



The Eastern Shore Chamber of  
Commerce's

# FAIRHOPE MAYORAL VOTER GUIDE

ELECTION 2008

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## *The Candidates*



Jack Burrell



Rick Gambino



Robert C. Gentle



Timothy M. Kant



Dean Mosher



Vince Valentim



Chris Warner



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Chamber of Commerce

## Question #1: What is your previous experience or involvement with business?

Jack Burrell	As a sub-contractor employee for both NASA and the Department of Defense, I have previously worked on and managed programs that concerned our nations space program and our National defense. In addition to currently being an Executive Sales Representative with GlaxoSmithKline, I am in the business of short-term condo rentals in Orange Beach.
Rick Gambino	I am a thirty plus year business man in Fairhope. At one time Gambino's restaurant was considered the 2nd largest employer. I have managed thousands, met every budget, made many payrolls; and always maintained a surplus. I have had much success promoting our business. I always ran my business from the customer's chair. I have several ideas on promoting Fairhope and bringing more patrons downtown. I have their best interest at heart because they are the backbone of Fairhope.
Robert C. Gentle	I am Managing Partner of Robert C. Gentle Construction Consultants, LLC and have been so for the last 28 years. I was located in Birmingham until 1995 at which time I moved my business to Fairhope. This business entails arbitration, mediation, funds control, construction expertise, consulting and project management of troubled construction projects throughout the eastern United States.
Timothy M. Kant	I have been employed with the City of Fairhope for 25 years, previously as the Director of Public Works and for the last 8 years as Mayor. I was also an investment advisor with the former investment group of Crabtree, McCarron & Kant, LLC. I work closely with the Baldwin County Economic Development Alliance and the Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce to support economic development. I supported bringing higher paying jobs to our area that allow our children to return home, work and raise a family.
Dean Mosher	Besides running three successful businesses with my wife for years, I have been an active participant and board member of the Fairhope Single Tax Corporation for nearly twenty years. This 501(C4) corporation manages the nearly 3,000 leaseholders that occupy our 4,500 acres of land. During this tenure I have helped raises millions of dollars towards improvements in and around the Fairhope area and helped to create nearly 100 acres of parks.
Vince Valentim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Co-owner of Discount Tire Company</li> <li>B. Quality deficiency coordinator "NARF Pensacola" ( Naval Air Re-Work Facility)</li> <li>C. ACFT. O &amp; R General Foreman "NARF Pensacola"</li> </ul>
Chris Warner	I have worked over the past eight years as an author and publisher and have sold 40,000 copies of nine different book titles. This is no easy feat. The publishing business is competitive and given the sheer number of available book titles, profitability is difficult, as it requires great marketing skill. From 2000-2004, I was the Editor of Louisiana State Business Magazine, a publication that covered business topics. It was mailed quarterly to 25,000 CEO's.

**Question #2: Outline your top three priorities if you are elected.**

Jack Burrell	1. Stop the rate at which the city is currently incurring debt and build a plan to reduce the city's tens of millions of dollars of current debt. Establish 2, 5, and 7 year financial plans. 2. Establish clear and open lines of communication between the mayor, the city council, and all city officials and employees. Make city government more transparent. 3. Follow the comprehensive plan regarding the growth of the city - preserve the uniqueness, beauty and rich history of Fairhope while still allowing for managed growth.
Rick Gambino	1. Encourage more businesses in the downtown area. 2. Get City finances in order. 3. Constantly circulate downtown and listen to merchants' issues and concerns and encourage cooperation from the city to help these unique independent businesses succeed as they are the most important asset Fairhope has.
Robert C. Gentle	I believe the Fairhope area should better manage the inevitable growth we have been and will continue to experience to ensure it is sensible and compatible with a long term vision for the City. Fairhope must revise its fiscal management policies for the future. Quality of life issues such as traffic, parking, and sense of community must be enhanced to lead to a community where integrity, experience and leadership are apparent to all citizens.
Timothy M. Kant	1. Manage growth – promote downtown Fairhope by keeping the two colleges in downtown which will ensure a work force, promote the medical industry, develop the 250 acre park around the airport, define the city limits and buffer zones. 2. Ensure quality, essential services and public safety for Fairhope residents. 3. Keeping Fairhope in the black, just like it has always been. One of my main goals has always been to maintain a conservative financial responsibility.
Dean Mosher	1. Make Fairhopes Comprehensive "Village" Master Plan actionable to protect our economic stability as our population is projected to grow 100% in the next decade. 2. Separate the Mayoral job from Superintendent of Utilities while at the same time bringing trust and fiscal transparency to city government. 3. Find new sources of revenue to offset our ever-growing dept that are not fee or tax based.
Vince Valentim	1. Review of revenue development polices and procedures. 2. Develop a ' Get Well Plan' for debt reduction. 3. An administration that is less intrusive and is more responsive with a unity of purpose which puts Fairhope first.
Chris Warner	1. Manage Fairhope's unbridled population growth. The city's 50% increase in population over the last four years has spawned a host of service delivery problems. As an urban planner I will promote prudent permitting decisions by the planning commission and city council. 2. Balance the budget by defining recurring revenues and expenditures. This will be done through an objective, comprehensive audit. 3. Improve recreational opportunities for families like a movie theatre, a bowling alley and a skating rink.

**Question #3: Name the taxes or fees that impact businesses and residents that you would support increasing, and for what purpose?**

Jack Burrell	If we cannot reduce our debt with proper planning and by reducing spending, then I will let the people decide on a sales tax. I do not believe any sales tax should be placed on food or prescription drugs. I believe there may be a way to reduce property taxes in our city, as well.
Rick Gambino	I do not support tax increases of any kind. You can avoid tax increases by being more efficient in the way you run city government departments. Expenses should never be higher than revenues. The independent businesses and residents shouldn't have to pay for the city's financial mistakes.
Robert C. Gentle	None
Timothy M. Kant	At this time, I do not believe the City of Fairhope needs any additional taxes.
Dean Mosher	I do not support any new taxes or fees to businesses or residents with the exception of impact fees for new construction on the city's infrastructure.
Vince Valentim	No plans of additional taxes or fees, only restructuring and possible reductions.
Chris Warner	I support reducing our property tax liability by rolling back the city property tax millage. There were 22,000 appeals to property taxes this past year. I would be in favor, in concert with a property tax break, of imposing a one-cent sales tax to improve roads and to provide per-call funding to the city's volunteer fire department.

**Question #4: Do you support the City’s decision to financially partner and support the Chamber of Commerce’s Blueprint for Tomorrow strategic plan and would you pledge to continue that support and consider future support on similar initiatives?**

Jack Burrell	Absolutely.
Rick Gambino	I feel every endeavor should have a plan. Even when you feel you know where you want to go, without a map, you probably won't reach your goal. I totally support this plan. It's a well laid out and its an extensive five year plan that covers all aspects of economic development, education, transportation, the environment and tourism. The city should definitely support the blueprint for tomorrow and consider other Chamber initiatives.
Robert C. Gentle	Yes, I supported the plan initially and still do support Blueprint for Tomorrow and will continue to support it and similar initiatives in the future.
Timothy M. Kant	Yes.
Dean Mosher	Though I have reviewed and see many positive aspects of your "Blueprint for Tomorrow" I must also say that over several decades I have seen many such "plans" and "initiatives" that, though well presented and well meaning, die on the vine for lack of political will and follow through. Plans have no value without the will to implement them.
Vince Valentim	My first response to the question is 'Yes', but we must see how any plan interfaces with the city plan.
Chris Warner	I am a planner by education and occupation. I wholeheartedly support any and all efforts to further plan for a better Fairhope and Eastern Shore. Moreover, I realize that regionalism is paramount for us to be able to successfully work with our brother and sister communities.

**Question #5: What steps would you take to ensure that your city planning department is coordinating with peers in adjoining sister cities and the county?**

Jack Burrell	We should establish clear and open lines of communication with our sister cities and the county. I will support initiatives and sessions, including hosting these if necessary, which bring our sister cities and the county together to share thoughts and ideas with one another on a regular, annual or more frequent basis.
Rick Gambino	I would encourage regularly scheduled meetings with sister cities to discuss and review all issues and concerns of planning and zoning.
Robert C. Gentle	While the three Eastern Shore cities are different in many ways, we are still one large Eastern Shore community. We should coordinate traffic studies and the communities should also strive to understand and manage storm water issues together. Additionally, we should look at compatible growth where the cities are adjacent to one another keeping the focus on an Eastern Shore community approach rather than three separate entities.
Timothy M. Kant	The City of Fairhope enjoys a great relationship with Daphne, Spanish Fort and Baldwin County. The City recently worked on the 181 Access Management Plan with Daphne and the Alabama Department of Transportation. The City of Fairhope has established a development review process to work hand in hand with the Baldwin County Highway Department to ensure compliance with the City's Subdivision Regulations and Baldwin County Regulations. The City is currently working with Baldwin County to streamline the development review process.
Dean Mosher	I would strongly support a policy that requires consistent and open communication with both our sister cities and county to be a standard component of planning procedure. We are all stronger and more efficient when we work together.
Vince Valentim	Form a coalition with the county and cities arriving to a mutual agreement and procedures to keep each informed on pending actions.
Chris Warner	I would be in favor of creating and maintaining a healthy dialogue of related matters that affect our region. This dialogue would occur with the leaders of our neighboring communities on the Eastern Shore but would extend to Spanish Fort to the north and Foley to the east as they are two of the faster growing area communities.