

SOUTHWEST News

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Serving Bellaire, Meyerland, Westbury, Willow Meadows, Willow Bend, Willowbrook, Post Oak Manor, Maplewood and other Southwest Houston areas.



SPECIAL VOTERS GUIDE

Bellaire Citizens Vote Saturday, December 12

Voters in Bellaire will go to the polls on Saturday, Dec. 12, to vote in a runoff election for two city council seats.

Two candidates are vying for the position 3 seat: Corbett Daniel Parker and Roseann Rogers. In the position 5 seat, Andrew Friedberg

faces James Jameson.

Early voting will take place through Dec. 8 at Bayland Park, on Bissonnet between Hillcroft and Beechnut.

Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 12.

Bellaire voting locations are:

- Pct. 128, Bellaire City Hall, 7008 S. Rice
- Pct. 182, Horn Elementary School, 4535 Pine at Ave. B
- Pct. 214, Southwest Presbyterian Church, 6101 S. Rice
- Pct. 215, Faith Lutheran Church, 4600 Bellaire Blvd.

- Pct. 268, ChristChurch Presbyterian, 4923 Bellaire Blvd.

Call (713) 662-8222 for information about voting locations.



To help voters make their decisions, the Village News is providing this election guide, offering can-

didates the opportunity to present their views. The guide is produced as a public service and has not been underwritten by advertising.

Questions are listed above the candidates' edited answers. Full answers are available at www.village-southwest-news.com



Candidates Stake Out Positions as Run-Off Looms for Bellaire Council Positions

By Zach Haverkamp

For Position 3

Corbett Parker Roseann Rogers



For Position 5

Andrew Freidberg James Jameson



1.) What aspect of your background best qualifies/prepares you for the council seat?

I am the only candidate in Position 3 race that is prepared to make well-informed decisions on day one because I have already done what other candidates says they will do have listened. I have constantly done the little things necessary while seeking to gain an expert knowledge in the areas residents have told me the city can improve. I not only have first-hand historical knowledge of the issues the city faces today from growing up in Bellaire, but I have treated my preparation to lead like a full-time job. I block walked the majority of Bellaire hearing residents' concerns, regularly attended city council & committee meetings, participated in a police ride around, and met with over 100 community leaders. I am the only candidate to publish a comprehensive policy paper which demonstrates my understanding of the issues and taken positions that residents can hold me

1.) What aspect of your background best qualifies/prepares you for the council seat?

I understand Bellaire. I am invested in and involved with the community, whether city sponsored events or initiatives, and am proud to call Bellaire home. As a wife, mother, taxpayer and a successful business leader, I have relevant skills for the job. In 14 plus years as an area resident, I have worked in multiple capacities in the local media, along with many charitable and public service endeavors.

Currently, as the Regional Sales and Marketing Director for Houston's Channel 55 (KTBU-TV), I serve as a leader on the station's management team. Working with a multi-million dollar sales marketing and promotion budget helps me fully understand the financial aspects and responsibilities of our own city. I set goals and objectives, as well as implement staff changes and manage growth and structures. I supervise senior

1.) What aspect of your background best qualifies/prepares you for the council seat?

I am easily distinguished in this race by my prior experience in Bellaire city government. There can be no better preparation for serving on City Council than to have been involved in the public process before deciding to run for office. Through my experience as a planning and zoning commissioner, I have developed an intimate understanding of how our city government works and how to be effective within it. I have been directly involved in debating and voting on a number of important policy issues, participated in countless public hearings, and I even chaired a committee to amend one of our zoning ordinances and successfully ushered the proposal through the process to adoption by city council. There is a substantial learning curve in local government, and with all of the important issues commanding our attention we cannot afford to waste time waiting for

1.) What aspect of your background best qualifies/prepares you for the council seat?

First of all, I think raising a family in Bellaire has given me the advantage of having a unique perspective of the community as a whole and the issues facing city council. Having lived in Bellaire for over 20 years, and being an active, engaged volunteer in a number of organizations, I know the people of Bellaire and what their priorities and values are.

Secondly, my professional background reflects a proven record of accomplishment in the legal arena and the business world. I have a unique skill set that I would bring to city council that is based on a solid legal education and business experience. I am the only candidate that has actually started a business and a law firm from the ground up; that knows the impact city government can have on the business community. I am the only candidate that has actually been respon-

*For Position 3***Corbett Parker Roseann Rogers**

accountable to. Additionally, my leading from an early age, and professional and educational background has equipped me to ask good questions, acutely analyze multiple alternatives, and effective work through conflict and with a variety of people.

2.) What would you do to cut Bellaire's costs and increase its revenue?

I have met with [the] mayor, city manager, and library/police/asst. police/fire/parks/recreation directors directly discussing the 2010 budget and contingency planning if budget shortfalls occur. I have accumulated the knowledge and have built the relationships with city staff necessary to make the hard budget choices if economy requires it.

City department directors were required to reduce their 2010 budget by 10 percent, but if necessary I will make additional expense cuts by further reducing or delaying funding for certain wants and non-essential needs. Bellaire is a service organization, with over 76 percent of our General Fund dollars going to people between salaries and benefits. Before we lay anyone off, we must make sure we are as efficient and accountable as we can be. Although reducing city staff is not popular, further weakening of the economy could make it necessary for council to make the tough choice of reducing this large part of city expenditures in a way that least affects the provisions of essential services, health and safety.

I will support the implementation of comprehensive plan to achieve its goal of spurring commercial development that increases the city's revenue.

3.) What would you do with respect to city infrastructure?

Please see my full discussion of recent infrastructure improvements and those to come in my policy paper available at www.corbettparker.com/issues.pdf. Thanks to the persistence and hard work of former opponent Richard Franke, the issue of improving our infrastructure has received much needed attention.

4.) What do you propose for the redevelopment of Bellaire's commercial areas?

Once again, I am the only candidate in race to discuss this multiple times with current and former planning and zoning commission chairs, as well as the city's chief engineering consultant, not to mention TONS of residents.

5.) What do you propose for the redevelopment of Bellaire's commercial areas?

I am a strong proponent of redeveloping downtown Bellaire, but will be adamant that actionable steps taken to implement any plan will build consensus amongst [the] community, enrich the residential quality of life (not deplete our close-knit community feel) while also reducing our residential tax burden by increasing the commercial tax base.

Many longtime Bellaire business owners effected by proposed development are supporting [me] and trust me to improve this area in a way [that] stays true to Bellaire. I am a proponent of having a town square that will serve as a central meeting place, increase the quality of commercial services available to residents, and provide life cycle housing for younger families and mature residents wanting a scaled down presence in Bellaire with less upkeep and tax burden. I

account executives, assistants and sales support staff; I am responsible for generating new business and create new advertising campaigns for station, on air and on line use.

This further reinforces my communication capabilities to work with others on important issues and accomplish tasks in a timely manner. I am confident my background, skills and perspectives best prepares me to represent Bellaire.

2.) What would you do to cut Bellaire's costs and increase its revenue?

I am prepared to work with the mayor and council with all of our available tools to be the best stewards for our city during times of success and challenge. Having an extensive business and marketing background, I have the resources, knowledge and expertise to manage budgets and execute strategic plans. Bellaire has great resources and provides excellent services. Whether it's the parks and pools or police and fire, we must continue to maintain those resources and services and ensure an appropriate level of funding without burdening our citizens.

With that said, we have to look beyond our current tax policy to provide that funding. We must maintain a broad tax base, encourage business development and seek funding from other resources - state and federal monies, grants and private sector funds.

3.) What would you do with respect to city infrastructure?

I believe in the quality of life for all citizens of Bellaire. (We should do) anything we can...as a council to maximize a healthy balance between what is best for Bellaire financially and what's best for Bellaire residents. I plan on working with current council on maintaining that balance through my careful stewardship.

4.) What do you propose for the redevelopment of Bellaire's commercial areas?

Our commercial areas are important to the growth and future of our city. We have to create more reasons for businesses to flourish and businesses to move into our areas. I would like to see balanced business development that would bring revenue to our city without negatively impacting our residential areas that make Bellaire so unique. We need to ensure Bellaire remains vibrant and relevant. In order to do this we have to help. First, as consumers we must support our local businesses, whether restaurants and grocery stores or boutiques and banks. Second, each of us must, in our own way, serve as marketer to encourage businesses to serve our city. Third, we must maintain a balance between broadening the tax base and maintaining Bellaire's sense of character and charm.

5.) The condition of the Evergreen Park pool/bathhouse has been a hot-button issue for council in recent meetings. What is your stance on the facilities? What other priorities do you see for the Parks and Recreation Department?

It's important to hear all sides of the issue at hand. I support anything that will enhance our resident's property value. Evergreen Pool is social environment open to all of our citizens, whether toddlers attending swim lessons or our retirees using the lap pool. It's maintaining a good quality of life for our citizens.

*For Position 5***Andrew Freidberg James Jameson**

our newly elected councilmen to catch up. Given my significant experience and proven track record, I am ready to hit the ground running from my very first day in office.

2.) What would you do to cut Bellaire's costs and increase its revenue?

In lean economic times the city's pocketbook should be managed just like our individual pocketbooks: we must work together to limit nonessential spending, improve efficiency and seek cost savings to maximize the value of every city dollar. In addition to carefully prioritizing and cutting back on our spending, in the current economic situation there are lots of deals to be had as we move forward with some of our projects. For example, civil construction and engineering firms are eager to get new contracts and market rates have dropped. I therefore support accelerating our timetable for [the] Rebuild Bellaire street and drainage projects (paid for through bond issuances and not increased taxes) to take advantage of these lower rates. In the long-term, it is essential that we increase city revenues, not by increasing our tax rate, but by growing our tax base. A cornerstone of my campaign is fostering appropriate redevelopment of our commercial areas, which in addition to other benefits, will provide a much-needed boost to our commercial tax base, thereby increasing revenues while easing the disproportionate burden on homeowners.

3.) What would you do with respect to city infrastructure?

Highest priority must continue to go to our ongoing drainage projects; the City is doing a good job but there is still much work to be done. In conjunction with these drainage projects, street reconstruction is an important area for improvement. As noted above, I support accelerating Rebuild Bellaire. In the near term, we must continue to address our infrastructure needs in order of priority and urgency while maintaining the infrastructure we've got, all with due attention to the current economic situation. In the long term, we will need to explore opportunities for funding more comprehensive street reconstruction projects.

4.) What do you propose for the redevelopment of Bellaire's commercial areas?

Commercial redevelopment is one of the key issues of my campaign. Through careful planning with appropriate buffers to protect the residential integrity of nearby neighborhoods, thoughtful commercial redevelopment will enhance the quality of life in our "City of Homes." I envision a pedestrian-friendly retail and dining destination -both upscale and reflective of our community character, with expanded green space and improved traffic circulation and accessibility. Our new and improved downtown, that both attracts new businesses and gives our existing business a nicer home, will serve as a focal point for our community and enhance our identity as a city. To accomplish these goals, we must be prepared to work with citizens, property owners and developers to ensure that our vision is fully realized and that the end result is what our community wants.

5.) The condition of the Evergreen Park pool/bathhouse has been a hot-button issue for council in recent meetings. What is your stance on the facilities? What other priorities

sible for developing business strategies while meeting the challenges of making a payroll every month. I am the only candidate that is responsible for working within a budget and establishing priorities and accomplishing goals. I am the only candidate that is trained as a professional mediator to assist people in finding common ground in resolving their disputes.

2.) What would you do to cut Bellaire's costs and increase its revenue?

This question is premised, in part, on an actual need to increase city revenue, which I do not believe is necessary. Given the current property tax rate, Bellaire's city revenues have actually increased consistently over the years due in large part to the increased values of real estate. The current revenue stream has been sufficient to fund our essential city services that the community has come to expect. City council has done an excellent job of keeping the tax rate low and has consistently decreased the rate. That is why I would oppose any tax rate increase to fund the current level of city services. Based on these assumptions, I don't see a need for a major shift in course or reordering of spending priorities.

I do support city tax incentive policies that would encourage small businesses to move to Bellaire, which in turn would increase the sales tax revenue.

If the property values decrease, resulting in a loss of revenue for the city, the council would be faced with making some cuts in the budget. The city operates like a family budget, if there is not sufficient money coming in, something has to be deferred or cut in order to provide the essential needs of the community. The largest budget item for the city is personnel. It might be necessary to implement a hiring freeze and defer the replacement of city employees that may be at retirement age or have resigned.

I would also support an audit or review of every city department and contractor to ensure that the city is maximizing the value for each dollar spent. Our competitive bid process should be examined to ensure that our city contractors are working at current, competitive, market prices.

3.) What would you do with respect to city infrastructure?

I supported the city bond program that was passed by the voters a few years ago. We are completing the first phase of a three phase program that is designed to rebuild our streets and address the drainage problems that have been a problem for many years. I also support the construction of the fire station and police/courthouse. Progress seems to be slow, but we will eventually enjoy the benefits of this long term planning.

In addition to the rebuilding of our streets and drainage issue, we are facing an aging waste water treatment facility. We need to carefully examine and budget the for the renovation or possible replacement of that facility.

An important part of the city infrastructure is our parks and green space. I would support the expansion of park space as it becomes available and the preservation of our trees.

During a slow economy, it is tempting to cut back on maintenance of our facilities and infrastructure, which proves only more ex-

*For Position 3***Corbett Parker Roseann Rogers**

am not a proponent of having zoning that permits multi-unit developments that go over a couple stories, or allows for less desirable commercial activities. I am a strong proponent that it be designed with softscape that blends the commercial area into the residential neighborhood, and have had discussions with business owners in favor of implementing a commercial landscape ordinance. Bellaire need more public space for community events and this is a great place to consider it.

Since the city does not own much of the property (outside of easements), the city must lead the conversation (as a facilitator) through zoning changes and other incentives that increase the property owners' return on equity, particularly with property owners living outside Bellaire with no emotional connection to it. I will be hesitant to support economic incentives that highly advantage new money over the long-time businesses that keep Bellaire is small town feel and continue to be cornerstones of our great residential community.

5.) The condition of the Evergreen Park pool/bathhouse has been a hot-button issue for council in recent meetings. What is your stance on the facilities? What other priorities do you see for the Parks and Recreation Department?

I am the only candidate in the race to have met with the director of the Parks and Recreation Department twice on this issue. I have also met with numerous effected residents and twice made public comments at council meetings supporting the upgrades to bathhouses and keeping the therapy pool open during the winter months.

[In terms of Parks and Recreation overall,] I have met with leaders of Bellaire Little League and the parks director about finding a solution to the provision of playing fields while and after Horn Elementary is reconstructed. I will also look into the feasibility of reinstating the city's junior teen board that I was a part of in high school, which not only develops future leaders, but gives the city valuable insight into the needs and thoughts of the generation that the parks department provides multiple programs to. I will also continue to work towards capitalizing on opportunities for additional park acquisitions.

6.) From your point of view, is there anything the new council needs to do differently from the old council?

The new Council needs to lead the way in utilizing 21st century technology (social networking, Facebook, Twitter) to better communicate to and invite comments from its residents. Council members' listening should go beyond their activities while campaigning or public comments. Council must illustrate they have not only listened but also deliberated on requests from Bellaire's residents. The easier it is for residents to remain informed and the more they feel they are listened to, the more they will engage and work alongside city leaders to implement improvements.

Many department heads I discussed this with are interested in regularly providing short updates on city operations, and the Library Director is excited about the possibility of providing classes for those wanting

I support our neighborhood parks and believe it is truly important in

providing the proper maintenance and care for our park systems. The Parks and Recreation Department has done an excellent job in creating recreational areas that continue to enhance our property value and are a place for all ages to enjoy. Priorities also need to include more community involvement and support as well as marketing the park systems to those who live outside our city. This can also include residents participating in new activities. For example a "Picnic Day" or a "Play date with Dad Day."

6.) From your point of view, is there anything the new council needs to do differently from the old council?

I feel Bellaire would benefit from a fresh perspective on the best ways to market Bellaire both internally and externally. One way of executing this is if there are city or community activities; make the public aware of where council members will be present. This will give residents the opportunity to talk to members of council in a less formal setting. It's important to continually be in touch with the residents of Bellaire. I proud of where my family and I have chosen to live and want to I want give back and serve my community.

7.) Finally, if you could accomplish just one thing as council member, what would that be?

I believe maintaining a safe environment for all of our citizens is top priority. Whether it is with our fire, police or medical services, we have to ensure our services are accessible as well as maintain high standards. Good roads, sidewalks and sewage systems are important to keep all who live and work in our city safe. We also need to maintain an effective and regionally integrated emergency preparedness plan well in advance of our next crisis.

Bellaire faces challenges with respect to growth that affect its residents. I pledge to study the issues transparently and seek input not only of the "experts," but also my fellow citizens.

*For Position 5***Andrew Freidberg James Jameson**

do you see for the Parks and Recreation Department?

I support the recent vote of council in favor of rehabilitating the Evergreen Pool bathhouses. Bellaire is a first-class city and we should have first-class facilities. The current condition is, frankly, embarrassing. The Evergreen Pool complex is an important aspect of the quality of life for many of our residents and we need to ensure that it is properly maintained to provide a safe, sanitary and enjoyable facility. While we can be proud of our new aquatics center at Bellaire Town Square, we must not allow our existing facilities to fall by the wayside. Moreover, just as with the aquatics center, the Evergreen Pool was the result of a lot of citizen effort, and we must again come together to save it.

As for other priorities for Parks and Recreation, and for that matter all city departments, we must continue to focus on being accessible to citizens and responsive to their needs. This is particularly so as we work through budgetary constraints while striving to maintain a high level of quality services.

6.) From your point of view, is there anything the new council needs to do differently from the old council?

Given that there will be three new faces on Council this year, the new council will necessarily be different from the old council. The influx of new ideas and perspectives is a good thing, but it is now more important than ever that we elect the most experienced and best prepared candidates who have demonstrated their readiness to lead from day one.

One thing I believe the new council should do differently from the old is to strive for better coordination with and among the various city boards and commissions. Particularly as we set out to implement the new Comprehensive Plan, we will need to coordinate their efforts in working towards our common goal. We will also need substantial citizen input, and all council members should seek to engage the public as we move forward with important decisions.

7.) Finally, if you could accomplish just one thing as council member, what would that be?

I'm proud of what we've accomplished in recent years on the Planning & Zoning Commission and I'm passionate about seeing our work on the Comprehensive Plan through to implementation. Given my background and experience, I am uniquely qualified to take the lead on these initiatives. But I want to emphasize that the adoption of the plan is only the beginning of the process. There are a lot of details still to be worked out in the coming years as we revisit our zoning ordinances and make changes to implement the plan, and I hope we will have active citizen input in that process.

If I could accomplish just one thing as a council member, it would be to facilitate implementation of the Comprehensive Plan with maximum public involvement and dialogue.



pensive in the long run. Therefore, we must continue the budget for maintenance of our infrastructure and implementing long term cost saving measures.

4.) What do you propose for the redevelopment of Bellaire's commercial areas?

As a member of the Citizens Advisory Committee for the Comprehensive Plan, I fully support the goals of the plan and the implementation that is outlined in the comprehensive plan. However, the actual redevelopment of the commercial area should be driven by market forces, with the city providing incentives for development that is consistent with the comprehensive plan. The city should not use tax dollars for development of commercial enterprises.

An excellent model for the type of redevelopment which I support is evident with the Sugarland town square. That type of pedestrian friendly, mixed use development is very attractive in Bellaire, so long as the market will support that type of development.

5.) The condition of the Evergreen Park pool/bathhouse has been a hot-button issue for council in recent meetings. What is your stance on the facilities? What other priorities do you see for the Parks and Recreation Department?

I am concerned that the issue with the Evergreen Pool may be a symptom of two larger issues in our community that needs to be addressed: (i) the needs of our senior citizens and (ii) routine maintenance of our facilities.

The centerpiece of the Evergreen Pool is the therapy pool that was first envisioned by a number of community leaders. Through a determined fundraising effort, the therapy pool was constructed. It has recently been the subject of possible budget cutbacks due to perceived low usage. However, the same criteria has not been the subject of the Aquatics Center usage, which usage has fallen far short of expectations.

Some discussion has been made of searching for ways to encourage our seniors to use the Aquatics Center. This has been perceived as a prelude to closing or limiting the operations of the Evergreen facilities. This is clearly the wrong approach. The city needs to guard against ignoring or discounting the needs of our seniors.

I am also concerned that the Evergreen facilities have fallen into such a shabby state of disrepair. The maintenance of the facility, as well as the Rec. Center, is simply unacceptable and needs to be improved. The facilities are too often unclean as a result of being ignored. We need to do a better job of ensuring our facilities are properly maintained and clean for the public on a daily basis.

I fully support the reconstruction and maintenance of the Evergreen Pool to accommodate the citizenry and oppose any efforts to cut back the facilities or the operations. Perhaps additional revenue for the operations can be generated by leasing the facility to private swim clubs or teams. I also support the expansion of the Evergreen Park in the event the water tower and facilities are relocated.

Overall, the Parks and Recreation Department [is] excellent and provide[s] great

For Position 3

Corbett Parker Roseann Rogers Andrew Freidberg James Jameson

to learn about newer communication platforms.

7.) Finally, if you could accomplish just one thing as council member, what would that be?

Bellaire must have a budget that is tolerable for our city is financial security. My main focus will be to help manage the city is budget in a fiscally responsible way during the current downturn while continuing to:

- 1) Keep the city in a position to immediately respond to disasters like Hurricane Ike,
- 2) Maintain the city is provision of essential services Bellaire residents expect,
- 3) Provide capital improvements necessary to protect city is asset values, guaranty health & safety, and meet future needs, and
- 4) Ensure public safety departments have the resources they need to continue providing the superb services the Bellaire community enjoys.



For Position 5

programs to the city; especially the summer camp programs and sports teams. The Parks and Recreation Department needs to continue to expand the summer camp programs and ways in which the Aquatics Center can sustain itself.

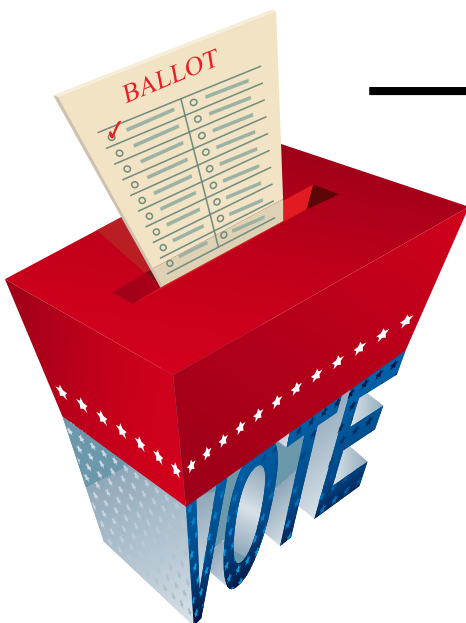
6.) From your point of view, is there anything the new council needs to do differently from the old council?

The new council needs to make sure that we can build on the successful policies of the past but also remember the lessons of the past. The focus should always be on what is best for the community and not be concerned with who gets credit for any issue or program. Rigid political doctrine or personal agendas can really be an impediment to getting things done on city council.

The council's role is not to micro-manage the city operations. We have an excellent city manager and should support him and the staff that is responsible for the daily operations of the city. The proper role of city council is to set policy for the city and ensure that it is carried out. City council should hold staff accountable and ask hard questions, but not manage the daily city operations. City council needs to listen and educate the citizens about decisions and issues. Encourage more involvement from the citizenry, but perhaps in different forums. I would encourage my colleagues to hold informal, town hall type meetings at the area schools or churches to discuss the issues. It really seems difficult to have an open forum for informal discussion at city hall during council meetings.

7.) Finally, if you could accomplish just one thing as council member, what would that be?

My wife and I moved to Bellaire over 20 years ago, because of the reputation and tradition of excellence in city services and police protection. At the end of my tenure, I would consider it a great accomplishment to know that the city's reputation for excellence has been preserved and strengthened.



**Don't Forget to Vote!
Bellaire's Runoff
Election is Saturday,
December 12**