



2024 SURVEY FOR COLONIAL HEIGHTS SCHOOL BOARD

Candidate: Robert W. "Bobby" Wade

1. Please tell us a bit about your background and involvement in the community.

It has been a privilege serving the Colonial Heights community as a city council member and vice mayor for the last four years. My 35-year career in insurance, (i.e., commercial, residential, general liability, and inland marine) coupled with my community service helped prepare me for this task.

As vice mayor, I have direct involvement with city departments, committees and organizations as well as opportunities to represent the city for meetings, open house events, ribbon cuttings and memorial celebrations. I also conduct performance evaluations for the city attorney, city manager and clerk of council

I presently serve on the Planning commission and the Beautification committee. I am also past chairman for the Economic Development Authority.

2. Do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or Independent? If Republican, are you in accord with [The Republican Creed](#)?

Per Colonial Heights code, I am seeking re-election as an Independent. However, I am conservative by nature and identify as a Republican in accordance with the Republican Creed.

3. Please tell us why you are running for City Council.

Colonial Heights is a great place to live, and I believe we need to aggressively improve our economic conditions. I believe in law enforcement and personal safety for our neighborhoods. The city has some serious needs in our infrastructure water/sewer utilities and our roadways which also need attention. During my present term on council I authored and received unanimous approval from council for issuance of a 6 million dollar bond for future necessary expenditures when the interest rates at that time were 2 1/2 percent. Understanding history, it was clear the interest rates would increase which today they are in the 6 1/2 percent range.

I confirmed with our finance auditor that issuance of this bond would not negatively affect our city's excellent credit rating. As a result, this has saved the city many thousands of dollars in interest costs. Those dollars can be put toward necessary projects versus higher interest payments.

4. What are two or three things that the City of Colonial Heights is doing well?

Presently, we are financially responsible and operate within our means as a city. Our credit rating is excellent. The yearly budget is very detailed and we carefully review each expenditure. We strive to protect the property rights of our citizens in order to live and work in a safe community.

There are ways for improvement as with any city, but compared to other cities I am proud to say I live and serve the citizens of Colonial Heights.

5. What are two or three things that the City of Colonial Heights need to improve on?

First, our infrastructure of water and sewer utilities in some areas of the city are over 100 years old. Many sections are in need of repair and/or replacement. The same conditions exist for several of our roadways throughout the city. During my term on council, I have aggressively pushed for obtaining more grants to assist in necessary repairs including environmental grants for soil erosion at our river banks and creeks. Secondly, our tax dollars go to the state and federal government and we must seek all available avenues for return of grant funds to improve our living conditions. Thirdly, we must seek every means to grow our economy. Colonial Heights is limited in available land for development so re-development is our way forward. We need to reach out to businesses beyond our city and state to market our access to I-95 and I-85.

I advocated for and council unanimously approved a separate website for our Economic Development Authority to reach the national market base. This website enables the City to reach business beyond our borders. Marketing our city is a must.

6. How will you seek to be responsive to city residents if elected to City Council?

During my term, I have encouraged citizens to personally contact me with any and all questions and concerns. This was accomplished by meetings in person, by phone or email. I am proud to say that many citizens have provided me positive feedback regarding my timeliness and attention to detail when responding to their concerns. If re-elected, I plan to continue to be available to assist in any way I can.

7. In your opinion, what is the number one issue facing the City over the next four years?

Making sure we do as much as we can to address our aging infrastructure and advancing economic prosperity. Currently the estimated cost to replace/or repair our aging infrastructure is \$188 million dollars. For too long the need for such repairs has been delayed.

8. What role, if any, should the City have in ensuring the long term success of the Tri-City Chili Peppers as a team in Colonial Heights?

Colonial Heights is very fortunate to have the Chili Peppers renew their contact with the City. Their presence has been a great addition and a fun-filled experience for our families and

community. With the upgraded exterior appearance and renovations, Shepherd Stadium it is a quality sports facility unique in its own way. There are still some needed improvements that I support and advocate; which include, updated locker rooms, renovation of the concession stand, as well as improvements to Roanoke Avenue which leads to the stadium. Also, the addition of sidewalks and better street drainage are a must.

It is my goal to continue to provide the utmost support to ensure this fine organization remains part of our City.

9. Is there anything else you would like to share that was not already asked?

I have achieved many significant milestones in my life thus far. I am the founder and owner of two successful businesses, one in insurance and the other in real estate. I am currently the Vice Mayor, a homeowner, a husband, father, and grandfather.

I am a life-long resident of the City with a strong commitment to public service, a core value shared by my family. Hard work, being kind, and community involvement were always impressed upon me by my family.

Throughout my life I have carried these values into every endeavor I pursue, including my service on City Council. I have always been committed to making the community a better place for everyone and I believe that public service is an important duty which I consider to be an honor.

I submitted a comprehensive plan approved by Council to enhance our Roundabout to include installation of 3 lighted flag poles in the center proudly flying the US, State and Colonial Heights flags. The light lenses will be color changing for holidays and celebrations throughout the year. Also, regarding the pond at the I-95 entrance/exit exchange, my plan calls for a large lighted **"COLONIAL HEIGHTS"** sign that too has color changing lenses. Removal of all the dead and diseased trees and related overgrowth around the pond and installation of a large lighted fountain in the center of the pond with several different spray patterns. Low growing shrubbery planted on the hillside providing a "stadium" effect. My plan was submitted to the State Department of Transportation over 2 years ago and permit permission has been delayed however; I will continually push for approval and implementation until it is granted. My plan costs will include contributions from area businesses and organizations.

I do not support any increase in tax rates for our citizens.

I support completion of the renovation of Violet Bank Museum.

In order to achieve resolution, I believe in approaching and joining forces with our community partners, business stakeholders, and increase advocacy efforts with state and federal representatives.

Looking toward the future, I want to see more unity between elected officials and the people of Colonial Heights.

As a business leader, I understand the importance of managing the City in a fiscally responsible way, including innovative ways to save money and spend wisely in a way that benefits the residents of our community.

I believe my professional and life experiences have prepared me to be a wise choice to serve on City Council. Beyond my business background, I truly love calling Colonial Heights home and serving our community.

I believe Colonial Heights is a unique community with a proud small-town feel. We have kind and welcoming residents and it's a wonderful place for families to raise children and foster long-lasting friendships.

I believe an elected official's first and most important job is to listen to the community and act in its best interests. I believe in pillars of fairness, respect, and decorum. I will provide pragmatic and decisive leadership that will listen to the needs of our community and proactively address issues rather than waiting for problems to arise.

I want to personally thank each and every one of you here in attendance. I also want to thank Chairman, Zackary Wood and the Colonial Heights Republican Committee in providing this forum. Lastly, I seek your vote and support in allowing me to serve you for another term on City Council.

Best Regards.