2023

Town of Taylorsville Municipal Election Candidate Information



Early Voting

October 19 – November 4

Election Day

Tuesday, November 7

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Message from the Director

In the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson wrote, "Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed". Consent of the governed is expressed directly through elections and voting. Free and fair elections are the cornerstone of a representative democracy. Sydney J. Harris said, "Democracy is the only system that persists in asking the powers that be whether they are the powers that ought to be". The Alexander County Board of Elections is committed to ensuring efficient, impartial, and honest elections. Our democracy and the citizens of Alexander County deserve nothing less. It is my honor and privilege to serve as your Elections Director.

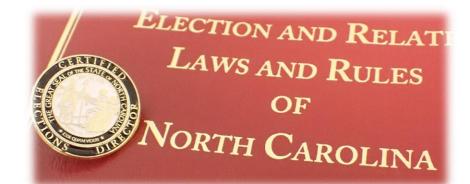


Wike

Sincerely

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Patrick Wike Elections Director



About County Boards of Elections

North Carolina's 100 county boards of elections conduct local elections, operate voting sites, maintain voter registration lists and handle many other aspects of elections administration. The State Board of Elections works with county boards of elections offices to ensure elections are conducted lawfully and fairly.

Each of North Carolina's 100 counties has a county board of elections with five members who are registered voters in that county. The State Board of Elections appoints four members – two Democrats and two Republicans – to each county board of elections. The state chairs of the Republican and Democratic parties recommend three registered voters to the State Board. The Board Chair is appointed by the Governor.



Page Barnes (left) administers the Oath of Office on July 18,2023 to members of the Alexander County Board of Elections, from left to right: Twyla Price, Martha Schronce, Ray Warren, Cheryl Millsaps, and Nancy Sharpe.

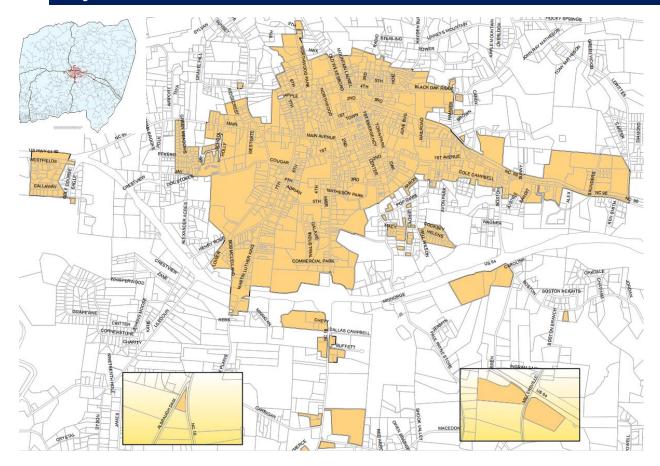
Town of Taylorsville Quick Facts

The Town of Taylorsville is the only municipality in Alexander County. It was formed in 1847 along with Alexander County. It was official incorporated in 1879.

The incorporated area for the town is approximately 2.4 square miles. Less than 1% of Alexander County's land.

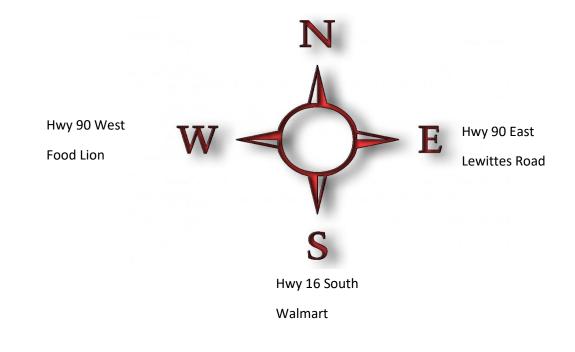
Approximately 1,352 out of Alexander County's 24,800 registered voters reside within the incorporated limits of Taylorsville. Roughly 5.5% of registered voters in the county.

Taylorsville Town Limits



Hwy 16 North

Alexander Funeral



Important Dates

Friday, October 13

Voter Registration Deadline

Thursday, October 13

Early Voting Starts

Tuesday, October 31

Deadline to Request by Mail ballot

Saturday, November 4

Early voting ends 3 p.m.

Tuesday, November 7

Election Day

Friday, November 17

Canvass (election results certified)

3 ways to vote

In order to be eligible to vote in the 2023 municipal election, your permanent residence must be located within the incorporated limits of Taylorsville.

Option 1: Vote by Mail

Any Town of Taylorsville registered voter may request, receive, and vote a mail in absentee ballot. No special excuse or circumstance is needed.

Registered voters must request an absentee ballot with an official N.C. absentee ballot request form. There are two ways to access and submit the form:

- 1. Online: Request an absentee ballot at the N.C. Absentee Ballot portal votebymail.ncbse.gov
- 2. On paper: After completing, submit the form to the county board of elections in person or by mail.

Request deadline: Tuesday October 31 at 5 p.m.

Option 2: Vote Early in Person

Voters can cast a ballot at the board of elections office during the early voting period (October 19 through November 4). During the early voting period, eligible individuals may also register to vote at the same time through same day registration.

Dates	Hours of Operation
Thursday, October 19 – Friday, October 20	8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Monday, October 23 – Friday, October 27	8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Monday, October 30 – Friday, November 3	8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Saturday, November 4	8 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Option 3: Vote in Person on Election Day

Registered voters must vote at their assigned polling place, The Alexander Senior Center.

The Alexander Senior Center will be open from 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Election Day. Any voter in line at their assigned polling place at 7:30 p.m. will be able to vote. The busiest times tend to be early in the morning and just before the polls close. Avoid longer lines by voting at off-peak times.

Voter Photo ID Requirements

Beginning with the 2023 municipal elections, North Carolina voters will be asked to show photo ID when they check in to vote. Voters who vote by mail will be asked to include a photocopy of an acceptable ID when returning their ballot by mail.

Acceptable Photo IDs for Voting

Any of the following that is unexpired, or expired for one year or less:

- North Carolina driver's license
- State ID from the NCDMV (also called "non-operator ID")
- Driver's license or non-driver ID from another state, District of Columbia or U.S. territory (only if voter registered in North Carolina within 90 days of the election)
- U.S. Passport or U.S. Passport card
- North Carolina voter photo ID card issued by a county board of elections (available soon)
- College or university student ID approved by the State Board of Elections
- State or local government or charter school employee ID approved by the State Board of Elections

Note: A voter 65 or older may use an expired form of acceptable ID if the ID was unexpired on their 65th birthday.

Any of the following, regardless of whether the ID contains an expiration or issuance date:

- Military or veterans ID card issued by the U.S. government
- Tribal enrollment card issued by a tribe recognized by the State or federal government
- ID card issued by an agency of the U.S. government or the State of North Carolina for a public assistance program

About the Candidate Statements

The order of candidates in this guide is the order in which they will appear on the November ballot by contest. For municipal elections, candidates are placed on the ballot in strict alphabetical order according to N.C.G.S 163-299(c)

The information for each candidate was provided by the candidate to the Taylorsville Times. The Statements by candidates do not express or reflect opinions of the Alexander County Board of Elections or The Taylorsville Times.

Candidates for Mayor



Candidate statements are featured in this guide in the order in which the candidates will appear on the ballot. The names of candidates for election in municipal elections shall be placed on the ballot in strict alphabetical order, unless the municipal governing body has adopted a resolution no later than 60 days prior to an election requesting that candidates' names be rotated on ballots. G.S. 163-299.

Results are determined by plurality, with the person receiving the highest number of votes elected to the open position.

Candidate for Mayor

Cyle Emke



Emke

Cyle T. Emke, age 29, filed to run for Mayor on July 20. He submitted the following statement:

"I hereby announce my candidacy for Mayor of Taylorsville in the upcoming municipal election on November 7th.

"I have lived in Taylorsville/Alexander County my entire life and value the true, small town feel here. Our community is integral to the very fabric which weaves the American Dream. Jason Aldean, recently, took heat in expressing this very aspect in

song. I believe we need to support small town USA even more as the decline of same goes hand in hand with the moral degradation of American society," Emke continued.

"Many say 'there is nothing we can do' and I believe that to be false. We all can do much to better our communities if we simply stand together. To enter into this race for Mayor, I hope to help inspire others to get involved in their local, State and Federal governments to correct the wrongdoings of those that came before us. Together we can make a difference!

"I often hear about 'our leaders' when they are not leaders at all. They are OUR Representatives. We do NOT elect people to lead us but to represent us in their official capacity. We do not elect these people to share/promote their ideas but OUR's! All aspects of government try and deny our access to information and decisions from spending, policy, decisions, etc. We need return to 'We the People' and foster transparency in every elected office in our land. To do so we must start here, in our community.

"Much has been said, recently, about mishandling of funds here in Taylorsville and those involved. Not one statement has been made to offset these allegations and not one document produced to prove otherwise. The only thing done by any of our Representatives was to act like nothing happened. This has been commonplace for far too long, not only here but in many small communities. We must push for truth and transparency in all we do if only to benefit posterity," Emke stated.

"As your Mayor, I will take it upon myself to provide the Taxpayers of Taylorsville all information on how and where THEIR money is spent. I will work with THEIR Town Council members on budgets and be open to any and all communication from the PEOPLE of Taylorsville. As it should have always been."I will be at or near the NC Patriot Alliance booth during the Apple Festival on October 21st and look forward to speaking with you. We can make OUR small town OUR's again," Emke concluded.

Candidate for Mayor

George Holleman



Holleman

is a veteran of the U.S. Army.

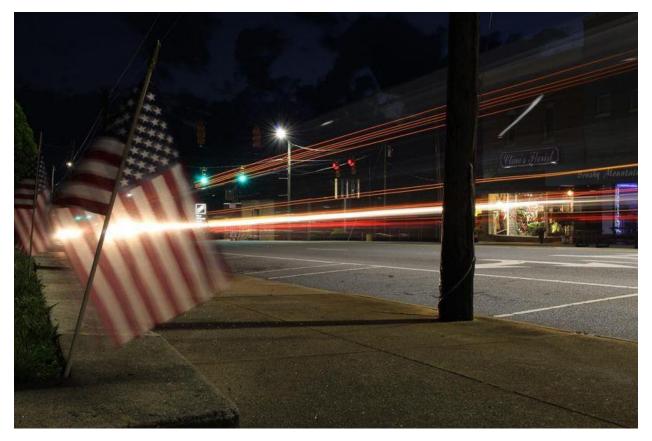
On Friday, July 7, Taylorsville Mayor George Holleman, 78, filed for re-election this November. Holleman is seeking his fourth full elected term as Mayor this year. He previously served the remainder of the late Mayor Guy Barriger's term as well after Barriger's passing.

"We have a lot of unfinished business with the Town of Taylorsville, as well as economic development goals to accomplish, and making the Town beautiful," Holleman told The Times.

Holleman is a former member of Taylorsville Fire Department, member of the N.C. Mayors Association, and 1976 graduate of Appalachian State University.

Holleman is secretary to the Executive Committee of the Western Piedmont Council of Governments. He attends First Baptist Church in Taylorsville. Holleman

He has one son, Matthew, and one daughter, Natalie. She and husband, Adam Millsaps, have two children, Carson and Chase.



Light trails on Main Avenue, photo by Patrick Wike

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Results are determined by plurality, with the person or persons receiving the highest number of votes elected to the open positions. For this contest, the top four vote getters would be elected to the 4 seats on town council.

Kim Brown



Brown

Kimberly S. Brown, age 56, filed for Town Council on July 14. She is currently a Council member and has served since being elected in 2019. A retired Alexander Central High School teacher, she coached volleyball, basketball, softball, and cheerleading at different times throughout her career. She served as the yearbook sponsor for 13 years, as Student Council advisor for 27 years, and on numerous N.C. Association of Student Council state and district boards. She advised numerous state student council officers, many of which were positions that required hosting state conventions at ACHS.

Brown is an entrepreneur with a downtown antique shop and property rental business with locations from the mountains to the coast.

Brown's education includes West Iredell High School, Class of 1984; Appalachian State University, 1988, BS Biology/Naturalist; Appalachian State University, 1989, BS Biology/Secondary Education; East Carolina University, 2009, MA Ed. Science Education.

She is a member of First United Methodist Church.

Brown and husband, James Scott Brown, have two adult children: Mattie Rae Brown, daughter, and Stewart Scott Brown, son.

She told The Times, "I have enjoyed being a member of the Town Council. There was a massive learning curve involved in understanding the ins and outs of municipal government. Even after four years, I'm not an expert. I enjoy serving the people of this community. I would like to continue the progress of upgrades and improvements to make Taylorsville a walkable downtown."

Eric Bumgarner



Bumgarner

Eric Bumgarner, 47, filed for Town Council on July 17.

He is an owner/operator of his own trucking company, leased to Brooks Furniture Express.

Faith and family are an essential part of his life, the candidate stated. Eric and his wife, Kim, have raised five children: Randall, Roxanna, Ryan (Bubba), Alyssa, and Tayler. They have nine grandchildren, all of Alexander County. He was raised in a Christian home by his father and mother, Rev. Clyde and Gail Bumgarner. He is an active and faithful member of Lebanon Baptist Church. He has also served in the past as a youth leader, Sunday School teacher, groundskeeper,

budget committee, and trustee.

Bumgarner has been a resident of the Town of Taylorsville for twenty-one plus years. He has been active in his community by serving on past PTOs and coaching recreational and travel ball teams. His desire is to be more involved in his community, build relationships, and serve the people of Taylorsville.

"My goal is to see how we can draw more business to our small town as well as providing a way for current small businesses to grow. They are the heart of a small town, and by helping them, they help us. Continuing in creating a revitalized downtown will help in this as well. With fiscal conservatism and transparency, we can reduce or eliminate unnecessary spending in efforts to keep our tax rates low. Our country is at a crossroads and my hope is that standing together on the morals of God's word, we can positively impact the generations now and those to come. The Town of Taylorsville has a great opportunity to thrive and my desire is to be part of that," said Bumgarner.

"I am also a strong supporter of our emergency services and those who sacrifice for the freedoms that we are greatly blessed to have. May God bless each and every one of you. I would appreciate your vote on November 7," he stated.

Jonathan Coley



Coley

Jonathan Coley, 44, filed July 7 as well. He has been a proud and dedicated resident of Taylorsville all his life. He is a 1997 graduate of Alexander Central High School and went on to obtain a bachelor's degree in Health and Physical Education with a concentration in Outdoor Recreation from the University of North Carolina at Pembroke in 2005.

With a passion for helping others, Coley has accumulated 15 years of experience as a Qualified Mental Health Professional, specializing in serving at-risk youth, families, and children and adolescents in foster care through the group Omnivisions, of Nashville, TN. His commitment to making a positive impact in the lives of vulnerable individuals is evident through his extensive work in this field.

In addition, Jonathan owns and operates Coley

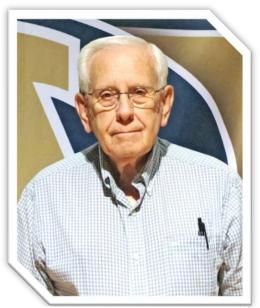
Lawn Care LLC. He is a Freemason also.

Jonathan's involvement extends beyond his professional endeavors. He currently holds the position of President in the Taylorsville Recreation Association, where he actively works to enhance recreational opportunities for the community. Additionally, he generously volunteers his time as a coach for Taylorsville Recreation and serves as an assistant coach for the ACHS Men's Soccer Team, nurturing young athletes and promoting teamwork.

Recognizing the importance of education, Jonathan is a member of the Taylorsville Elementary School SIT (School Improvement Team) and serves as an Executive PTO (Parent-Teacher Organization) Board Member. Through these roles, he actively contributes to shaping the educational environment for students in the Taylorsville community.

Jonathan's family is an integral part of his life. He is happily married to his wife, Beulah, and together, they have two beautiful daughters — Emma, 17, and Cora, 8.

Harold Dagenhart



Dagenhart

Harold Dagenhart, age 80 of Taylorsville, filed for the Town Council race on Wednesday, July 12.

Dagenhart previously was elected and served on the Town Council for a two year term, 1991-1993. He is retired from the furniture industry.

"I have experience in serving on the Town board. One of the most important things, I think, is we have to keep an eye on expenditures that are not necessary in providing services for the Town. We must keep costs under control. In times of high inflation, this is more important than ever. I'm someone who will be a good steward of the citizens' tax dollars.

"Another thing is we need to come up with a way to revitalize downtown," Dagenhart said.

"I'm also a strong supporter of the police and fire department. I support ways to expand the tax base, so that the tax rate doesn't get out of hand. I also support looking at ways that the Town can cooperate with the County where there are duplication of services. That's been done in other places; an example would be Charlotte/Mecklenburg.

"I think we have to be careful that board policies being implemented in other parts of the country don't creep into our local government, because that can also cost us extra tax dollars that are unnecessary. We also need to look at grant funding to upgrade the water and sewer infrastructure," he stated.

Dagenhart is a lifelong Lutheran and member of Salem Lutheran Church for 36 years. He has served as elder, treasurer, and currently is President of the congregation. He has three living children and nine grandchildren.

Glenn Deal



Deal

Taylorsville resident and businessman Glenn P. Deal, Jr., filed July 7 to run for the Town Council. Deal is an active member of the Taylorsville political scene.

Deal, 74, has deep roots in Taylorsville, where he grew up and has resided most of his life. Glenn obtained his education from Taylorsville High School and further pursued his studies at UNC at Chapel Hill, obtaining a bachelor of science degree in Business Management.

With a passion for insurance and investment, Glenn has earned three advanced professional designations from The American College. His commitment to excellence and expertise in his field led him to become a valued member of The

Million Dollar Roundtable. He is a Financial Consultant with Thrivent Financial located in Taylorsville.

Devoted to serving his church and his community, Glenn actively participates in various organizations. He currently serves on the Church Council of Reformation Lutheran Church, demonstrating his dedication to his faith. Additionally, Glenn is a member of the Rotary Club of Taylorsville, and is its current President.

Family is an integral part of Glenn's life. He was married to the late Amy Keever Deal. Together, they raised six children, all of whom graduated from ACHS, highlighting his commitment to their education and success.

Jason Durmire



Durmire

Jason Durmire, age 39 of Taylorsville, filed July 21 for candidacy for the Town Council. He is the son of Stan and Carolyn Durmire of Hiddenite and attends Crosspoint Church.

"As a local businessman, I have worked for the past 15 years in the Town of Taylorsville. I have spent my whole life living in Alexander County. I graduated Alexander Central High School in 2001, and obtained a degree in Business Management from Appalachian State University in December 2006. I am a former Rotarian and a current member of the Alexander County Family YMCA board. I serve as the board's director for fundraising and community outreach. I was blessed to receive the 2022 YMCA Strong award winner for Alexander due to my volunteer work with the organization and

community," said Jason Durmire.

"With my father dedicating 30 years of his life to law enforcement, with the Town of Taylorsville and Alexander County Sheriff's Department, I feel a Town Council position will be my chance to serve the public, in my own way. I want to improve on town services while cutting unnecessary spending to keep taxes as low as possible. I would like to reach out to the businesses in the town who might not have a voting voice but still need to have their concerns heard. I believe we can keep the small town feel while creating a welcoming environment for businesses and citizens alike. I simply want to see our town and community continue to grow and improve," Durmire concluded.

Edd Elliott



Edd K. Elliott, Jr., age 78, filed for Town Council on July 20. A 1964 graduate of Taylorsville High School, Elliott received a degree from the University of Texas Tech in Industrial Printing. He is retired from Gulf States Paper, where he worked for 38 years, including the last 20 years as supervisor. He served on the Taylorsville Town Council from June 2011 to December 2019, not missing a meeting. An active bowler, Elliott is president of two bowling leagues.

His family includes fianceé, Debra Auton, and two nephews, Chris and John Elliott, of Hickory. He has attended East Taylorsville Baptist Church for about 75 years.

Elliott

Elliott said he is running for Town Council "to continue to serve the citizens and the Town, to provide all necessary services, and to make our town grow and prosper."

"I am a lifelong resident of Taylorsville. While I served on the Council, the Town received \$12 million in grants and was responsible for the grant for the Millersville Sewer Project," Elliott continued.

"I want to continue to support the fire department and police department and see they are equipped to serve all the citizens of Taylorsville. I will represent everyone, not just certain groups. I would appreciate everyone's support," said Elliott.

Megan Hefner Fischel



Fischel

Filing on Wednesday, July 12, Megan Hefner Fishel, age 41, is running for Town Council. She submitted the following statement:

"I'm Megan Hefner Fishel, and I'm running for Taylorsville Town Council. I love my hometown and care about the quality of life for us all that call Taylorsville our home. I've lived in Alexander County my entire life, I've seen firsthand how our town has changed and where we can all work to make it even better. We've made progress, but still there is work to be done.

"I am running for Town Council because I believe that the people of this town need more input and to be able to freely share opinions on where we as a town can make improvements for the greater good and our children, the future leaders. My focus will also be supporting our small businesses so we can create more jobs, and bringing additional activities everyone can do as a family. I'm committed to working hard to make

Taylorsville a better place to live and raise our families.

"I am asking for your vote so together we can make Taylorsville a town we can all thrive in.

"I have been in public service for almost 25 years and, with that, have created many close relationships with individuals, families, and businesses. I'm currently in real estate sales and I am a Benefits Specialist working with a veterans organization to help educate on benefits they can acquire, [helping] veterans that have given so much to our country and our families the help they deserve! This has always been my way to give back to those that have sacrificed so much and is very important to me.

"My commitment to all the residents is to work as hard as I can to improve the town we all live in. I will be working for the people of this town because that's what makes our town special. Hearing the concerns and opinions will be my first priority!" Fishel concluded.

Greg Foster



Foster

Gregory Foster, age 60, is a lifelong resident of Taylorsville, NC with more than 40 years of experience in emergency services serving in many roles. I graduated from Alexander Central High School in 1981. I am a Christian and attend Millersville Baptist Church. I sit on several committees at church to include finance and safety, while also serving as the treasure of the Baptist Men's Group. Throughout my career, I have attended several colleges to further my training and knowledge in public service, fire, rescue, 911 and computer technology.

I have a true passion to help those in their time of need. I first began my service with the Alexander County Rescue Squad in 1978 as a junior member. I have since then retired from this organization, but do remain a lifetime member. I currently serve as the Director of the Alexander County 911 Communications Center since 2007. I am also a

volunteer with the Central Alexander "Taylorsville" Fire Department where I have more than 30 years of service and currently serve as the Training Captain.

I currently sit on several local and state boards and committees to include the North Carolina 911 Board, North Carolina 911 Board Grants Committee and North Carolina 911 Board Standards Committee. Locally, I sit on the Board of Directors for the Central Alexander Fire Department where I serve as board secretary.

As a former longtime employee of the Town of Taylorsville Department of Public Works, I have clear understanding of the infrastructure and needs of the water system, sewer system and streets maintenance in Taylorsville.

I am a very strong supporter of all emergency services and I feel it is time to look for better ways to help fund these services. I also want to work toward the revitalization of not only the downtown section of Taylorsville but the entire town by taking advantage of things such as the many grants that may be available and the use of state and federal monies when they are available. I support a stronger relationship between the town and county by working together in an effort to help reduce any wasteful spending, while not duplicating services.

William J. Fox II



Fox

William Jay Fox, II, age 34, filed for Town Council on Thursday, July 20.

He has served his country for 16 years in the U.S. Navy Reserves. Fox is the Assistant Superintendent at River Oaks Golf Club in Statesville.

"I'm running because there are a lot of things that could be done better in town, improvements to be done. The town needs more economic development to help businesses and to make things better for people in Taylorsville. The traditional,

old way of doing things isn't working anymore. I also

want to ensure Town ordinances are being followed and upheld," Fox concluded.

Tamara Odom



Odom

Tamara Odom, age 52 of Taylorsville, filed July 7 to run for Town Council.

Odom has dedicated her life to her educational career, her church, and her family.

Her educational journey began at Alexander Central High School, where she graduated in 1989. She then pursued higher education at Lenoir-Rhyne University, earning a bachelor's degree in K-6 Education with a minor in Communication in 1993. Her passion for teaching led her to a fulfilling career in the Alexander County Schools system, where she devoted 30 years to shaping the minds of countless students in our town and county.

Tamara's involvement extends beyond the classroom. She is an active member and pianist

at Sulphur Springs Baptist Church, where her musical talents and dedication to her faith are evident.

Family has always been a priority in Tamara's life. She was married to her late husband, David, who served as a County Commissioner, School Board member, and Town Manager. Together, they raised three children — Daniel, Averi, and Zoie. Taylorsville has always been the proud hometown of the entire Odom family.

Jack Simms



Simms

Incumbent Council member Jack Simms, 73, is running for re-election. He is finishing his first term on the Council.

He and his wife, Patty, have twin sons Timothy and Matthew Simms, daughter-in-law Deidra Watson Simms, and three grandchildren: Kayla, 22, Kody, 18, and Katen, 12.

Simms is "reluctantly" retired, he said. A former production manager with Pepsi-Cola and operation manager at Coca-Cola, Simms was owner and operator of a local textile screen printing business and was Vice President of Operations for Legend Gear and Transmission.

He is currently Chair of the Republican Party's NC-10 District as well as the Alexander County party chair (in his fourth term for the latter).

Simms is a Past President of Taylorsville Rotary Club, 1989-1990.

"The vision I have for Taylorsville is to have a business environment so the residents of Town and Alexander County can buy local. That would keep tax dollars here at home, to have that business which attracts visitors from surrounding counties versus going outside our town and county, spending money.

"My action plan is simple: don't promise what can't be delivered, listen, be open minded, and serve all the people of Taylorsville, not a select few," Simms stated.

When asked why he should be elected, Simms said, "I want to serve the Town of Taylorsville, not because someone asked me to, not because I have a special interest agenda. This is my hometown,

I want to be a part of the dialog between the Town of Taylorsville and Alexander County, that's why I am asking for your vote on November 7."

Tristian St. Clair



St. Clair

Taylorsville native Tristan St. Clair, age 41, filed to run for Town Council on July 14. St. Clair is a veteran of the U.S. Army and N.C. National Guard, with a combined service of 23 years, including five combat tours. Areas where he served included Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan.

St. Clair is currently employed with N.C. Dept. of Transportation in the Alexander County Maintenance unit, where he has worked for just under ten years.

This is his first time running for an elected office. When asked why he's running for Council, St. Clair said, "I grew up here and never really planned on coming back until I realized how I missed what I had, how great of a town it is. This town pretty much raised me."

He noted that he had traveled to many other places but those areas had problems that Taylorsville doesn't have to deal with.

"This is an opportunity for me to give back," he added, saying his goal, if elected, is "anything I can do to make it better for my kids and the citizens of Taylorsville."

St. Clair and his wife, Kasey, have four-month-old twins.