

## **Call to Action: Seeking a Candidate for the Delray Beach City Commission**

*Bob Averack*

The late, great, Thomas P. “Tip” O’Neill of Massachusetts, the former Speaker of the US House of Representatives is closely associated with an old political proverb: “All politics is local.” This sage guidance is as true today as it was when it was first spoken. It is right here at home that politics have the greatest impact on our daily lives, and it is local governance that is manifested through local politics. With this in mind, let’s take a look at the Delray Beach City Commission.

The City Commission is the governing body of the City of Delray Beach. It is the body that hires and oversees the actions of the City Manager, through which all municipal operations occur. The commission determines ordinances, approves operating budgets, and levies taxes that fund the operations. Our commissioners also establish the Comprehensive Plan that informs development of our various neighborhoods and guides our partnerships with local businesses. The commission also oversees 21 boards and committees that focus on various aspects of life in the community. Finally, as of 2018, the commissioners also occupy 5 of the 7 seats on the Delray Beach Community Redevelopment Agency, that directs public investment in the modernization and revitalization of certain neighborhoods. In short, the City Commission has a high impact on the quality of life in our Little City by the Sea.

There are 5 seats on the City Commission. One of these seats, Seat 5, is also recognized as the Chair of the Commission and the Mayor of Delray Beach. All commission seats are elected for a 3-year term, with the election occurring on the third Tuesday in March of the expiring year. Seats 2 and 4 are up for reelection on March 17, 2020, the same day as the Presidential Preference Primary. Seats 1, 3 and 5 will be reelected in March, 2021. And while all City Commission seats are elected in a Non-Partisan Election (whereby the candidate’s party of registration does not appear on the ballot), it is important to note that it is through these offices that we establish our “bench” of candidates for possible, future runs for higher office, be they county, state or national offices. For example, Florida State Representative Al Jacquet was, at one time, a Delray Beach City Commissioner.

As stated earlier, Seats 2 and 4 will be up for reelection on 3/17/2020. Seat 2 is currently occupied by Deputy Vice Mayor William Bathurst, who is a registered Republican. Seat 4 is held by Vice Mayor Shirley Johnson, who is a registered Democrat. Commissioner Bathurst won his seat in March, 2018 to fill a 2-year vacancy created by then Commissioner Jim Chard’s decision to run for Mayor. And he won his seat BY DEFAULT, because no Democrat filed to run for that seat. We cannot let that happen again!

There is every reason to believe that both Commissioners Bathurst and Johnson will seek reelection in March. Therefore, the Democratic Club of Delray Beach is seeking a registered Democrat who lives in Delray Beach, seeks a great opportunity for public service, and is willing to take up the mantle of leadership and represent our party as a candidate for Seat 2 on the Delray Beach City Commission. The Club will do its utmost to support your candidacy, only bound by the rules of the Florida Democratic Party, and we will ensure that you get as much

community exposure as possible in your efforts to get elected. We can also ensure that many Democrats will be voting on 3/17/2020, as they will be at the polls to vote for their candidate of choice in the Presidential Preference Primary. In short, this is a great time to run!

If you wish to discuss your interest in running for Seat 2, please contact Bob Averack at [Bob.Averack@gmail.com](mailto:Bob.Averack@gmail.com) or (203) 980-3558. Thank you for your interest. Go Dems!