

Election 2013 Candidates – Town of Matthews

Office	Candidates	# seats in election
Mayor	Jim Taylor	1 candidate will be elected
Council	John Higdon Gina Hoover Christopher Melton Jeff Miller Joe Pata Kress Query John Ross John Urban *	6 candidates will be elected

High school students surveyed all candidates for office in Election 2013. Candidates who completed the questionnaire are included in this guide. * = The candidate did not provide the requested information.

Return to the Student Candidate Guide for other Election 2013 candidates, information about local government, how to participate in GenerationNation’s Kids Voting election, and more. www.generationnation.org/index.php/election/candidateguide2013

Matthews Town Council	John F. Higdon
Website	www.electjohnfhigdon.com
Email	electjohnfhigdon@gmail.com
Facebook	
Twitter	

Occupation	Engineering Manager
Education	B.S. Aerospace Engineering - NCSU
Political viewpoint	Independent
Favorite news source	Newspaper
Community involvement and leadership experience	Two Term President of the Ashley Creek Homeowners Association Neighborhood Watch Street Captain Matthews Appearance and Tree Advisory Board Member Mecklenburg County School Volunteer Boy Scouts of America Volunteer Matthews Athletic & Recreation Association Coach Multiple Center for Creative Leadership Participant Mecklenburg County Floodplain Task Force Member

First issue I will tackle	Traffic is of growing concern in Matthews. Our roads must be adequately sized and maintained, and the ramifications of zoning changes that impact traffic must be carefully considered before being implemented.
How I will impact...	
Young people	I will continue to volunteer my time talking to young people about the great world of possibilities that awaits them if they are willing to take advantage of the educational opportunities our schools provide. I will also work with school officials and local police to help insure that safety (both in and out of school) remains a top priority.
Economy	I will solicit the opinions of our local business leaders to make sure the decisions the town board makes fully consider their concerns. I will strive to keep our taxes low, and make sure our infrastructure is maintained to support further growth.
Community growth and/or transportation	We must keep an eye on our infrastructure, schools, police and fire resources, etc. as we continue to grow. I will encourage car pooling and public transportation use to help cut down on traffic. I would like to see the portion of South Trade Street that goes

	over Four Mile Creek included in the current street widening plan to prevent a bottleneck there.
Community safety	I will continue to support our local police force, which under the leadership of Chief Rob Hunter has done an outstanding job of making Matthews a safe place to live. I support the aggressive prosecution of those few that do decide to break the law.
Housing and neighborhoods	I will have an open door policy so that any citizen of Matthews will be free to air any concerns they have about their neighborhood from crime to traffic to ordinance enforcement. The town board must listen to our citizens and take appropriate action as warranted.
Budget	I am fiscally conservative, and will seek out and eliminate wasteful spending wherever possible. Our citizens' wallets are not an infinite supply of additional resources, and the town must tighten its belt just as those that live here have had to do.
Most important ...	
Role of local government	The maintenance of public works is the most important role, but local government must also listen to those they serve and taking appropriate action. Too often in the past I have seen citizens' concerns discounted or ignored, or decisions made that are in
Collaboration between CMS, local and state government	I tend to agree with our governor concerning there being too many required standardized tests. Our teachers need to be free to teach their own curriculums with less emphasis on the current glut of tests. The government, on all levels, should seek out resources to raise the salaries of our teachers, who arguably have one of the most influential and significant impacts on the lives of our children. All this requires an open dialogue between officials at every level of government, which I would encourage.
Biggest accomplishment will be	There are many issues confronting Matthews - growth, infrastructure, park space, public safety, etc. I don't think any single issue at this time trumps all others. But if elected, at the end of my term I will know that I listened to and carefully considered our citizen's concerns, took appropriate actions when necessary, and helped make Matthews a better town. I would consider that a successful term in office because I would have honorably served those that live here.
Other comments	I have been an active volunteer in Matthews for well over a decade, and in other communities where I have lived for my entire life. I would welcome the opportunity to serve as a Matthews town commissioner, and promise to do my best if elected.

Matthews Town Council	Gina Hoover
Website	www.voteGINAhoover.com
Email	voteGINAhoover@gmail.com
Facebook	
Twitter	

Occupation	part owner of small snack food distributorship
Education	attended - CPCC
Political viewpoint	People First
Favorite news source	Fox News
Community involvement and leadership experience	

First issue I will tackle	Did not complete
How I will impact...	
Young people	
Economy	
Community growth and/or transportation	
Community safety	
Housing and neighborhoods	
Budget	
Most important ...	
Role of local government	
Collaboration between CMS, local and state government	
Biggest accomplishment will be	
Other comments	

Matthews Town Council	Christopher L. (Chris) Melton
Website	www.chrismelton.co
Email	chris_melton@carolina.rr.com
Facebook	facebook.com/electchrismelton
Twitter	@chris_melton

Occupation	Electronic Systems Sales Representative, SimplexGrinnell
Education	Technical College
Political viewpoint	Moderate Republican
Favorite news source	Internet
Community involvement and leadership experience	Town of Matthews Planning Board 2012-Present, President-Brightmoor Homeowners Association 2011-Present, Treasurer-Brightmoor Homeowners Association 2010/2011, President Carolinas Chapter of the Society of Fire Protection Engineers 2008/2009, Treasurer Carolinas Chapter of the Society of Fire Protection Engineers 2007/2008, Subcontractor-Specialty Contractor Advisory Council of the Carolinas Association of General Contractors 2005 through 2012, Member of the North Carolina Healthcare Engineers Association since 2004, Volunteer for Children's Ministry- First Baptist Church Indian Trail 2007 through 2012, Volunteer Instructor for Fire & Life Safety-Carolinas Associated Builders & Contractors Electrical Apprenticeship Program 2012/2013

First issue I will tackle	
How I will impact...	
Young people	I will encourage participation in local/regional volunteer programs which foster leadership opportunities and mentoring for the youth in the Matthews Community.
Economy	I will work on developing and nurturing relationships on the local and state level to highlight the Matthews corporate community especially placing local business owners and entrepreneurs in the regional spotlight.
Community growth and/or transportation	I will continue to improve the relationship between the Town of Matthews and the State of North Carolina Department of Transportation to come together and share responsibility of improving the transportation infrastructure and evenly distribute

	the financial burden of finding a solution to the traffic congestion in Matthews.
Community safety	I will continue to empower the Matthews Police Department to do their job keeping Matthews citizens safe by while preserving our low crime rate.
Housing and neighborhoods	
Budget	
Most important ...	
Role of local government	The most important role of local government is to provide a safe, economically stable place to live while making available a community in which its citizens can be proud of their leadership.
Collaboration between CMS, local and state government	The most important collaboration is to tear down walls that separate CMS, local and state government. Instead of passing along responsibility, take responsibility. Develop and support relationships with one another, share the burden. Work with each other to find solutions, not place blame.
Biggest accomplishment will be	
Other comments	

Matthews Town Council	Jeff Miller
Website	
Email	jmiller@matthewsnc.gov
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/jeffamiller73
Twitter	

Occupation	Inventory Control Area Manager - Family Dollar Stores
Education	Associates in Culinary Arts
Political viewpoint	Conservative
Favorite news source	Fox News
Community involvement and leadership experience	Commissioner - Town of Matthews 2007-Present Centralina Council of Governments Delegate 2007-Present Board of Directors - Matthews Chamber of Commerce 2008-2011 Family Dollar Chairman's Circle Award - 2008 Strategic Economic Development Leadership Team - 2007 Chairman of the Matthews Parks & Recreation Advisory Board - 2005-2008

First issue I will tackle	Widen Trade Street and continuing to beautify the Town of Matthews and expand on the Greenway System.
How I will impact...	
Young people	Better pedestrian & vehicular connectivity. Expanding Public Art. Making Matthews a place where young people will want to live, eat, work, exercise and maybe even raise a family.
Economy	Continue to do more with less, invite more tourism, especially thru the New Matthews Sportsplex.
Community growth and/or transportation	Approve only smart development on the little land that we have left, work with infill type projects. Widening of Trade Street, eventual beautification of John Street and the Greenway are all important pieces of our local Transportation Projects.
Community safety	Fully fund the Police/Fire & EMS. This is a very LARGE part of our Budget. It is also one of the basic functions of Government.
Housing and neighborhoods	Approve only smart development that adds to the beauty of the area and adds value to the Town.
Budget	No real impact outside of the Town.
Most important ...	
Role of local government	To protect and represent it's citizens.

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Collaboration between CMS, local and state government	
Biggest accomplishment will be	The building of the Four Mile Creek Greenway, the widening of South Trade Street and the addition of Public Art. The ability to walk on a Linear Park thru Nature, connecting neighborhoods and Parks. To provide Traffic Relief along the major corridor of Trade. To enjoy Art in an outdoor setting.
Other comments	

Matthews Town Council	Joe Pata
Website	Votejoepata.com
Email	joseph.pata@icloud.com
Facebook	Joseph Pata
Twitter	

Occupation	Project Mgr at major financial institution
Education	MBA Mgt Information systems - Pace University
Political viewpoint	Conservative
Favorite news source	CNN / Newspapers
Community involvement and leadership experience	Mecklenburg County Park and Rec Commisioner for 7 yrs. Chaired various boards - Special Needs advisory, Athletic Advisory and Aquatic Advisory Boards for the county Matthews Town - Planning Board and Transportation Board Providence High School - Athletic Booster Club President Founded SCSA - South Charlotte Soccer Association President - 8 Years (now CSA) St Matthews Catholic Church - Eucharistic Minister and Knights of Columbus

First issue I will tackle	Issues for Matthews include additional roads and ensuring our major projects get funded by the State level, Ensuring that Matthews has a strong presence and list of tansportation projects that have a vision to the future. Listening to the people of the town and making sure we grow Matthews responsibly.
How I will impact...	
Young people	Ill start with having an understanding for "young people" I have 4 young adults. One is in High school and the other 3 are at various stages of College. Todays bsuiness world and jobs are much more competitive than even prior to the economic down turn in 2008. Continuing to support local business to keep young people who want to work working and setting a track for thier futures. Making available programs for training to be ready for the business world, whether thats internships or opportunities through local business.
Economy	Having spent my career in the financial world, I have a pretty solid foundation around the economy. We will always experience ups and downs in the market, so planning becomes critical to

	<p>providing the proper services to the citizens of Matthews. Working with county leaders and State leaders, of which i have some experience will also provide inout around planning at the town, county and State levels.</p>
<p>Community growth and/or transportation</p>	<p>Having been a voce chair of the Matthews Transportation board - i was fortunate enough to spend some time on the issues of roads in Matthews. We studied various transportation opportunities for connectivity at the request of the town council. Our proposals were items for round table discussions. Matthews needs to ensure that the County and more importantly the State has our priorities at the highest levels possible, This means coming up with 10 and 20 year plans for Matthews and sticking to it. Community growth is another important topic... Matthews must move forward for growth in a responsible manner. This means balancing the future with keeping the historic aspects of our community. It is what draws and keeps people in Matthews. Continuing to service the people in Matthews while being able to move people in and around Matthews is important.</p>
<p>Community safety</p>	<p>Community saftey starts with Police and Fireman. Basic services and life saving at that. Continuing to provide additional services for the town of Matthews - at or above standard support. We need to keep our service employees equipped, trained and prepared to support the town.</p>
<p>Housing and neighborhoods</p>	<p>Housing and neighborhoods in Matthews are the cornerstone to what makes it such a great town. Tyhe people that live here make a community. Continuing to develop out multi-use neighborhoods, including additional developepment by the Matthews SportsPlex. Connecting new neighborhoods on a go forward basis. Making existing neighborhoods safe for transportation of fire and police. Ensuring that the infrastructure supports new neighborhoods including schools, roads and stown services.</p>
<p>Budget</p>	<p>Again, with many years of financial background, running small and large project oin the financial world - I have a good foundation around budgeting, I have been very enagaged with Park and recreation Bonds and have participated at the BOCC level meetings when budgets have been discussed. I have seen the ranking systems developed for the county over the years. By having this background - i think i can participate and provide input from day one around budgeting.</p>
<p>Most important ...</p>	
<p>Role of local government</p>	<p>Miost important role of local government in my opinion is to service the people they support. Understanding and listening to</p>

	the citizens should prepare us to support our town.
Collaboration between CMS, local and state government	Healthy partnerships are critical to collaboration. I have been able to participate at CMS, and local government (BOCC). I know Jeff Tarte and Bill Brawley personally having served on past boards with them. I also know a couple of the School board members having served on various boards. So having known some of the current members at the various levels allows me to be able to work with these individuals to the future.
Biggest accomplishment will be	Well - will have to start a term to come up with a biggest accomplishment. Currently, I would have to say the Matthews SportPlex is my biggest accomplishment. As a participant from before day one.. and carrying the ball as a Park and Rec commissioner - southern towns representative (Matthews, Mint Hill Pineville), I worked many hours with Mayor Myers and Bill James and other BOCC and town representatives to help get the project funded, and stay funded. There were a couple of times that the project was taken out of budget, and we were able to negotiate it back in. It has been over 10 years now and it is on the doorstep to Phase 1 completion and Phase 2 starting. A major accomplishment for many many people.. that will continue to serve Matthews and the region for many years.
Other comments	I want to thank you for the chance to reach out to the : "Young People".. I can provide the cliché they are the future to the community.. but I truly believe and support the young people having 4 of my own..

Matthews Town Council	Kress Query
Website	www.kressquery.com
Email	kress@abtmotals.com
Facebook	
Twitter	

Occupation	President, ABT Metals
Education	Associates, Mechanical Engineering
Political viewpoint	I believe in non-partisan decision making.
Favorite news source	Newspaper
Community involvement and leadership experience	Current member of Matthews Town Council, continually held office since 1993 Past president of Matthews Volunteer Fire Department Charter member of Matthews Historical Society and acquired the Nancy Reid House for the Matthews Historical Society Past president of Matthews Methodist Pre-school Past president of Matthews PTA Former Mayor of Matthews 1969 - 1974

First issue I will tackle	Keeping the tax rate in Matthews contained is a priority for me.
How I will impact...	
Young people	I hope to lead by showing involvement in my community and taking an active part in the life of Matthews.
Economy	I will work diligently to keep the cost of government down.
Community growth and/or transportation	I will work towards keeping Matthews a family friendly place to live and work.
Community safety	I will continue to support our police, EMS and fire department.
Housing and neighborhoods	I will work to keep Matthews a mostly residential community.
Budget	I will continue to fight and make our leaders aware that we need to keep the budget in line, while retaining the amenities at the current level.
Most important ...	
Role of local government	The most important role of local government is to fairly represent our constituents.
Collaboration between CMS, local and state	We need to continue to work with CMS and our State government to provide the funding necessary for a good

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government	education for our children.
Biggest accomplishment will be	That I worked successfully with the other members of the Town Council and the Mayor to do what was best for Matthews in all different fields of government.
Other comments	No.

Matthews Town Council	John Ross
Website	www.VoteJohnRoss.com
Email	John@VoteJohnRoss.com
Facebook	www.facebook.com/JohnRossForMatthewsCommissioner
Twitter	@JohnWRoss

Occupation	Senior Vice President/Operational Risk Manger at Bank of America
Education	
Political viewpoint	Conservative
Favorite news source	Don't know that I have a favorite, I read a wide range of material mainly online.
Community involvement and leadership experience	Terms on the Hands on Charlotte Board of Directors (1 as Vice Chairperson of the Board), Former Sunday School Teacher & President, Cubmaster and District Activities Committee Chairman for the Mecklenburg County Council of the Boy Scouts of America, I was appointed twice to the Town of Matthews Transportation Advisory Committee, Member of the Crown Point PTA, Former Vice President for the East Learning Community on the Mecklenburg County PTA Council Executive Board.

First issue I will tackle	Working with the rest of the Board of Commissioners on continuing Matthews outreach to the business and development communities. Based on the timing the UDO (Unified Development Ordinance) should be presented right around the election and implementation will fall under the newly elected board.
How I will impact...	
Young people	By ensuring that Matthews is financial viable for the next generation. We need to maintain a fiscally sound approach to the Town budget and be wise stewards of public funds. We have some wonderful programs with Parks and Rec and I'd like us to do more to promote with our young people. I'll also make myself available for anyone interested in the role of the board and local government.
Economy	We need to continue to act with fiscal responsibility and not compound the other challenges families are facing financially, while ensuring the Town of Matthews continues to see growth

	and is positioned for future success. We need to keep our tax rate as low as possible and resist the urge to spend the taxpayer's money unnecessarily.
Community growth and/or transportation	Supporting sound developments before the board that make sense for the Town and Community as well as the developer, by ensuring we enact fair common sense town policy, and by ensuring we are business and citizen friendly in our approach to issues. Specifically on Transportation – we need to continue to work all angles to get the necessary funding to complete the Trade St expansion, and other road/transportation projects. We started some great work but need to finish it, and do it without raising taxes to pay for it.
Community safety	I am committed to providing the funding our Police and Fire Departments need to protect us and keep Matthews a great place to live, work, and raise a family. We need to ensure the safety and security of our neighborhoods by maintaining the same levels of service the people of Matthews have today. As Matthews grows so do our needs and it is paramount we continue to give them the resources they need.
Housing and neighborhoods	We have some excellent opportunities for growth over the next few years. As the economy starts to come back we have some fantastic options for developers to build great neighborhoods (as long as they make sense and fit with the vision of Matthews) that will be very beneficial for the Town. We also have a tremendous opportunity to build a great park on recently transferred land at 51 & Idlewild that I want to see come to completion.
Budget	Sound restrained fiscal policy. We cannot put the next generation in debt for wants. Government shouldn't be adding to the burden of families in this generation by raising the tax rate unnecessarily. There are limited reasons that I would ever be in favor of borrowing or raising taxes higher than they are. I'm not unreasonable but we need to ensure that we are spending money properly and not on a foolish pursuit. Occasionally those things are warranted (infrastructure would be a good example) but only in the most limited terms. If we plan properly, we shouldn't find ourselves having to make drastic choices.
Most important ...	
Role of local government	The Safety and security of our citizens, which comes from proper planning and budgeting.
Collaboration between CMS, local and state government	We need to do a better job planning and budgeting spending (that's a matter for the School Board & County Commission). But as funding becomes less and less available we need ways to encourage Teachers to stay in the profession, and ensure funding

	is going to the places it's needed the most (the classroom). Locally the Town can help by possibly setting up grants for teachers that live in Matthews and work at a local school, or provide discounts/opportunities on services or with local businesses.
Biggest accomplishment will be	I hope that I'm able to look back and say I represented the wishes of the citizens of Matthews well, and that I've at least helped provide a way for Matthews to continue on for generations as a wonderful place to live.
Other comments	My family and I love Matthews and all of my children attend CMS schools, I think this program is a fantastic way to engage people in learning and contributing to local government.