

Madame Mayor, distinguished council members, Staff and citizens of Flowery Branch,

As I said back on January 21st, I intend to qualify to run for Hall County Commission at the end of this month. The Georgia Constitution, Article 2, Paragraph 5 says; "The office of any state, county, or municipal elected official shall be declared vacant upon such elected official qualifying, in a general primary or general election, or special primary or special election, for another state, county, or municipal elective office or qualifying for the House of Representatives or the Senate of the United States if the term of the office for which such official is qualifying for begins more than 30 days prior to the expiration of such official's present term of office."

While I would have liked to continue to serve the citizens of Flowery Branch until taking office in 2011, unfortunately, the law does not allow for me to. As I committed previously, I intend to pay for the special election to fill my remaining term because I do not feel that it is right for the citizens of our city to carry the financial burden of the special election. I do regret, however, that there will be a significant amount of time that this seat will be vacant. I commit to continue to work with our Mayor and Council over the next several months until this position is filled. While I may not have a vote, I would still feel honored to know that my ideas and opinions have a home in this council chamber.

The decision to run for County Commission was provoked because of the lack of cooperation between the county and the municipalities; it was compounded by the breaking of promises to

the citizens; but it was enabled because of the new members added to this council. In the past 4 months this new council has seen a lot of intense issues from annexation to the appointment of a new judge. In our brief time together we have seen hearings on alcohol and zoning code violations. Most of these of these items were not seen in my 1st 2 years on council. Your abilities to convey thoughts, ideas, and arguments have demonstrated to me that the City is moving in the right direction.

To quote James Riker, while the wheels of government may grind slowly, they do grind, and I believe that they are grinding in the right direction. As I am set to qualify, I have run out of time to implement some of the things that I would still like to see improved in our city. So at this time I would ask that this council take up the banner and address the following issues:

1. Trash- please consider changing our trash ordinance by making it an exclusive franchise. By outsourcing our trash, we can still maintain low prices through the RFP process and we can use the taxpayer dollars more efficiently by redirecting resources within the city;
2. Ethics- While not directed for towards anyone on this council, but for members that will most assuredly follow us, we need to ensure a greater amount of transparency in our personal dealings with each other. If 2 or more council members are in business with each other, the people should know the nature and purpose of the business relationships;
3. Water and Sewer- There are a couple of things that need to be addressed in our current budget cycle: the FOG fee and the discrepancy in rates between neighbors. We should not

have a special class of residents paying an arbitrary lower rate based on when they moved to Flowery Branch, and we need to see what we can do to make the FOG/Wastewater permit charge correlate to the amount of sewer used;

4. Zoning code updates- we need improved stratification in our industrial codes. More importantly, I ask that this council consider that we never have a vote on the same day as a public hearing unless there is unanimous consent from the council. Samuel Taylor Coleridge said, "The three great ends which a statesman ought to propose to himself in the government of a nation (city in our case), are -- 1. Security to possessors; 2. Facility to acquirers; and, 3. Hope to all." In the security of the possessors and facility to acquirers, the updates of the zoning code will allow for a consistent atmosphere in which to acquire and develop within the city. By delaying our first vote until the next regularly scheduled meeting, it will add hope to all citizens that their voice will be heard, contemplated and acted on;
5. And finally budget- Do what you can do to hold the line on the milage rate. While there are some here that would like the rate lowered, please look around the city at many of the infrastructure needs we have in all parts of the city. Let's see what we can do to use the taxpayer dollars in a wiser, more efficient manor, but let's not put ourselves in a position where we are sacrificing the quality of life in Flowery Branch or jeopardizing the future of our citizens.

Since I cannot leave you with only 2 quotes, and one of them being from Mr. Riker, let me close by saying, "In the councils of a state (or in our case the city), the question is not so much, what ought to be done? As, what can be done?" I think this council is on the right path to consider what can be done. We are no longer managing by crisis. H.R. Heweis said, "All good government must begin at home." I would say that all good government begins at the local level. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve the citizens of Flowery Branch and to work along side this Mayor, Council and Staff. I look forward to serving this council as the next Commissioner for South Hall County.

With qualifying occurring between April 26 and 30, this voting session may be my last, unless we have a special called session. Thank you for allowing the opportunity to serve and good luck to this council as you move forward with the business of the city.