

**League of Women Voters www.VOTE411.org
Manassas City Council 2018**

Description:

The Manassas City Council is composed of seven members, including an elected Mayor, and a Vice-Mayor selected by the Council after each election. Elections are held on the first Tuesday following the first Monday in November. Council Members are elected to four-year terms in staggered elections in even years. This year vote for no more than three.

See City information here: <http://www.manassacity.org/153/Mayor-City-Council>

Vote for 3 candidates. Do not vote for more than 3 candidates.

Candidates (choose 3):

Amalfi M. Arias



Party: Rep

Biographical Info:

Address: 9300 Prescott Ave

Website: <http://onemanassas.org>

Email: amalfi.arias@gmail.com

education/Degrees: Bachelors, Social Sciences concentration Government

experience: 20+ years Project Management in Technology and a veteran of

Questions:

Q#1 : *What economic issue is of most importance to the future of the City of Manassas?*

A: The biggest economic concern for the City of Manassas is the lack of joint strategic planning sessions with Prince William County and Manassas Park. Manassas benefits economically due to the fact we are in the middle of one of the world's largest tech corridors and next to our nation's capital. We recently had fantastic news of Micron expanding and bringing over 1100 to our area. The region will have many more of these opportunities. It would be an advantage to work with our neighbors to ensure the City's resources and needs are considered. Our economic development team has done a fine job revitalizing Old Town and, combined with our historic streets and landmarks, Old Town Manassas has become an attraction for the entire region. If we combine resources with Prince William County and Manassas Park to attract corporations, we can get ahead of the planning as a region and have a say where, when, and how we can grow responsibly.

Q#2: *What transportation issues(s) needs to be solved and what will you propose for solutions?*

A: Attract high-paying jobs to the immediate area is paramount, so our residents do not have to commute on the already congested Rt.28, I66 and I95. Too many of those high-paying jobs are landing just north and south of us when they could be in the Manassas area. I discussed the importance of working with surrounding jurisdictions on joint planning. I would also investigate the feasibility of scheduled shuttles that go from the train station to Vienna Metro and the shuttles from Manassas and DC, morning, evening and weekends. I recently spoke to a resident that uses the bus service and her commute from Manassas to Alexandria can take up to 3 hours a day. We can improve on this by exploring and realizing better transportation options for our work force and tourists alike.

Q#3: *What is the impact of the opioid overdose epidemic on Manassas? What solutions would you recommend?*

A: The opioid crisis has impacted the entire country and Manassas is no exception. We need to educate our residents of the dangers, how it can start, and what signs to look for. We also need to take away the stigma that is associated with a "drug addict". Recognizing the problem is the first step to recovery but this becomes very difficult when there is the additional concern of being judged. Education, access to recovery programs, discussions with family and friends are the best resources to help heal this disease.

Q#4: *What proposals do you recommend to maintain and increase the quality of Manassas schools?*

A: I propose a coordinated effort between the City Council and School Board to focus on improving our school ratings. The Council does not have responsibility for education, but they do have control over the budget and responsibility of items that impact our schools. The major concerns that I hear from parents and teachers are overcrowding, communication (English as a Second Language for both the kids and parents,) and

disciplinary/safety concerns. The underlying issues have many layers and are complex. Let's have an open honest discussion on what is impacting our schools and work as a community to resolve. Currently the discussion regarding our schools is how much are we going to raise taxes to meet the school's needs. The discussion should be what can we do to improve the school ratings for the good of the entire community. Great schools attract families and business and increased demand will raise property values that would offset the need to raise taxes. Schools are top priority.

Q#5: *What are your priorities for Manassas City residents?*

A: We are divided as a nation and as a city due to today's political environment. Our residents have the same common goals. We all want great schools, quality of life, and economic prosperity. Our differences are minimal in comparison to capacity we have to become a great city. I plan to use my leadership to help us come together as a community. If we work together on the local issues we can be the Jewel of Northern Virginia. One Manassas.

Marc T. Aveni

Party: Rep

Biographical Info:

Questions:

Q: *What economic issue is of most importance to the future of the City of Manassas?*

A: - no response -

Q: *What transportation issues(s) needs to be solved and what will you propose for solutions?*

A: - no response -

Q: *What is the impact of the opioid overdose epidemic on Manassas? What solutions would you recommend?*

A: - no response -

Q: *What proposals do you recommend to maintain and increase the quality of Manassas schools?*

A: - no response -

Q: *What are your priorities for Manassas City residents?*

A: - no response -

Theresa Coates Ellis



Party: Rep

Biographical Info:

Address: TheresaCoatesEllis.com

Website: <http://TheresaCoatesEllis.com>

Email: theresacoatesellis@gmail.com

education/Degrees: George Mason University BIS Business Communication Degree

family: Husband: George Ellis 6 Daughters: Allison, Christine, Natalie, Kathryn, Jillian, Laura 1 Son: Chris

experience: Manassas Regional Airport Commission Asst Governor Rotary
Manassas/PW Education Foundation/CTE Board

Questions:

Q#1: *What economic issue is of most importance to the future of the City of Manassas?*

A: Economic Development/Job Growth: Theresa is an experienced marketing professional and attracts new entrepreneurial businesses and helps existing businesses to thrive. Bringing awareness to City of Manassas tools adding easy business guidelines will grow businesses to take the tax burden off families.

Q#2: *What transportation issues(s) needs to be solved and what will you propose for solutions?*

A: Improving traffic and walkability. Bypass and widening of Route 28. Future expansion of Metro.

Q#3: *What is the impact of the opioid overdose epidemic on Manassas? What solutions would you recommend?*

A: The opioid crisis increases suicides, domestic and sexual abuse, mental health and physical health problems. Education with a large-scale educational campaign with professionals will bring increased awareness.

Q#4: *What proposals do you recommend to maintain and increase the quality of Manassas schools?*

A: Increasing certified, career-ready programs, internships, entrepreneurship (CTE) with business and community outreach to connect to students for careers.

Q#5: *What are your priorities for Manassas City residents?*

A: The Manassas City Council members serve their citizens as decision makers for the community. My priorities: Job Growth, Quality Education, Responsible Spending

E. Michelle Davis-Younger

Party: Dem

Biographical Info:

Website: <http://michelle4manassas.com>

Questions:

Q: *What economic issue is of most importance to the future of the City of Manassas?*

A: - no response -

Q: *What transportation issues(s) needs to be solved and what will you propose for solutions?*

A: - no response -

Q: *What is the impact of the opioid overdose epidemic on Manassas? What solutions would you recommend?*

A: - no response -

Q: *What proposals do you recommend to maintain and increase the quality of Manassas schools?*

A: - no response -

Q: *What are your priorities for Manassas City residents?*

A: - no response -

Ken D. Elston



Party: Dem

Biographical Info:

Party: Dem

Biographical Info:

Address: Manassas, VA 20110

Website: <http://www.kenelston.org>

Email: kenelston8@gmail.com

education/Degrees: MFA, The Ohio State University BA, Temple University Honorary PhD, Nanjing University

family: Molly, Spouse Sam, Son, Osbourn grad Emma, Daughter, MCPS Student

experience: 4 years on Council 8 years college administration 20 years as a professor of Theater

Questions:

Q#1 : *What economic issue is of most importance to the future of the City of Manassas?*

A: Long-term strategic planning is absolutely key to continued economic success for the city. Over the past four years, I have vocally supported and proposed the increase to the fund balance [from 13% to 15%] AND for a long-term funding of the CIP...both

acknowledged by our financial analysts [Davenport] as major contributing factors to the city's AAA Bond Rating. The bond rating, as well as planning and responding to needs before they become immediate challenges SAVES MONEY and makes for responsive, rather than reactive, government. I have been encouraging a policy that the schools also fund a long-term CIP, as building a new elementary school is an important and, now, immediate challenge. Economic Development is key to attracting business. Make a city attractive to people and it will be attractive to businesses. One Council Member cannot save the world...but we can save the schools, support public safety and save lives, support economic development and save the citizens fiscal shock.

Q#2: *What transportation issues(s) needs to be solved and what will you propose for solutions?*

A: I have already advocated for a street study and, again, a clear plan for resolving low-rated streets; I have advocated for improvement in VRE coverage and PRTC service...it takes many voices, and positive changes are already in the works; I have advocated for following sector planning and traffic flow improvements-- if grants and other funding sources make the choice feasible, I will vote for the traffic circle at Rt 28 and Sudley, because studies show that it would move that from a D-rated to an A-rated intersection and improve traffic flow for commuters; I have advocated for an alternative to Rt 28 [though multiple jurisdictions guide the Commonwealth's decisions in this area], and I believe that necessary alternative route will be built.

Q#3: *What is the impact of the opioid overdose epidemic on Manassas? What solutions would you recommend?*

A: This is an area that I have taken as a personal priority. There are only so many things that the locality can do- supporting public safety is one, and I have done that consistently. In Richmond and, even, in DC, I have been advocating, not simply for greater spending to combat this scourge, I have been advocating for new strategic thinking: Mental Health treatment must be addressed in schools and hospitals; we must have diversion centers, so that police can deal with crime and have a system into which to channel addicts; drug courts should be established across the Commonwealth; treatment alternatives to incarceration should be funded--- these have been proven to save tax dollars and support long-term recovery for addicts; and drug therapy treatments that take the place of harmful drugs and suppress addiction should be widely available to those families struggling. In addition, drug makers and physicians need to join the fight for families and stop over-producing and over-prescribing.

Q#4: *What proposals do you recommend to maintain and increase the quality of Manassas schools?*

A: No one on Council has worked harder on developing school funding strategies than I have. It is important to protect the citizens from tax spikes and excessive burden, while guaranteeing a floor to the schools budget that has sufficiency for positive growth. Education is a matter of national security, as we are safer with a well-educated populace

and better prepared to compete economically. Future generations need to be the greatest priority of responsible government. After years of his hostility from some members of Council toward public schools, including some promoting funding Charter schools and vouchers with Tax Payer money, rather than invest in stellar public education, it has been my priority to help build stability intoning-term planning to support the schools. Our schools have been improving and innovating with home and private school partnerships and vital CTE training, and deserve continued support.

Q#5: *What are your priorities for Manassas City residents?*

A: Service is my priority. Drawing inspiration from my Lutheran upbringing, I have been serving the community in Manassas City for sixteen years, proving faith through action, and helping to support multiple not-for-profits, including Grace United Methodist Church, as well as arts and history-based organizations. On Council and within the Council of Regional Governments, I serve on multiple committees, in service of our diverse population. Keeping values and people foremost [and above any ideology] I believe that we can continue to improve conditions in the city and quality of life with transparency and respect for all people. If re-elected, I will continue my focus on serving my neighbors with common sense leadership and an emphasis on keeping our city a great choice for all phases of life. Manassas City is a great place to live. In describing the ideal for our community, one of our most beloved community leaders used the phrase "a community for a lifetime" I will maintain that ideal.

Rexford G. Parr Jr



Party: Dem

Biographical Info:

Website: <http://rexformanassas.org>

Email: parr.rex@gmail.com

education/Degrees: BA Psychology Graduate study

family: Married

experience: Successful Corporate CEO Institutional Governance Active Community Leader

Questions:

Q#1: *What economic issue is of most importance to the future of the City of Manassas?*

A: There is nothing more important to the future of Manassas than a first-rate education system. Without it, families will not move here, property values will decline and businesses will leave.

Q#2: *What transportation issues(s) needs to be solved and what will you propose for solutions?*

A: To be an attractive place to live, work and play the city must offer efficient transportation, reliable and effective public services and an appealing quality of life. Here's where we should start: 1. Widen Route 28 North to I66. The study of this change is in VDOT's 6-year plan but needs constant attention to keep it there. 2. Add mid-day VRE service in both directions and then extend the Manassas line to Gainesville and Haymarket.

Q#3: *What is the impact of the opioid overdose epidemic on Manassas? What solutions would you recommend?*

A: Manassas had 14 opioid deaths in 2017, up from 7 in 2016. The rate at which this crisis is growing should frighten us all. I recommend two things that we can do immediately: First, Make REVIVE! training more widely available at low to no cost. It teaches lay rescuers to administer naloxone to someone experiencing an overdose. Second, beef up staffing of the Community Services Behavioral Health Wellness Team that serves Manassas.

Q#4: *What proposals do you recommend to maintain and increase the quality of Manassas schools?*

A: 1. We need to align the goals and objectives of the School Board and the City Council. 2. We should make sure that every child has access to the innovative pre-k education program. 3. We must continue to add to the outstanding progress on Career and Technical Education (CTE). 4. We need to replace Jennie Dean Elementary School. The longer we wait the more expensive it gets.

Q#5: *What are your priorities for Manassas City residents?*

A: I want Manassas to be a great place to live, work and raise a family. In my experience, nothing really important gets done without a vision and a plan. The last citizen-led strategic plan for the City was 2003-2008. Ten years without a plan for our collective future is not good governance. If elected, I will work to bring the community together to articulate a vision of Manassas in 2050. Together, we can develop a strategic plan to achieve that vision.