

**ANSWERS FROM CANDIDATES RUNNING FOR  
PUTNAM COUNTY COMMISSIONER IN 2022 REPUBLICAN PRIMARY ELECTION  
TO QUESTIONS POSED BY THE REC ELECTIONS COMMITTEE**

<b>What motivates you to want to become a member of The Putnam County Board of Commissioners?</b>	
Larry Harvey, candidate D4	Helping others all over the County to help them Navigating County Government to make their Lives better and Promote Putnam County
Tom Williams, candidate D4	My motivation is for the betterment of the County and the Citizens of Putnam.
Jeff Rawls, candidate D2	What motivates me (to run for the BOCC) is my Love for my family and Putnam County. I moved to Putnam in 1988. I realized that Putnam is ideally located to provide a great quality of life, as well as access to almost anything that might be needed within a short distance. Seeing the multitude of needs in our community, I have been passionate about and am advocating for several areas of change that I feel will propel us all as citizens and help ensure success for future generations. Some of these are: ● Encouraging skills training within our county (Vo-Tech) for Highschool students and Adults. This will help build our workforce. ● In county Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Facilities. This will reduce our jail population and help get people back into the workforce. Turning a liability into an asset. ● Economic and Tourist Development that meets the goals as stated by the public during Strategic Planning, and budgeting accordingly. This will help our growth and identify needs. ● Encouraging Public participation in our Governance. Evening BOCC and Town Hall meetings will allow more access to the public.
Leota Wilkinson, candidate D2	<b>Note from Committee: Ms. Wilkinson respectfully declined responding due to a death in the family.</b>
<b>What are your experiences that qualify you for the position?</b>	
Larry Harvey, candidate D4	Appointed by Governor Scott 3/2014 elected twice and the Countless time I have dedicated to my calling. I am a mentor to other commissioners around Fla.
Tom Williams, candidate D4	I have owned and or operated several successful and profitable businesses for more than 40 years, 25 of which have been right here in Putnam County which encompasses setting policies, managing employees, enforcing rules, satisfying customers, being fiscally responsible (budget). County government is nothing more than a large business. What attributes are essential for s
Jeff Rawls, candidate D2	My Faith and service in the US Navy are the cornerstone of my experiences that qualified me to serve on the BOCC. Some of these include a strong sense of right and wrong, teamwork, adaptability, decision making skills, and ability to find solutions. Other experiences include starting and owning a construction business since 2001. As a General Contractor, I am adept at contract review and writing, budgeting, and execution for multi million dollar projects (both private sector and government). I Worked as a Firefighter/Paramedic for 10 years This gives me a unique insight when dealing with issues that revolve around our Volunteer and Paid Fire/EMS . Being a Christian, Husband, and Father have honed me and my core values.
<b>What attributes are essential for successful members of The Putnam County Board of Commissioners?</b>	
Larry Harvey, candidate D4	Trust from other Board members & Public our employees Writing Proposal Listening to our Citizens Caring & Loving our Citizens. I have graduated from FAC County Commission all three schools
Tom Williams, candidate D4	Attributes; I think the most important starts with Honesty and Integrity followed by Respect and Transparency, to be a good commissioner you need to LISTEN.
Jeff Rawls, candidate D2	The attributes that are essential to me being a successful commissioner (a public servant) include but are not limited to: being accessible, having vision, being resourceful, being persistent, being honest, and having the support of my wife and family.
<b>What do you see as the commissioner's roles and responsibilities?</b>	

County Commissioner REC Questionnaire

Larry Harvey, candidate D4	Making our Citizens lives easier getting Government out of the way as much as we can. Connecting with the Right people to solve Problems
Tom Williams, candidate D4	I could cut and paste a long answer for this question, however the commissioner's role and responsibility is governed by Fl. Statute and just as important is the use of common sense.
Jeff Rawls, candidate D2	The commissioners roles include serving as a legislator, serving as a conduit for the purpose of communicating the requests of the public that we serve. Identify community needs and address them with the proper agency (whether within the county, municipalities, or state), serve as a liaison between the constituents and the county commission staff and serve as an ambassador that represents the citizens of our county at various functions and events. In Putnam County, the commissioners also serve as governing members of the Putnam County Port Authority. The responsibilities are clearly delineated in Florida statutes (125.01 Powers and Duties included HERE: <a href="http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&amp;URL=0100-0199/0125/Sections/0125.01.html">http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&amp;URL=0100-0199/0125/Sections/0125.01.html</a> ). Some of the more obvious are hospitals, Fire/Ems, health and welfare, parks and recreation, and etc.
<b>What role does policy play in the functioning of the commission?</b>	
Larry Harvey, candidate D4	Policy is set by the Board and Management Making Sure the message dose not get lost in the workers.
Tom Williams, candidate D4	Creating and setting policy is the basic role of the commission its job is to protect the citizens and county again using a common sense approach for the good of everyone. Commissioners are authorized and required to make policy for the county. Policy-making means defining high-level goals and long-range outcomes for county government. This includes choosing the direction, identifying the ways and the means to achieve desired outcomes, and guiding the decision-making process leading to these outcomes.
Jeff Rawls, candidate D2	Policies do not dictate the functions of the commission in Putnam county as there are no established governing policies set by the board. Each chairman sets their own policies for the year they serve as chairman. Policies as it relates to the county commission is what drives the day to day operations of the county government. Contract procurement, budgeting, spending, employment/staffing, human resources, to name a few. The commission approves policies that guide how staff manage or operate. Policies will typically leave some decision making ability on the part of staff.
<b>Do you have sufficient time/energy to devote to this position?</b>	
Larry Harvey, candidate D4	This is my full time Job! Mostly starting at 5am everyday till late in the evening.
Tom Williams, candidate D4	I understand the responsibility of taking on the role of a commissioner, to me it's another business and would not attempt to do so if I didn't think it thru.
Jeff Rawls, candidate D2	I absolutely have the time and energy to devote to the position. For more than 4 years my family and I have dedicated whatever time is needed to the performance of my duties both written and implied. Service as a commissioner requires dedication to the public needs ahead of personal needs. It requires service above self. When I was asked to run in 2018, I waited to get a commitment from my wife as the obligation impacts the entire family. Being a business owner, I can set my own schedule. As a commissioner, I schedule my time around the needs of the community.
<b>Do you believe in big government or limited government as it relates to the commission? Explain.</b>	
Larry Harvey, candidate D4	I believe in smaller Government even though we are consistent ask to grow government by our Citizens and some don't even know that is what they are asking
Tom Williams, candidate D4	Being a strong conservative I believe in limited governments only objective is to protect its citizens.

County Commissioner REC Questionnaire

Jeff Rawls, candidate D2	I do not believe in big government. I believe that the government should be limited to providing services like Police, Fire/Ems, trash collection, roads and drainage. I believe that Churches,civic groups, and other non governmental organizations do better in other areas as they have a closer relationship to the community they serve. Big government is the problem. Limited government is the solution.
	<b>How do you manage bureaucracy to ensure there is no abuse of power?</b>
Larry Harvey, candidate D4	The Power is loaned to us by the people and we the People manage it. My Role as a Commissioner is to keep an eye out for any abusive and Ring the Bell.
Tom Williams, candidate D4	This question seems to be the biggest problem some officials have, to ensure no abuse of power I will maintain my integrity, be honest, transparent and sue common sense. If you notice the use of COMMON SENSE in my opinion plays a huge role in serving the people and the people is what it's all about. You can't maintain a successful business (county) by lying, cheating or playing favorites.
Jeff Rawls, candidate D2	The abuse of power that is allowed within our government can only be checked by electing commissioners that are honest, have integrity, and are willing to do what is best for the public. The public needs to hold its elected officials accountable. Fiscal accountability is allowed to go unchecked when a majority of the commission does not question what is presented. Fl. statute requires the commissioners to (From FS 125.01 (s) ) Make investigations of county affairs; inquire into accounts, records, and transactions of any county department, office, or officer; and, for these purposes, require reports from any county officer or employee and the production of official records. In short, the commission is required to question what is put in front of them. Putnam NEEDS an Inspector General as requested by the current and past Clerk of Court. The Commission refuses to encourage this as it would reduce the opportunity for abuse of power.
	<b>Do you believe the commissioners should be involved early in the budget process for the county? Explain.</b>
Larry Harvey, candidate D4	I am involved almost daily. We tose od us that want to be are never not involved. The budget never stops.
Tom Williams, candidate D4	Since money controls all aspects of the county's ability to serve and protect its citizens the commission should be aware of the budge at all times. The Process is ongoing as it should be.
Jeff Rawls, candidate D2	I firmly believe that the commission needs to change its approach to budgeting. Starting the budget process early, allows insight into each department and what is needed to accomplish the goals that are set via strategic planning. Putnam County Commission does not budget according to a strategy. This allows the Administration to set a budget regardless of needs and therefore not provide a good value and service to our citizens. I have been opposed to this approach since before being elected. Administration is allowed to budget in the dark because the commission allows it. Government is like a pig. It will eat as much as it is allowed to.
	<b>Additional Comments:</b>
Larry Harvey, candidate D4	No Comment
Tom Williams, candidate D4	No Comment
Jeff Rawls, candidate D2	When I ran in 2018, I stated that I am in favor of more oversight and public participation. I believe by holding our meetings at 0900 it limits the number of citizens that can attend. I have held numerous town hall meetings that prove that the public wants to be heard. We as a community are living in very tough times. With high inflation, high labor cost, high cost of durable goods, Putnam County will need to be very attentive to OUR budget. If I am blessed with an opportunity to serve a second term, I would hope that the citizens would hold the commission accountable as to their RESPONSIBILITIES to the public. I appreciate the opportunity to share me views with the REC as a candidate and would be grateful for any support that can be given by the REC members.