



**Candidate Questionnaire for Monroe County
Treasurer's Race**

About DFMC

Democracy for Monroe County (DFMC) is a political action committee dedicated to recruiting, training, and supporting fiscally responsible and socially progressive candidates at the local and state levels. DFMC is part of a nationwide coalition of grassroots groups allied with Democracy for America, the political action committee inspired by the presidential campaign of Howard Dean. We meet every first Thursday of the month. For more information about our organization, visit our website at www.democracyformonroecounty.org.

DFMC: Building and training the progressive grassroots.

Please return this questionnaire to chair@democracyformonroecounty.org by Monday, March 21 either in written form at our forum on that date or send to robertdeppert@gmail.com.

About You

Name: Jessica McClellan

Preferred email address: jmcclellan1978@gmail.com

Website (if available): www.VoteJessica.com

List of your support or campaign committee members: Judy Sharp, Honorary Chair. Marnell Gorman-Treasurer, Kim Alexander, Eric Spoonmore, Charlotte Zietlow

Question 1

Why are you running for office? I am running for office because we need a change in Monroe County. Every four years the voters get to use their power to place people in office that they will hold accountable for 4 years of service. I believe very strongly that the voters are ready for a change and take their responsibility to choose a great Treasurer very seriously. I pledge to serve the public with honesty, respect and accountability. I believe in giving vigorous daily attention to balancing the county's books. I will be answerable to the public about financial information. I will serve every tax payer equally and with respect. I am running because my experience with government is a positive one and I want to pass that culture on to taxpayers. I insist on a culture of communication and openness between county departments. I have a deep understanding of the property tax system, the assessment procedure and the complex nature of county government.

Question 2

List your political experience (here and elsewhere), including any grassroots activity in which you participated or led. I have been involved in grassroots community projects since before I could walk. My mother was a board member of the American Association of University Women preschool in our city. The preschool serves a very large population of at risk youth. I was in the school and attended board meetings. I started volunteering at our church's soup kitchen at age 12 and the local hospital at age 13. I volunteered for numerous organizations during college at IU such as Amnesty International, Greenpeace and WFHB. I still volunteer to help the most needy in our society today. I am a board member of the Hoosier Hills Food Bank and finance committee member. I work on events for the Center for Sustainable Living. And I support Monroe County Community Kitchen with funds and volunteering. I feel that rolling up your sleeves and going out to work for organizations that need your hands and your heart is the best way, for me, to inspire and enact change.

Question 3

In what way(s) do you consider yourself socially progressive? This quote from John F. Kennedy illustrates a cardinal rule that I try to live by- "I believe that, as long as there is plenty, poverty is evil. Government belongs wherever evil needs an adversary and there are people in distress." I believe in accessible and equal public education for all, no matter what your address is. I believe in a women's right to make decisions about how to care for her body, no matter how old she is or what her education is. I believe in adequate and fair healthcare that doesn't leave survivors destitute and the grieving traumatized. I believe that the men and women of government have a duty to provide basic needs for a good life to all citizens in their care. I am a progressive because I believe in working hard to make the path easier for those that come after me, and the path wider for all that have been squeezed out of the process.

Question 4

Describe your ideas for engaging citizens in more active participation in our community and our government. It is imperative that we engage more citizens in active and informed voting, citizen/government run activities and local engagement opportunities. I know that trust in government is at an all time low. I believe this is a reason people across all ages have chosen to ignore political

participation. I am running because I specifically want to improve public trust not only in the Treasurer's office, but in all of city and county government. I want to be an advocate for the hard work and tough decisions that our local leaders commit to every day. I want to not only be an effective Treasurer, but I want to continue my work in local non-profit organizations and strengthen local participation in these efforts. I believe engagement happens on many levels. I will be a Treasurer that continues to be active and involved in the community. I believe this will inspire faith in the political process and pride in our achievements inside and outside the courthouse.

Question 5

Do you pledge to publicly support all Democratic Party nominees, including your primary opponent(s), should he/she prevail in the May Primary Election? I think it is impossible to know what will happen between the May primary and the November general election. I do know that my opponent is a fine person and a good public servant. I would be happy to work with him and vote for him in November. I also think it is important to point out that I will be working with the person that the voters select for each office in the county. I will support whomever the voters select and make sure all of us are successful in fulfilling our duties and making improvements in our offices. There is no I. It is all about we. As Democrats, we succeed or fail together.

Question 6

Do you support the policies of the prior treasurer that allowed payment plans to catch up property tax payments that were in arrears?

The Indiana State Treasurer's Manual supports the usage of payment plans to give taxpayers a chance to catch up payments that are in arrears. It is very important for the Treasurer to be equitable and non-partisan when administering the payment plans. One of the most difficult jobs of the Treasurer is to have an understanding and empathy for the human condition, and to be impartial when weighing the sometimes very difficult factors that lead to hardship in people's lives. Collection of payments is no small matter and I will be humble and sensitive when I serve the public.

Question 7

There have been questions raised about the software compatibility between the Auditors office and the Treasurer's office, do you have any thoughts or ideas on changes that could help? I have worked in each software that is used in these offices. Like all software there are pros and cons to every one of them. Software compatibility is good, but it may not be the root cause of the problem. It is probably combination of three things, people, process and technology. I am still listening and learning at this point. Since I don't work in that office now, I cannot say what I would do different. I will find the problem and fix it. I will also find the root cause of these problems so we can anticipate and fix future problems before they happen.

Question 8

Over the last few years the resources given to this office to do the work of the Treasurer's office has been cut, do you think the office as of today is adequately funded to accomplish the tasks it is charged with? I can't speak directly to the division of duties in the Treasurer's Office now. I can speak to the pressure that the county council and all departments feel when seeking funding for state mandated duties. As state and local revenue sources shrink, local populations and the complexity of our duties

grow. I will work with the county council to find solutions from all possible avenues to address staffing, whether it be number of staff, compensation of staff or talent retention.