

City Commission Presentation

November 10, 2009

I have come to the people's chamber to begin a discussion on the 2011 city budget. We cannot make the same mistakes that occurred in the 2010 budget process. Our City Commissioners have just passed a 2010 budget that will continue to over tax our citizens. This commission is acting more like Washington politicians than local leaders. City Commissioners have **created a government that we can no longer afford, they are out of touch with its citizens, wasteful with our tax monies, and have acquired a sense of entitlement.** Tallahassee citizens are tired of the arrogance shown by this Commission when they grant themselves a \$22,000 cash bonus and then act perplexed when we complain that our public funds are being misused.

We need to protect core services while reducing waste and duplication thus limiting the growth of government. Our city employees need to be encouraged to seek innovative solutions in the delivering of city services. Our city budget must be based on the needs of our community and the financial limitations of our citizens.

City Commissioners are out of touch with their citizens. During recent public budget hearings over 200 citizens pleaded with this commission to not raise their property taxes during this exceptionally difficult period. This commission ignored the needs of the citizens and raised property taxes by 15%, increased building fees, and even doubled parking fees in the downtown area. Our citizens need jobs, not more taxes. We need to encourage the expansion of local businesses and attract new businesses. We need to streamline the regulatory process. We must become business friendly while protecting our quality of life. We need to reduce property taxes and utility rates and implement a fiscally sound budget policy.

Tallahassee citizens are angry over many decisions made by this Commission and ask what can I do. They are frustrated because they feel ignored and unheard. They question whether they can actually change the "politics as usual" and political corruption. The answer is yes – we can if we vote.

I want to remind those citizens who are uncertain and disheartened that our City Commissioners can only cast 5 votes in our next election. WE THE PEOPLE have 175,000 potential voters – the odds are in our favor.

WE THE PEOPLE Can,
WE THE PEOPLE Must, and
WE THE PEOPLE Shall make changes on the City Commission.

We will raise the bar of ethics for our City Commissioners from “barely legal” to a standard based on honesty and integrity.

I am in a unique position in my personal, family, and business life where I can challenge the politics as usual crowd. I will oppose wasteful government spending, excessive utility rates and crippling property tax increases that have destroyed the financial security of our families and businesses.

For these reasons I will present myself to the public for the City Commission seat 5, vacated by Alan Katz and currently held by the appointed friend of this Commission – Gil Ziffer. I pledge to be a public servant – not a self servant! I will guard and treasure the public trust if given to me. The public’s best interest will always be at the center of each decision I make.