

Meet the candidate: Kelly Russell

By Jen Bondeson News-Post Staff | Posted: Tuesday, August 27, 2013 2:00 am

Alderman Kelly Russell, a Democrat, is running for re-election.

1. Should the city continue investing public dollars in business ventures? The city owns an airport (Frederick Municipal Airport), a theater (Weinberg Center for the Arts) and a golf course (Clustered Spires). Should the city be investing in a downtown hotel and conference center?

These amenities are economic development investments. Airport runway expansion will attract larger employers, bringing more quality jobs to Frederick. Weinberg Center brings regional visitors who dine and shop here. A hotel downtown will enable us to keep those visitors overnight. Our golf course also attracts regionally and operates as an enterprise fund; the users pay for the course. Prudent public investments that attract commerce to Frederick are important investments to ensure future vibrancy and success.



Kelly Russell

Kelly Russell, candidate for Frederick Alderman

2. Assess the efficiency of the Frederick Police Department. What improvements should be made?

FPD has a legacy of community involvement and a problem-solving philosophy. Crime in the last decade has decreased. Despite current (ongoing) understaffing, our police are still highly effective. However, we must grow our department to meet the needs of the growing population, or we risk sacrificing the high level of service currently provided. State-of-the-art technology for data-driven policing and appropriate physical facilities to support FPD are critical needs as well.

3. Are the city's resources (funding, police, planning, recreation, etc.) allocated appropriately throughout its neighborhoods? Name any neighborhoods you feel receive too much or too little, and explain why.

City resources must be available and flexible to meet changing needs of all residents. Those needs vary across the city and across neighborhoods. City staffing must be adequate to meet those needs not

just reactively, but proactively. We must continue outreach efforts ensuring all residents have representation and an equal voice. City departments must continue to work collaboratively to problem solve using all available resources, both in house and with community partners like NAC.

4. What's your view on the status of business and crime along Carroll Creek Linear Park? Is the city moving in the right direction when it comes to redeveloping this area?

The final phase of CCLP will soon be under construction. Several commercial projects are planned along that corridor such as the Cannery (underway), McCutcheon's Mill, and others. New growth and vibrancy along the park will activate the area and bolster business. Active police presence on the CCLP and downtown should continue, however the special downtown unit is pulling resources from other areas of the city, due to understaffing of FPD. That's not a permanent solution.

5. What is the best plan for Hargett Farm?

The method of financing used for purchase restricts our use of the land to public purpose only. We donated a school site for an elementary school, and dedicated 50 acres to Program Open Space for permanent green space. Ten acres is being farmed in partnership with nonprofits to educate and feed neighborhoods nearby. Longer term, a regional aquatic center has been identified as a critical need and the farm may offer the ideal site.

The Frederick News-Post invited candidates in this year's Frederick mayor and Board of Aldermen election to give their thoughts on some of the city's issues. We are publishing their responses leading up to the Sept. 10 primary election.