



## CANDIDATE SPOTLIGHT

**BOB WERTZ**

COMMISSIONER OF THE REVENUE

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OFFICE: **COMMISSIONER OF THE REVENUE**

### **How long have you lived in Loudoun County?**

I have been a resident of Loudoun County for almost 60 years. I was born in Syracuse where my dad was in the military. However, my mother was from this area. The family moved back to Loudoun soon after I was born. I graduated from Loudoun County High School and my son, who is 21, and my daughter, who is 23, also graduated from there. After high school I attended Longwood University in Farmville, Virginia where I received a degree in Business Administration with a Marketing concentration. I have volunteered with the university for many years and served as Rector of the Board of Visitors after having been appointed to the Board by Governor McDonnell. My wife, Debra, grew up in Rockville.

### **What is your favorite thing about living in Loudoun County?**

I like that Loudoun has that small-town feel even though it has grown substantially, and it has a sense of community. The best things about the county are that it's a safe place to raise a family and has a very high quality of life.

### **What made you interested in running for Commissioner of the Revenue?**

I didn't run for this office because I am interested in being an elected official or politician. I originally sought the office after having worked in the office for more than a decade. I felt that I was the most qualified person for the job; and you don't apply and get hired to be Commissioner of the Revenue, running for office is how you get the job.

I am often asked if I am interested in running for some other elected position or for higher office, but I didn't run for office because I am interested in higher office. I ran and am running again because I am the most qualified candidate for the position and know I can continue to do a good job. I have been Commissioner of the Revenue since 2004; winning a total of five elections.

### **What does the Commissioner of Revenue do?**

The role of the Commissioner of the Revenue is to serve as the chief tax assessing officer of the county. Many people confuse my role and that of the Treasurer, Roger Zurn. The difference in roles is that my office is responsible for assessing local taxes, while the Treasurer does collections. Basically, it's a separation of duties where no one party has full taxing authority over its citizens. The Board of Supervisors establishes the budget and sets tax rates, my office does the assessments, and the Treasurer's office does collections. This separation of roles protects taxpayers. I'm basically in the fair assessments business, not the revenue maximization business. People often suggest to me how the county could raise more money, but that's not my role. It's solely to establish fair assessments. These values are then utilized by the Board of Supervisors to determine the tax rate based on how much money they feel they need to provide services for the County.

### **Why are you running for re-election?**

I am running for re-election for the same reasons I ran before, because I believe I'm the most qualified candidate and have done an exemplary job in this role. Many people don't realize that this is not a legislative position. It's a tax administration job. In order to serve as Commissioner, you have to run for it. Basically, I am responsible for the top three locally administered tax revenue programs: real estate, vehicle/personal property, and business taxes; as an example, my office is responsible for the assessment of taxes on equipment in the county's data centers. The office has an \$11 million budget and I have 90 full-time employees.

I am asking voters to hire me for this important tax administration role for another four years. It has truly been an honor to serve as Commissioner; as it's one of the most important jobs in the county. One of my primary responsibilities in this role is the need to protect the confidential personal and business information maintained in the office. With access to the DMV, Virginia Department of Taxation, Virginia Employment Commission and other confidential databases, citizens need to consider what can go wrong with the information we have access to if it should fall into the wrong hands. In my view confidentiality of protected information is paramount.

### **Who is your favorite political/historical figure?**

Ronald Reagan. It is fascinating how he joined the Republican Party after having been a Democrat. Many Republicans today criticize individuals for prior decisions and don't allow them to change their minds. I have so much admiration for him for coming to the Republican Party as well as all that he was able to accomplish.

### **When you aren't running for office, what do you like to do?**

I'm pretty handy, so I'm often either working on the house or the car. I always have projects that I'm working on. I also enjoy going to a local brewery. We have a group of Republicans that often end up at Loudoun Brewery on Friday evenings and solve the nation's and county's political ills.