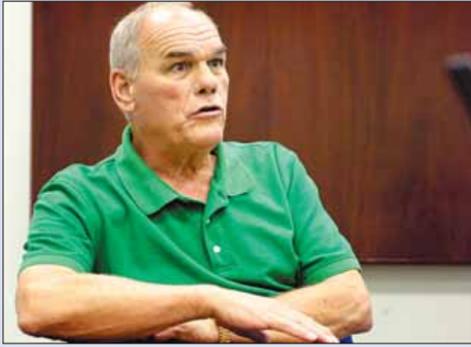


WHERE THEY STAND

www.thejournalnet.com

Greenwood mayor

Election Day: Nov. 6 ■ **Voting hours:** 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. ■ **Web extra:** Expanded answers and more questions at thejournalnet.com



CHARLES HENDERSON, Republican, incumbent

On Nov. 6, voters in Greenwood will pick a mayor. Assistant managing editor Michele Holtkamp-Frye interviewed the candidates on a wide range of issues. Voters have a right to know where the candidates stand. Use these pages as a guide to help you make your voting decision.



DAVID PAYNE, independent

Henderson

Character is something a person has inside them that would lead them to do what they think is the right thing for everybody's best interests. "I am willing to look at myself and say, 'OK, back up. It's not always your way is the best way.'" Is willing to listen to others' opinions. If decisions turn out to be wrong, doesn't try to pass blame. Biggest flaw is he used to take differences of opinion personally. As he's getting older, he realizes it is not personal. Works on that on a regular basis and is getting better.



How do you define character as it relates to being a public official? What qualities of character do you possess that would make you an effective mayor? What are your character flaws?

Payne

Defines character traits as a person who is totally forthright and honest, possesses integrity and someone who has the ability to earn the trust of the people he was elected to serve. Says it is also an internal feeling and ability to judge those you are dealing with to determine if they are honest or someone to avoid. Says his qualities are honesty, integrity, passion for doing the right thing no matter the circumstances and the desire to do the right thing. One character flaw would be to take a situation and analyze it too long because it could lead to a missed opportunity. Can become very passionate and overzealous about some matters and has been told is too honest. Can be stubborn.

Henderson

Mayor is administrative arm and has to set a direction somewhat and then see to it employees follow that. City council has some direction-setting as a fiscal body and can say how money will be used, and then mayor and council have to come to some agreement. Is his job as mayor to make it work, even if council doesn't make decision he wants.



What is the role of a mayor? What is the role of the city council, and how do the two work together?

Payne

Role of the mayor, besides managing day-to-day business, is to appoint competent people and competent department heads in conjunction with the views the mayor has. Mayor also is a cheerleader for the city. "In my perspective, you would encourage people to become involved in city government and to demonstrate the energy that is going on within the city." Role of the city council is to provide funding for programs, to provide leadership from their perspective and establish guidelines that the city must have to operate. To work together, would develop a team approach to solving the issues of the city. Thinks the mayor should bring ideas to the table, present them, give the council and public enough time to thoroughly research, then discuss the issues in public meetings. Would want an atmosphere of teamwork, not necessarily adversarial.

Henderson

Yes, because the city is too big for one person to run the whole show on a day-to-day basis and know what is going on out in the field, and do the things that need to be done, such as lobbying while legislators are in session on issues that would make a difference in Greenwood. Said position has evolved because Norm Gabehart has gotten more comfortable with what mayor wants and his philosophy and made decisions when mayor is not available and stands up for those decisions.



Does Greenwood need a director of operations? Why or why not?

Payne

Doesn't believe Greenwood needs a director of operations. "If you have competent department heads in place and meet regularly with those department heads, I don't think you need that extra level of government."

Henderson

Top priority is to maintain the level of service that city has been providing for residents and at the same low tax rate the city has been able to maintain. Said tax rate is lower than many other municipalities. Other priority is to continue to rebuild infrastructure. Other initiatives are: revitalizing downtown by tearing down some buildings on Madison; taking out old parks department garages and putting in a walking park, gazebos and fountains; and having developers open coffee shops. Wants to make area an arts and crafts fair attraction and tie in with amphitheater. Also wants to get OK to build the Interstate 65 interchange at County Road 750, or Worthsville Road. Wants to make that road from Honey Creek Road to the interstate a four- or five-lane boulevard. Wants to see planning department grow and not be so reactionary. Wants to hire a true visionary planner who wouldn't be tied to permitting and zoning. Said planning department doesn't have staff to do true long-range planning.



If elected, what would be your top three priorities? How would you address them? Beyond your top priorities, what are other initiatives that need to be examined?

Payne

Is often asked what top priorities are, but doesn't have a top three. "I have one basic goal, and that is to encourage every citizen in the boundaries of Greenwood to get involved in city government. I want to provide an open forum and be able to provide information and to give citizens the opportunity to express how they would solve problems, then go back and figure out how to make it happen." Some areas that need to be addressed are understaffing in the police and fire departments and streets that need to be repaired. Would encourage other people to get involved and give them the opportunity to do so.

Henderson

City intentionally released name of a company considering coming to Greenwood, so the company backed out. All companies want incentive packages and secrecy. "It is a tough line to walk, and that is one that we missed." Said city should have bought six to eight houses and property along Meridian Street to expand the park and the community center.



What is the most significant missed opportunity for Greenwood? What went wrong? How can you make sure it doesn't happen again?

Payne

Most significant missed opportunity is getting the people involved in what is going on in the community. Sees a few people at meetings, and they attend because the issues relate directly to them. Wants to keep people in the meetings so they can hear what is going on. Said it all relates to communication and developing two-way communication with the public and trying to ensure that all are held accountable to those they represent. "Once that begins to happen, you'll see a massive change in the city. I think you'll see the city grow in leaps and bounds once that happens, such as pride in the city and neighborhood improvement."

Henderson

Greatest asset is people, but everyone says that. Greatest asset is location and educational base with three great high schools — Center Grove, Greenwood, Whiteland — and Central Nine Career Center. Talks about those schools when recruiting companies.



What is Greenwood's greatest asset and how will you leverage it to better the community?

Payne

Assets are location, proximity to Indianapolis, a low tax rate and the schools and educational opportunities available. Greatest asset are the people who live in city. Would leverage it by getting people involved. Said must get people involved and can't do it alone. Said current administration has tried to do it alone.

Henderson

Would aim to do a better job of educating certain segments of the city's population on why change is positive and why change is needed in order to move city forward.



What is Greenwood's greatest liability and what will you do to correct it?

Payne

Greatest liability is the communication. The appearance is that the residents do not have the opportunity to voice their opinion, or if they do, it's not heard or nothing is done. That breeds discontent and apathy. Would make it easy for people. Would upgrade the Web site and allow residents to e-mail the mayor directly. By making it simple, will go a long way in correcting the greatest liability.

Henderson

"In the year 2020, I believe that Greenwood will still be a community that is growing, and that growth will be to the east of our city toward Shelby County." Sees area developing with shops, retail, commercial and more affluent residential. "I think the city is oversaturated with starter homes." Said planning commission and city council realize that and the city will see changes to a different level of housing going east, and have a population of 55,000 or 60,000. To achieve that is going to take that planning staff the city has been short of for years, instead of being reactionary.



Describe Greenwood in the year 2020. What will you do to achieve that vision?

Payne

Growth will be happening to the east. Envisions pod communities that have a neighborhood store, access to a park, plenty of sidewalks and where transportation is easy. Wonders if there would be a commuter train to Indianapolis. Development and cooperation with Center Grove. Would have addressed issue of Center Grove being annexed into Greenwood or Bargersville or becoming its own city. Something needs to happen because county government is not structured to handle the situations.

Henderson

Not sure city has a serious quality of life issue per say. "We have people who struggle with the day-to-day needs of life based on income not being sufficient to support a quality of life lifestyle." Would continue to search for companies that pay a livable wage to help those people who struggle day-to-day. Wants to help get quality jobs with higher pay and better benefits. "I believe that we need to try to have companies that are in that \$18 to \$20 range." Said the county average wage is still low. Companies are coming here paying \$15 per hour, but wants it up to \$18 or \$20. Arbonne pay is lower, but company provided jobs for a segment of people who needed jobs. Wishes pay was higher, but if city hadn't given incentives, company wouldn't have come here. "We just have to keep working and hope we can attract a higher wage."



What is the most serious quality-of-life issue facing the residents of Greenwood? If elected, what would you do about it?

Payne

Outside of basic services that the city provides, sometimes you have to be careful talking about quality of life because it is different depending on life stage. Quality of life depends on a person's point in life. The city should work so that residents have recreational opportunities, good housing, shopping opportunities and transportation. Continued access to Indianapolis and a safe, comfortable environment for their children. Good employment opportunities.

Henderson

Agrees with becoming a second-class city, but is committed to not pursuing it because two separate city councils have chosen not to pursue it.

Second-class city?

Should Greenwood pursue second-class city status? Why or why not? If yes, how would you gather residents' support? When would the issue be brought before the council and the public?

Payne

"I think second-class city status is going to come, sooner or later, and I don't really know all the benefits. Likewise, what are the liabilities?" Would need more research. Doesn't foresee that coming up in the near future at all. Some other issues need to be addressed first.

Henderson

Will propose next year that the city look at land but not constructing a building yet. Talk about if city wants to keep offices at current location, buy property or move elsewhere. Wants to get land purchased and start building a new city hall in 2010. Buy land in 2008, have plans drawn up in 2009, construct in 2010. Still likes previous location for new city building at Washington Street and railroad tracks. Taxpayers would benefit. They wouldn't be paying a lot of rent on something they never get a return on. Taxpayers would own the building. Government would be more efficient. Every time you split out and work in different areas, it's not as efficient as if it is under one roof. Said the layout would be different than his first proposal. Wants to keep everyone together in one building and not so segregated.



Will you propose building a new city building? When, if ever, should the city begin the process of securing additional office space? What are the options? How would taxpayers benefit from a new city building?

Payne

Wonders how taxpayers would benefit from a new city building. If everything in the city was working the way it should be working, it could be on the table. Feels there will be a new building at some point. But would address other issues first. Could be convenient and beneficial to be efficient and have all city offices under one roof. Could be a convenience issue for residents. "It does concern me that we are paying for office space, but that's kind of the nature of the beast right now." One benefit could be convenience for the taxpayers and, depending on the location, it could be a showcase for the city as the center of government. Doesn't see that happening in the near future.

Henderson

Said the city council has been good to city employees, and he would just try to maintain that good level of pay. A few employees need to be adjusted, but for the most part, the council has treated employees pretty well. Wants to hire more people for planning and street departments. Said people are doing great work because the city pays better, but city needs to hire people. Fire department has been on a growth plan for past six or seven years, and more employees were in the 2008 budget proposal, he froze that. Has been surprised that police chief didn't ask for more personnel. Will put forward a plan but hasn't seen that yet. Wants to fill the vacancies in the police department and have four or five more employees than city has ever had. Wants to see a four- or five-year plan for police department growth. Parks department has done great things with minimal staff. Law office does a tremendous amount of work. Sanitation needs some growth but not a great deal. "Outside of planning and public safety, I don't see huge needs for more growth. We are a city that truly operates with far less employees than most other cities our size. But it proves to me it can be done. It proves to me we can do more with less. Pay our people well and give them a good benefit package, and they'll do the work."



What are your plans for city government growth? Will new employees be hired? For what departments? Do any employees need raises? Should any positions be cut?

Payne

Does not believe that city government as its own entity needs to grow any. Said the city has enough levels of government to handle issues that will come up. First 90 days in office would be a total assessment. Understands the need in the police department, but doesn't have privilege of knowing parks department and others. Needs a total assessment of departments and positions to determine if there are duplications or positions that aren't being utilized to their fullest extent. Would have a total assessment in the first six months about the direction the departments need to take. Then would sit with city council and board of works and look at benchmarks and how to get there. Said the police department is understaffed, and there is no doubt about that. New employees would come in those areas and wants to fill open positions that are available immediately. To make cuts, would shift responsibilities around to another area.

Henderson

Has decided to re-evaluate all department heads, and has not done that before. Would look seriously at planning department. That doesn't mean getting rid of Ed Ferguson but bringing in someone fresh who will focus on planning and supervision of the whole area east of the city. Would like to explore hiring office managers for city departments. Just like lawyers and doctors offices have managers who aren't lawyers or doctors. Would look for office managers who know about planning, engineering and zoning. "I think that's something that intrigues me and might be worth looking at." If there are openings for department heads, he would interview applicants and see if their personality and philosophy matches his. Said Greenwood Police Chief Joe Pitcher is a very intelligent individual. He knows the law and fits very well. He is hands-on. He will get out and direct traffic or take a call. He'll get involved. He fits in some of those areas very well. "He has shortcomings like we all do. He doesn't communicate to a degree that I did when I was there. His management style is different than mine. He and I talk about that." Recently made Dave Mertz assistant chief, and Mertz is a communicator.



What process will you use to identify and appoint the best qualified people to head departments in your administration? What changes would you make to current personnel? Will the following people be retained: Joe Pitcher, Steve Dhondt, Evan Springer, Norm Gabehart and Ed Ferguson?

Payne

One process includes a series of questions that help determine certain traits. To hire or retain a department head, the person would need to have same passion for moving forward and engaging that he has. Would conduct interviews and take recommendations. Wants to give department heads a period of time to demonstrate that what they are doing is what they truly believe, not what they've been ordered or directed to do. Would give people the boundaries in which to work and the goals, then give them the freedom to go out and achieve it. Is not up to him to know the ins and outs of every position. Would explain well-defined goals. Would not retain Joe Pitcher as chief of police. Initially, thought Pitcher's hiring was a good move, but now doesn't have confidence in him, based in part on the few months spent working in the department for Pitcher. "He might know where he wants a department to go, but he's not disseminating that information. Those officers need to know what is going on and where it is going." Said Pitcher does not lead or give the department direction. Norm Gabehart as director of operations is not needed, but could look for an opportunity for him to remain employed by the city.

Henderson

Other major project to be paid for out of that district is the expansion of County Road 750. That is the final major project with exception of some maintenance work on existing infrastructure. Should be phased out after that. Has asked redevelopment commission, and they have agreed to issue a request for proposals to design that from U.S. 31 to Interstate 65. So that's in the process of getting companies to get us proposals on that design. Wants design done by the end of 2009 and start building after that. Wants Honey Creek Road designed in the process but not be part of TIF district project. City has plans going to the Metropolitan Planning Organization to get funding for that project. That would be 2010 funding if awarded. That grant proposal is being headed up by three engineering firms who are partnering to do the cost estimates. Led by United, American and Butler, Fehrman and Seifert. The firms are doing the grant for free in hopes that city is awarded the money, and then those firms will be awarded the design phase.



At what point should the city's eastside tax-increment financing district be phased out and tax money returned to the schools, library and other government funds? Should any additional projects be paid for with funds from that district?

Payne

TIF districts were set up to achieve certain goals for those areas. Once they are achieved, the districts should be closed. Certainly understands that goals can change, but once they are accomplished, that should be changed. Establishing the infrastructure is the key, and the city is close to establishing all of that. Can't think of any other projects that need to be done.

Henderson

Would support a food and beverage tax and 1 percent sales tax. Those are fair consumer taxes. If city had those two taxes, they would generate \$4 million to \$5 million dollars per year, and that would directly reduce property tax bill. Wouldn't necessarily be for an increase in spending. Three exceptions to growth: utility costs, insurance costs and salary increases. The only place that kind of increase is needed in those three areas. New growth pays for itself. If couldn't get those two new taxes, would possibly support an increase in the income tax and maybe the economic development income tax. State should give us the options. Let us pick. Has been at regular meetings of Indiana Association of Cities and Towns and had planning strategies, and talked with State Sen. Brent Waltz and State Rep. Woody Burton and attended meetings like the one Eric Miller had, wrote a letter of support for his position. Wants to have two years of debate so residents understand it and put it on the ballot and let voters decide.



If state legislators give local government the option to adopt new taxes, what taxes would you support and how much additional money should be generated? What city services should increase spending? Would you raise any tax, including property, sales or income taxes?

Payne

Said the only way there should be any different type of tax is if the state decides to reform property taxes. Not sure that total reform or abolition is ever going to happen. Some change in the structure is likely, but cities would need to explore ideas such as a consumption tax. As cities grow, it costs more for services. More streets to maintain, more work for police officers and firefighters. "That is where most of the money needs to be focused if we are to ever generate more money." Not in favor of raising any tax. Hope that never has to happen. But as things grow, it costs more to do business because of personnel, fuel and equipment. Additional taxes are always an option, but that has to be a last resort. Has no intention or desire to raise taxes. Frankly, doesn't want to pay any more.

Henderson

Government started out to serve the basics and has expanded on a regular basis. Some say good, some say bad. Quality of life has come down to having parks, trails, sidewalks. Government does that in different ways, such as community center and parks departments. Government has accepted that role, public has asked for that. "It is our job to do and we need to continue doing it."



Is it city government's job to do more than just provide roads and police and fire protection? Is it government's job to improve the quality of life so that the city can attract new residents and businesses? How does city government do this?

Payne

City government's job is to provide basic necessities and services so the city can grow and prosper and help business grow and prosper. Everyone shares in establishing quality of life. Is not solely the job of city government, but city government shares in the job. City as a whole has to establish that and work in conjunction. "We are there to help."