Name: Dave Stepp

Address (not for publication): PO Box 234 Newcomb, MD 21653 (Campaign address)

Phone (not for publication): (410) 299-2111 (Cell)

Email: dave.c.stepp@gmail.com

Age: 46

Family: Married to my wonderful wife Lori of 23 years and we have 2 wonderful adult children together

Education:

Associates Degree - Anne Arundel Community College - Law Enforcement

Bachelor's Degree - University of Maryland - Management Studies

Master of Business Administration (MBA) - University of Maryland

Occupation: 27+ years in the wireless telecommunications industry and 23+ years as a small business owner

Previous political experience: Current Talbot County Councilman, first elected to office in 2022

1. What are your main goals if elected to the Talbot County Council?

I'd like to continue to advance common-sense legislation that keeps Talbot County a great place to live, work, and play - and that align with what I call my 5 F's – Faith, Family, Freedom, Fiscal Responsibility, and Fighting for you! I believe that our rights and freedoms are given to us by God and are enshrined in our US and MD Constitutions. I believe it is the primary responsibility of any elected official to firmly protect both. As I've done as a current County Councilman, I will continue to prioritize public safety, our first responders, and our rural character.

2. How should the county approach balancing the need for affordable housing with managing growth and preservation?

I believe that "affordable housing" means something different to every person and family – it is numerical in nature and unique to everyone. Growth in Talbot County should simply follow the county's Comprehensive Plan. That plan has been carefully designed, with citizen feedback throughout, to properly address growth while still maintaining our rural character. I would continue to do several things that will help citizens attain housing that is affordable to them - keep property taxes low, keep income taxes low, and keep fees low. I have a proven track record as a Talbot County Councilman of doing all three.

3. Impact fees for development have proved a hot topic at recent council meetings. What are your thoughts on the matter?

I feel impact fees should appropriately and fairly cover the entry-cost portion for relative infrastructure and capital needs, as property taxation (and most likely income taxation) goes into effect after the development has occurred. Developmental impact fees require careful monitoring and balance. They absolutely impact the price of housing in Talbot County, whether through ownership or in a rental capacity. It is important to note here that impact fees automatically adjust on July 1 of each year for inflationary purposes unless the County Council votes to maintain the prior year's fees.

4. In recent years, the state has pushed down certain fiscal responsibilities to individual counties. How would you handle and address that?

It is absolutely true that the State of Maryland is cost-shifting their poor fiscal performance onto Talbot County. Unfunded mandates like Maryland's Blueprint for Education, SDAT carrying costs, and TCPS teacher pensions are now a reality, in addition to astronomical increases to property assessments. To combat these realities, I will continue to fight to keep our property taxes the

lowest in the state and fight to move Talbot County income taxes from the second-lowest in the state to the lowest. I'll continue to honor our County Charter and its 2% real property tax revenue growth cap as well.

5. What is your approach to public education funding in Talbot County?

Education funding for TCPS is not just an option, it is mandated by the state law at the higher amount of two categories – either Local Share or Maintenance of Effort. The County Council can also choose to fund additional dollars over and above if they so choose. My approach to funding TCPS is first and foremost centered around student, teacher, staff, and administrator safety. I heavily weight student, teacher, and facility needs. I also consider student testing metrics and overall Board of Education and TCPS Administrator accountability, as it is their daily responsibility for the success of TCPS' students.