

Election 2015 Candidates – Town of Matthews

Office	Candidates	# seats in election
Mayor	Robert Guy Powell* Jim Taylor	1
Council	John Higdon Gina Hoover Christopher Melton Jeff Miller Joe Pata * John Ross * Nobie Thrasher John Urban * Larry Whitley	6

*High school students surveyed all candidates for office in Election 2015. Candidates who completed the questionnaire are included in this guide. * = The candidate did not provide the requested information.*

John F. Higdon
Town Council
Matthews

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John Higdon

Education/Occupation

I graduated from North Carolina State University with a degree in Aerospace Engineering, and currently serve as the Vice President of Engineering for Apollo Valves, Elkhart Products Corporation and Lasco Fittings.

Community involvement and leadership experiences

I have lived in Matthews since 2001 and have been active in the community since arriving here, including serving two terms as President of the Ashley Creek Homeowners' Association and volunteering in various civic organizations such as the Boy Scouts, MARA coach and board member, Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System where I have been a speaker and proctor, Mecklenburg County Floodplain Taskforce member and the Matthews Appearance and Tree and Economic Development Advisory Committees. My family attends Matthews United Methodist Church.

Where I grew up and when I came to Mecklenburg Co.

I moved to the Charlotte area from Ohio in 1975. I attended Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools (Quail Hollow Junior High and South Mecklenburg High School).

As a student, I was interested in government, leadership, and civic issues because...

I was most impressed that one person, even from humble beginnings, could make a difference.

Favorite news source

radio/internet

Political viewpoint

moderate Republican

First issue I will tackle	If re-elected, I intend to continue pushing forward on road improvements like the South Trade Street project, which will include walking trails under the road and will connect Squirrel Lake Park to the MARA ball fields. I also will stay involved in the planning of future public transportation options like light rail and additional CATS routes.economic development:: build new infrastructure to provide jobs, build new public/private schools, repair roads,bridges...set up industrail parks to produce high tech products.
I think the most important role of town government is	We must provide a safe, secure environment for our citizens. That is job number one.
What does our town do well? What can we do better?	Matthews does a great job using taxpayers' funds wisely. The town has a long tradition of conservative spending that I pledge to contnue. On the "what could we do better front", I would like to see more natural park space set aside for our citizens to enjoy.
A town issue that does not get enough attention – and how I will solve it	I am passionate about trees, and I want to continue to encourage developers to leave some of the older specimens so that future generations can enjoy them. I always cringe when I see a 100% clear cut development site. I pledge to make these wishes known when zoning requests are brought before the town.
My impact on the town's progress and growth	How we use the small amount of remaining undeveloped land in Matthews will affect the town for decades into the future. I promise to thoughtfully consider how we use this land for the best benefit of all our citizens.
Do all kids in our town have equal opportunities for success? How I will help...	Obviously some families are better off economically than others, but there is absolutely no reason any child in our community can't enjoy a wonderfully successful life. Keeping our schools staffed with dedicated teachers and providing a safe environment to grow and learn in will ensure this opportunity continues.
Why students should get involved in GenerationNation and CLT-Meck Youth Council	Today's students are our future. It is important that they know how government works and that their voices and perspectives are heard by our leaders. Some of our very best ideas have come from our youth.
One more thing I want people to know about me	Matthews is blessed with many dedicated employees and volunteers. I enjoy working with them, and would like to continue my community service by serving another term as a Town Commissioner.

**Gina Hoover
Town Council
Matthews**

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Education/Occupation	I attended Central Piedmont Community College & Co-owner of a snack food distributorship
Community involvement and leadership experiences	I am not a political insider
Where I grew up and when I came to Mecklenburg Co.	I grew up in Matthews and attended Matthews Elementary
As a student, I was interested in government, leadership, and civic issues because...	(DID NOT ANSWER)
Favorite news source	Fox News
Political viewpoint	Transparency, Diversity, Ethics, Accountability
First issue I will tackle	Transparency - The Town of Matthews has the grade of "D" for transparency and this needs to be corrected. In government there should be no secrets. Public records are property of the people.economic development:: build new infrastructure to provide jobs, build new public/private schools, repair roads,bridges...set up industrail parks to produce high tech products.
I think the most important role of town government is	Open and Honest Government - There are questions of ethics, misuse of tax dollars and use of private email accounts to protect the privacy of the communications. The citizens must be able to trust their local government.

What does our town do well? What can we do better?	Matthews Police & Fire/EMS Dept. Thank you to all the men and women who serve the Town of Matthews. There seems to be a breakdown in communications between the citizens and the town. All citizens concerns and input must be carefully listened to and taken to account.
A town issue that does not get enough attention – and how I will solve it	Honesty and Communication - A lot of citizens feel they are outsiders and they are not being told the truth. If elected I will get involved with the residents on issues and concerns and honestly answer any questions.
My impact on the town's progress and growth	Having a seat on the Town Council is a little like serving on a jury. I would hear the developer's proposal and the concerns of residents. Making a fair decision without any special interest or influence from either side is the key to good government.
Do all kids in our town have equal opportunities for success? How I will help...	Yes, There are a lot of positive programs for kids and young adults. We are very blessed to have Levine CPCC, Matthews Playhouse, basketball camps, summer programs and much more.
Why students should get involved in GenerationNation and CLT-Meck Youth Council	Because you have to live in a society that's governed by elected officials who need to held accountable for their actions. And it is up to "we the people" to hold them accountable.
One more thing I want people to know about me	I was born and raised in Matthews. I am the proud daughter of a retired United States Marine who received a Purple Heart for his service in Vietnam. I have been married to my high school sweetheart for thirty-one years. As the only woman running for Town Council, I will bring a different perspective to the job.

**Christopher L. Melton
Town Council
Matthews**

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[@chris_melton](https://twitter.com/chris_melton)



[chris_melton](https://www.instagram.com/chris_melton)

Education/Occupation

I'm an Electronic Systems Sales Representative for SimplexGrinnell, where I've been working for about 18 years. After graduating high school from West Meck, I attended Central Piedmont Community College.

Community involvement and leadership experiences

In addition to serving on the Town of Matthews Board of Commissioners, I'm also president of the Brightmoor Homeowners Association for a fourth term, I serve on the Board of Directors for Matthews HELP Center, the Board of Directors for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Arts & Science Council and I'm an At-Large member of the Board of Directors of the Matthews Chamber of Commerce and an alternate member of the Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization (CRTPO), representing the Town of Matthews. Prior to being elected to the Board of Commissioners for the Town of Matthews, I served on the Town Planning Board for one (1) term. For two (2) years, I led the Carolina's Chapter of the Society of Fire Protection Engineers (SPFE) and served on the Subcontractor/Specialty Contractor Advisory Council for the Carolina's Associated General Contractors (CAGC).

Where I grew up and when I came to Mecklenburg Co.

I grew up on the west side of Charlotte, NC and graduated from West Mecklenburg High School in 1991

As a student, I was interested in government, leadership, and civic issues because...

In my youth, I really wasn't interested in government or civic issues as much as I was news and current events, as a whole. It wasn't until after my wife and I established a family that I developed an interest in local government.

Favorite news source

I typically rely on the web for news sources, visiting and reading websites for the Charlotte Observer, Fox News, CNN

and sites for local television stations. Twitter has become a great source for breaking news, even for major news outlets. I've noticed that reporters will tweet an item, even before the network posts the story. Even the web is having a difficult time keeping up with quickly developing news stories.

Political viewpoint

Conservative Republican

First issue I will tackle

After I'm re-elected, I'll continue to be an advocate for neighborhoods and communities all while promoting proper and appropriate development as an avenue for a sustainable economic environment. economic development:: build new infrastructure to provide jobs, build new public/private schools, repair roads, bridges...set up industrail parks to produce high tech products.

I think the most important role of town government is

In my opinion, the most important role is to find balance, creating a safe, happy place to live, where citizens can be proud to call home, all while developing the suitable economic environment for companies, restaurants and stores to conduct business and be successful.

**What does our town do well?
What can we do better?**

Our town manages it's finances well, with an award filling finance department. We continue to look for alternate sources of revenue and additional funding sources. We need to work on our transportation infrastructure.

A town issue that does not get enough attention – and how I will solve it

As a part of the 2015 Matthews Citizens Satisfaction Survey, 73.9% of the respondents feel that traffic is the biggest issue facing our Town of Matthews. Although it receives a great deal of attention, we must continue to push for and find funding sources for upgrades to our transportation infrastructure.

My impact on the town's progress and growth

Development is key to a sustainable economic environment. We must continue to develop and implement a sound common sense plan to upgrade our transportation infrastructure to accommodate the increased traffic volume.

Do all kids in our town have equal opportunities for success? How I will help...

Students in Matthews and Mecklenburg County have a tremendous opportunity for success. Walls that existed not too many years ago are going away. People are working together more than ever and today's children have the chance to continue to eliminate barriers for success. More than the restriction of 350 characters will allow me to describe.

Why students should get involved in GenerationNation and CLT-Meck Youth Council

It is extremely critical for today's youth to get involved. The 10th grade student at West Meck in 1988 is now a leader in our community and candidate for re-election. Students have infinite possibilities and opportunities however, desire and drive can't be taught. Go get it.

One more thing I want people to know about me

During my second term, I want to continue to be an advocate for our community and keep the small town feel we all love. I'm a neighbor, father, husband and homeowner who has the best interest in the town as a whole. I want a safe community to live in, a great community for my family to call home and be proud of.

Jeff A. Miller
Town Council
Matthews

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<https://www.facebook.com/jeffamiller73>

Education/Occupation	Associates Degree in the Culinary Arts from the Culinary Institute of America. Former Executive Chef at Charlotte's Best Hotel in 1999, then 15 years with Family Dollar. Now, semi-retired.
Community involvement and leadership experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commissioner - Town of Matthews 2007-Present• Centralina Council of Governments Delegate 2007-2013• 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
Where I grew up and when I came to Mecklenburg Co.	Wilmette, Illinois, a suburb on the North Shore of Chicago. I moved here in 1999 after a divorce so I could be close to my Son Rory. (My ex moved here immediately after the divorce)
As a student, I was interested in government, leadership, and civic issues because...	Nothing honestly. I just want to be involved in the Community and serve others.
Favorite news source	CBS & FOX News Channel
Political viewpoint	Conservative
First issue I will tackle	To continue building on our infrastructure of Roads & Walking Trails/Greenways. The widening of South Trade Street should be completed by Christmas. Next will be the Bridge replacement by the State. This will include a Greenway extension that will connect to the MARA Sports

Fields.economic development:: build new infrastructure to provide jobs, build new public/private schools, repair roads,bridges...set up industrail parks to produce high tech products.

I think the most important role of town government is

Safety of its Citizens - Police & Fire Departments.

What does our town do well? What can we do better?

Special Events - Beachfest, Concert & Movie Series. Matthews Alive. ArtFest, HomeTown Holiday.

A town issue that does not get enough attention – and how I will solve it

I honestly cannot think of one. :-)

My impact on the town's progress and growth

By approving only smart development on the little land that we have left, work with infill type projects.

Do all kids in our town have equal opportunities for success? How I will help...

Yes. We have a variety of Housing types in Matthews that is affordable to the starter family, thru middle age, and into retirement. Children of all ages can walk the Greenway to other neighborhoods and Parks. The Special Events mentioned above are all Free to the Families that attend.

Why students should get involved in GenerationNation and CLT-Meck Youth Council

They are the Leaders of tomorrow.

One more thing I want people to know about me

My reason for moving here to be close to my Son & relocate my career speaks volumes.
I love the Town of Matthews and the people in it!
Jeff A. Miller

**Nobie Thrasher
Town Council
Matthews**

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Email: Nobie@VoteNobieThrasher.com



NThrasher

Education/Occupation

High School, Some College & technical schools. I own A Construction Co & real Estate Company

Community involvement and leadership experiences

Served in the US Marines June 1991- June 1995, Graduated Leadership development for Realtor Assoc. in 2009, Served a 3 year term on R.E.B.I.C. (Real Estate Building Coalition) *represented Clt Realtors Assoc., Served 4 year on the Realtor Care Day Core committee 2 of those years was Co-Chair, Served 4 years on the Housing Foundation Board for Realtor Assoc, Served 6 years on the Realtor Government Affairs Committee, Just ended a 2 year appointment as chief judge of pct 136 in Matthews, Entering 2nd year appointment by Meck. Co. Commissioners to sit on the B.E.R. Board (Board of Equalization & Review, Entering 2nd year on the USO-NC Charlotte advisory Board, Spent 3 years on N.A.R.I. Charlotte executive board 1 year as 2nd V.P. (National Assoc of Remolding Industry, Graduated from NCIOP (N.C. Institute of Political Leadership) in May 2015

Where I grew up and when I came to Mecklenburg Co.

Trussville, AL Moved here after serving in the US Marine Corps

As a student, I was interested in government, leadership, and civic issues because...

The political process, freedom to vote, freedom to advocate

Favorite news source

Twitter

Political viewpoint

Patriot

First issue I will tackle	traffic, its a growing problem in Matthews, its a good problem means we have growth, but how do we manage it, is the question.economic development:: build new infrastructure to provide jobs, build new public/private schools, repair roads,bridges...set up industrail parks to produce high tech products.
I think the most important role of town government is	providing a safe environment for residents to live, socialize, raise a family. An opportunity for business to thrive and succeed while providing goods & services for the residents of the town.
What does our town do well? What can we do better?	We have a great family atmosphere, we have a lot of different venues and festivals. provide that small town feel
A town issue that does not get enough attention – and how I will solve it	(did not answer)
My impact on the town’s progress and growth	Being in Real Estate & Construction mostly all of my life, I will be able to bring leadership to decisions on progress of growth of what our citizens future and present will want to live in a great town like ours.
Do all kids in our town have equal opportunities for success? How I will help...	Yes, no matter if your a little tot to an aging adult our community has services and activities to fit their needs. To continue these we must make sure the community business stay involved in helping sponsor and support these activities. Joint partnership is a must.
Why students should get involved in GenerationNation and CLT-Meck Youth Council	Youth now more than ever needs to be involved in the History of Country on what it was founded on, and the political process to ensure our freedoms today will be around when they are older or even when their own kids are grown.
One more thing I want people to know about me	I am a servant leader, a true Patriot of this country and stand behind the Constitution of The Unites States of America.

**Larry Whitley
Town Council
Matthews**

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Education/Occupation	Stay in school to get the very best job.
Community involvement and leadership experiences	Pastor Mt.Moriah Baptist Church
Where I grew up and when I came to Mecklenburg Co.	Zebulon, NC
As a student, I was interested in government, leadership, and civic issues because...	serving others
Favorite news source	sports
Political viewpoint	Make this country strong again by using good values
First issue I will tackle	To get equal representation in jobs in Matthews for all races. So we can be fair to everyone who lives in Matthewseconomic development:: build new infrastructure to provide jobs, build new public/private schools, repair roads,bridges...set up industrail parks to produce high tech products.
I think the most important role of town government is	Serving and Meeting the needs for all the people.

What does our town do well? What can we do better?	Making it a good place to live. Have more diversity
A town issue that does not get enough attention – and how I will solve it	Getting to know more about our races and understanding their heritage. By getting to know one another work and play.
My impact on the town's progress and growth	By working to keep what we have and improve on its future.
Do all kids in our town have equal opportunities for success? How I will help...	No, Teaching Training on diversity in others.
Why students should get involved in GenerationNation and CLT-Meck Youth Council	Knowledge is power and to keep up with what is happening around you.
One more thing I want people to know about me	Lets get this country back to "IN GOD WE TRUST " what we were built on thanks and God Bless'