

# 2020 Election Questions-Non County Board

On behalf of the McLean County Chamber of Commerce Political Action Committee (PAC) thank you for your interest in elected leadership serving constituents in the communities of McLean County.

Please find our candidate survey attached to this email for the November 3, 2020 general election. Answers must be complete and submitted no later than Friday, July 10, 2020 by 4:00 PM to be eligible for candidate interviews slated for late July and early August. Responses from the survey and interview will be considered by the full PAC Board when endorsing candidates and/or providing a financial contribution.

We look forward to getting to know you as a candidate. If you have any questions about the PAC or our endorsement process for this general election, please call Charlie Moore at 309-829-6344.

Best regards,

Meghan O'Neal-Rogozinski  
Chairman

Candidate Name

Don Everhart

### 1. What are your top three priorities if elected?

McLean County's justice information system (JIS) is a computer system that takes information from all the different justice partners (law enforcement, state's attorney, circuit clerk's office, courts, public defender, probation) and stores it in one place so each one of the partners has access to the information. McLean County's JIS, like all technology, has its limitations and is near the end of its current usefulness. If reelected, I would continue working on the McLean County Justice Information Systems Project Committee (which I sought for and helped to initiate) to seek, acquire and implement 21st century solutions for McLean County justice partners and court users.

I would continue working with Illinois JusticeCorps and the other 11th Judicial Circuit Court Clerks to seek ways to enhance access to justice for the growing number of unrepresented people in the courts.

Pursuant to an Illinois Supreme Court order, the electronic filing of civil cases is mandatory for the Illinois Supreme Court, the Illinois Appellate Courts and the Illinois Circuit Courts. I would continue working with the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts and the electronic filing vendor to improve electronic filer and court reviewer experiences statewide and to improve cross-jurisdictional access to court case records across Illinois.

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## 2. What is the greatest challenge(s) of this office? How do you propose to address said challenge(s)?

It is a huge challenge working with the limitations of a justice information system near the end of its usefulness, especially, in the world of e-Business. I would continue to work on the McLean County Justice Information Systems Project Committee to seek, acquire and implement a 21st century solution. In the interim, as I have been doing, I would continue seeking stopgap solutions to address some of the limitations. For example, I sought and obtained several enhancements to the justice information system and personally built several computer applications.

There is a huge amount of information for clerks to manage and implement – including knowledge and application of existing and new laws, policies and programs. Not only does the circuit clerk have to work to be informed, in most instances, the clerk is the only person who has the information; putting the clerk in a position to share the information with the judiciary, attorneys, judicial partners, etc. I would continue efforts to stay abreast of new laws, opinions of the courts of review, new/amended IL Supreme Court Rules, etc. – and to share the information.

Circuit clerks receive pressure from constituents, judiciary, legal community to perform duties which are not ministerial or set in law/order/rule/policy. The circuit clerk is a non-judicial officer of the court and serves the court in a ministerial capacity requiring the following of instructions, without power to exercise any personal discretion. The clerk's authority is entirely statutory; his or her official actions must conform to the statutes. I would continue to perform the duties of the office as prescribed by statute, court order, court rule, or other written directive of the court.

## 3. How will you make yourself available to and/or interact with members of the business community?

I would continue an open-door policy; remain easily accessible; be a resource of information; be available to provide an overview of the Circuit Court Clerk's Office to business leaders and community organizations.

## 4. Do you believe this office has a role to play in community and/or economic development?

Public confidence in the court system and local elected officials is a factor in community and economic development. When positions in local government are held by experienced, competent professionals, their leadership strengthens the community as a whole and makes potential investment in the community more appealing.

5. Do you feel there are services missing from the office you plan to represent? Alternatively, are there any that you view as non-essential and could be eliminated?

A new justice information system would afford the ability to enhance and expand existing services such as electronic filing of court documents, expand e-Business, to create a paperless court, and much more.

There are no non-essential services within the office.

The McLean County Chamber of Commerce works with the Political Action Committee to help its membership understand who you are as a candidate and what your policies will be if elected. We achieve this by sharing your responses with the membership to help increase the turnout of educated voters. I agree that the McLean County Chamber of Commerce may share and publish my responses as submitted and as presented, on the McLean County Chamber of Commerce website [www.mcleancochamber.org](http://www.mcleancochamber.org).

☒ Yes

☐ No

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