



2022 Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name: Kevin G. Gerrity

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Date: 09/09/2022

1. About you:

- a. How old are you? 65
- b. In what part of Collier County do you live? Golden Gate Estates
- c. How long have you lived in Collier County, and where were you living previously?
Lived here since 2004, previously lived in Cleveland
- d. What is your educational background and past work experiences? I have an Associate of Arts and a Bachelor of Science degree from Liberty University. I am a US Air Force veteran. I worked for 23 years as a Cleveland Firefighter, and spent the last 6 ½ years as the Fire Chief of the Cleveland Fire Department. I have served on the fire commission since 2009.
- e. What qualifies you for this job?
Having served in many operational and administrative positions in one of America's major city fire departments, I have a wealth of experience in dealing with issues that pertain to the fire service. As a local business operator for 13 years, I can also bring some private sector business strategies to bear when appropriate.

2. Why are you running for this position?

I am a strong advocate for consolidation of the fire and EMS services within Collier County. Thus far, we have been able to consolidate the variety of fire districts in the county to two major districts. This consolidation has provided better and more efficient services to the taxpayers. I would like to see the remaining agencies come together under one management structure. Furthermore, I am frequently the only dissenting vote on the board when it comes to increasing taxes and spending public funds. I feel the taxpayers deserve a fiscal conservative overseeing a \$40,000,000 plus budget.

3. What are three things you want to accomplish if you are elected?

1. Develop a comprehensive and realistic strategic plan that lays out a common-sense strategy to manage the growth of the district.
2. Continue in discussions with local partners to encourage functional consolidation of support functions across all departments.
3. Reimpose common-sense financial oversight to the district.

4. Name one past policy decision of the board you are running for that you disagree with that you would like to change if elected. Why?

The board has made several unfortunate decisions lately, expanding operations at significant cost to the district before demand for the services has been fully documented. Even against the recommendation of the fire chief and support staff, the board has expanded services where the demand has not warranted. The board must develop a comprehensive growth plan and, absent measurable statistical data that would indicate otherwise, stick to it.

Another vote by the board recently, of which I was the lone dissenter, was to put a millage rate increase on the ballot. As board chair, and thanks to much public outcry, I was able to bring the matter back for reconsideration, at which time it failed by a 3-2 vote. The board is one vote away from trying to raise the millage rate again. I feel raising the millage rate at this time is unwise fiscal policy.

Revenue to the district doubled from 2016-2021, and has increased by nearly 20% in 2022. The district does not have an income problem, it has a spending problem.

5. What is the most important thing voters should know about the issues at stake in this election, before making their decision about who to vote for?

The district was quite close to placing a millage rate increase on the August, 2022 ballot. I believe that another effort will come to raise your taxes during an off-year election cycle. It is critical that we put people on the fire commission that will keep spending at a reasonable level.

Please email your responses to Sandy Parker, sandy@sparkers-soapbox.com , no later than September 16, 2022.

Thank you!