

Candidate Name: Peter Ascitutto

Office Sought: Stanly County Commissioner District 5

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1) Will you accept PAC contributions? Yes

2) Background and why I am running for office:

Owner of Vac & Dash in Downtown Albemarle since 2004. Been involved in civic activities over the years, including serving on the boards of the Stanly County Chamber of Commerce, Stanly County Family YMCA, Albemarle Downtown Development Corporation and more.

In 2012 I was elected to the Stanly County Board of Commissioners. In my one term I was instrumental in the following:

A- Becoming the 3rd and final vote to end a longstanding lawsuit with Alcoa over the relicensing of their dams. At the time, Stanly County had spent over \$5,000,000.00 in legal fees. In the summer of 2013, the resettling agreement was signed with Alcoa.

B- Was lead commissioner in the expansion of the Stanly County Agri-Civic Center lobby that was well overdue, leading to the increased usages for the Civic Center.

C- Highly supportive of the Farm Bureau Livestock Arena at the Agri-Civic Center. Funding is coming from public and private partnerships. I organized a concert to raise over \$3,000.00 for the project in addition to the \$2,500.00 Vac & Dash donated to the project.

D- In a gamechanger for Downtown Albemarle, I gave my full support to a property swap with the City of Albemarle to clear the way for Pfeiffer University to build a 30,000 square foot campus in downtown.

I decided to run again in 2020 to give growth a voice at the table when zoning decisions are made at County Commissioner meetings. I know of at least five cases over the last six years where zoning requests were turned down because a handful of people showed up at a meeting and complained.

One of my strengths has been able to communicate with the public about the rationale behind the decisions I make. Doing so, has helped earn the respect of people that disagree with me on certain issues.

3) Top Three Challenges:

A- Education - Stanly County has too many buildings and not enough students. Consolidation is needed as is facility repairs. In 2016 when I was on the Board of Commissioners, the estimated cost to bring our school buildings up to par was \$20,000,000.00. Four years later, the costs are estimated at \$40,000,000.00. As I have done in the past, I will continue to be a proponent for improving the efficiency of our school system.

B- Restoring trust between the Stanly County Commissioners and the municipalities in Stanly County.

In 2017, the Board of Commissioners attempted two power grabs over the municipalities.

The first was to attempt support passage of a law to require municipalities to get approval from the County Commissioners if they Entered into a contract or memorandum of understanding with another local government outside Stanly County.

The second, if passed, would have been financially devastating to the municipalities. The Board of Commissioners attempted to change the distribution of sales tax dollars from the Ad Valorem Formula to the Per Capita Formula. If they passed it, they would have taken \$1,797,203.46 from the municipalities.

As a Commissioner, I would regularly attend various municipal meetings around the county to update them on what the county is doing as well as seeing how the county and municipalities can partner for a better Stanly County.

C) Growth and zoning decisions – See Question 2

4) Active Role in Economic Development Etc.

As commissioners, one of our main duties is to help create the proper infrastructure to attract business – includes but not limited to roads, schools, broadband, etc.

5) Plans for affordable housing.

Be open to growth and zoning changes.

I attended a meeting at the Red Cross Town Council this week in which a zoning request was turned down, even though the Zoning and Planning Board approved it and it fell within future land use plans. (See attached article.)

As I listened, the arguments were the same against it as any other zoning issue: bring more traffic, bring more crime, bring my property values down, etc.

As a County Commissioner, your job is to make the best decision you can for the citizens of Stanly County with the knowledge you have. Evidence would have to be overwhelming to overturn a growth decision by the planning board.