place.

**5) In these tough economic times what budget categories would you like to**

**SPEARS** - Maintain the

See CANDIDATES, 6A

**Kings Mountain Weekend Weather**

Thursday October 24	Friday October 25	Saturday October 26	Sunday October 27
Mostly Sunny - 63° 0% Chance of precipitation Night time Low 37°	Mostly Sunny - 55° 0% Chance of precipitation Night time Low 30°	Partly Cloudy - 59° 0% Chance of precipitation Night time Low 36°	Partly Cloudy - 63° 10% Chance of precipitation Night time Low 38°

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## 2013 DIABETES EXPO

**Mindless Eating: Emotional, Behavioral & Social Triggers**

*Sarah Philbeck, MA, LPC, Psychotherapist*

**YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program**

*Ashley Harris, RN, Director*

**Thursday, October 24  
 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.  
 Life Enrichment Center  
 110 Life Enrichment Blvd., Shelby**

Vendor booths will be available.  
 Light refreshments will be served.  
 For more information, call  
 Cleveland Regional Medical Center's  
 Diabetes Center at 980-487-3953.



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