

## **Candidate Background:**

1. Please tell us about you and your family. What are your qualifications, skills, and experience? Tell us about your faith, your civic involvement, and about any character traits that will help you be an effective alderman or mayor.

Tennessee native, living in Franklin since 2007, married to Darci Caesar from Columbia, TN. Darci and Greg have 4 children. I currently serve as the Vice-Chair for Franklin's Board of Zoning Appeals, having served on this board for 10+ years. I'm a mentor for the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Center, a volunteer for the Brett Boyer Foundation, Habitat for Humanity, My Friend's House, and a Graduate of Leadership and Citizen's Government Academy. My family and I attend St. Philip Catholic Church in downtown Franklin. As a business leader, having run healthcare businesses domestically and abroad, I have a heart for helping people. I also have been known to be very cost-conscious, saving countless dollars of overspending in the private sector and will introduce these same conservative principles when making decisions with the people of Franklin's money.

2. Why are you running? I returned to the US after 3 years successfully re-launching a business in western Europe to a community that I loved (I chose Franklin to return to over ALL other US Cities). I chose to run to introduce wise policy, re-engage the people (old and new) in our city, and maintain the character of Franklin which brought all of us here. Franklin is a conservative community, based on principles of hard work and the success derived from those efforts. We are built on a strong history and I feel compelled to help pull us through this recent divide to ensure, like we've done in the past, that we will continue to be a shining star in our nation.

## **Scope and Role of Government:**

1. What is your view about the U.S. Constitution and how it should be interpreted? The constitution is a foundational document and provides legitimacy and form to our democracy while protecting national rights of our citizens as well as the rights of states in the USA. The constitution uniquely unifies our country and provides direction, vision, and guidance to all who live in the United States— including the division of power across 3 branches of government. I believe the U.S. Constitution should be interpreted as it was written and amended.

2. What does liberty mean to you? How does government influence liberty? Liberty is fundamental for American society in that it allows you to pursue freedom and have a voice in a society without unnecessary or overbearing restrictions imposed. I believe governments can influence liberty by protecting the rights of all in pursuit of freedom from undue or unnecessary hinderance or burdens. These burdens could be in the form of overcomplicated paperwork to receive government services, quelling free speech or the inability of persons to vote because of their race, religion or sex.

3. What is the primary role of government?  
To serve the people and provide a framework(laws) upon which we can pursue liberty and, if desired, build successful enterprises.

## **Franklin Governance:**

1. What are the three most critical issues facing Franklin today and how would you propose that Franklin address each issue?

**Growth**– We’ve built something great and our city will continue to grow. I will fight to ensure businesses and residents receive the best public services (water, waste) and best trained and equipped community protection services (by investing in our Police and Firefighters) for our taxpayer dollars. Beyond community services, we MUST work together with industry to build roads to support our growth. No-one wants to fight gridlock or failing and insufficient roads. Beyond first-responders, services and roads, I will protect the integrity of our historic town and our irreplaceable Historically significant areas.

**Community** – Residents from all over the US have flocked to middle-TN and Franklin for the quaint and conservative values our city offers; a great place to raise a family, raise a business, or retire. We need to work to bring our residents together as we continue to grow together. Franklin is stronger when our city pulls together rather than in opposite directions. I will build bridges, not walls, to ensure that all have a voice and exemplify one of my favorite axioms; we are always stronger than I.

**Budget** - While we all love living in Franklin, TN; if you’re not new to the county, you know we just experienced a substantial county tax increase. Williamson County collects the highest property tax in TN (in real dollars – median annual payment, based on a percentage of home value). Many of our residents are still recovering from economically challenging times. Our current sales tax rate is higher than 89% of counties in the nation. While our city’s property tax rate is low, our home values (and indirectly our taxes) have continued to grow, which increases our actual tax expense. I will investigate the budget and challenge small and large disbursements of our city tax dollars to ensure that frivolous spending does not occur on my watch.

2. Do you have any concerns about how city officials are appointed? What involvement, if any, should the BOMA have in recommending and/or approving appointments? I believe BOMA should be able to affirm or appoint city officials. However, I don’t think the ‘application’ process should be exclusive to elected officials. I would like for Citizen nominees to be considered with BOMA having the final recommendation and/or approval.

## **City Finances:**

1. What concerns do you have regarding Franklin’s finances and how would you propose they be resolved? We are on the precipice of committing to a \$100M government services building, City Hall. 15 years ago, similar claims of MANDATORY need and FAILING City Hall facilities were made, and a \$60MM City Hall was a primary topic of debate. Somehow, we survived and provided services from that rickety building for 15 years. Now it seems we need to spend nearly double the amount discussed 15 years ago to build a replacement building – even though we’ve grown external resource locations to support our civic needs. I want to re-evaluate (if they don’t pass the new building before, I’m elected) the need for space; raising questions about departments which we’ve outsourced as our city has grown. IF we move

forward with the city hall before I'm elected, I will push for prompt action to investigate lease terminations or sale-options for our properties (like CoF Streets Department).

### **Growth and Infrastructure:**

1. What is your commitment to the Envision Franklin document? What changes would you propose, if any, to the Envision Franklin document?

The Envision Franklin document sets a general direction for the growth and development of our community. Having served on the Board of Zoning Appeals for 10+ years, now the Vice Chair of that Board, and personally participated in NUMEROUS community listening sessions during the formation and adoption of the first document as well as the 5-year update, firstly I'm proud that our city invests in constructing these guidelines. I believe we need to increase our focus on non-motorized and alternative modes of transportation to support our community and promote our quality of life. I love what we've created with better roadways including walkability improvements downtown and how that has spilled into the Factory and Fieldstone Farms in the north, Westhaven to the west and south toward the library. As Mack Hatcher and our city grows toward the south and east, we need to provide sensible density that reflects the character and community of Franklin along with walk and bike paths for our residents who want to get from home to anywhere safely via car and/or bike or foot. We MUST continue to invest time and energy in collecting community feedback to support our vision to provide clarity, boundaries, and guidance to those who are building in our city.

2. For new development, how do you think the additional infrastructure (water, sewer, roads, police, ambulances, fire, etc.) should be funded? Infrastructure for new development should be materially funded by those building and buying in the new developments. There may have to be sharing of some sort, but it must be a small minority contribution, if at all. I believe new entrants into the city should shoulder most of the expense as those who've come before have done.

3. Some citizens have expressed concern that the building in which City Hall resides is no longer adequate. What are your thoughts? As mentioned above, it was 'inadequate' and urgently needed re-development 15 years ago, yet somehow, we persevered. I know that a building has a lifespan and that the current City Hall has probably reached its golden years, but I do strongly contest us not re-thinking civic use models for a newly built City Hall. We don't do business like we did in 2009, so I would encourage us to think long and hard about mixed-use spaces to support our evolving workforce while understanding that we made strategic facility-based pivots during the past decade which resulted in a better-functioning City without tearing down and re-building the city hall and parking facilities. I'm not expressly opposed to the new building, having served in City Hall on the Board of Zoning Appeals since 2010, one can clearly see the building is in need of improvement – but I don't want us improving the facilities only burden our community and future generations unnecessarily.

4. What are your views concerning Franklin giving tax breaks to attract new businesses? Tax-incentives to bring businesses to town can be a good thing. To attract top businesses and top talent, some incentives are required. If the economics make sense, I'm not opposed to granting concessions to organizations who want to truly pour into the city. Along with tax incentives, our outstanding characteristics will bring the right businesses (and people) to our community. But this CANNOT be a one-way street. I want businesses that will be productive

contributors to our community, not just seeking the lowest cost of operations. Cities in TN are desirable due to the conservative taxes, but we need the liberty to provide incentives, like all cities who we 'compete' against for new businesses.

### **Public Issues:**

1. Should the City of Franklin have a code of decency for events held at publicly owned venues? How should the attendance by children be addressed at events which may contain adult content, including sexual content? I don't support indecent or unlawful activities in public events in public areas, period. There are laws that prevent this and I support us enforcing these laws.

I am open to listening to community feedback and defining what a 'code of decency' for public events in public areas should look like along with the potential repercussions for violation. I don't believe explicit sexual content or explicit sexual activities should be permitted in public events in our public parks in view of children.

2. Is it the government's role to ensure the availability of affordable housing? If so, how? The government can help encourage affordable housing, but I believe other organizations (non-profits) are best equipped to facilitate and manage affordable housing. Having worked with the Habitat for Humanity organization, this is a perfect example of the community (not the government) supporting private efforts to procure land and rebuild character-matching properties with a price point and framework to propel families and individuals forward.

I am all for supporting the hard-working residents who help make Franklin a vibrant, multicultural community. I want the government to work with the private and non-profit sectors to offer opportunities for our workforce to find residency in Franklin. I would love to see non-profit and private sectors create opportunities for our workforce to procure a home where they can live safely while providing training and skills needed to move into a higher income bracket if they so desire. I believe it is critical that we have properties available for hard-working contributors to live our city boundaries. It is, however, unrealistic to believe that these individuals should receive huge government-subsidized homes in the prime real-estate areas. I would consider attracting development and introducing density which could provide opportunities for affordable homes to be constructed while allowing our hard-working residents to feel pride in ownership without burdening the taxpayers.

3. What are your thoughts about the "Middle Eight" development project? (abstain given this item may come before a board I currently sit on).

4. What do you think about how Franklin handled the pandemic? What would you have done differently? I think the best way to evaluate how we handled the pandemic is to look at the current state of the city... economically, we are thriving, while socially we are divided. The pandemic for Americans was a difficult period for all, Franklin included. While I wasn't living in our house in Franklin during the pandemic, I hope we never have to be tested in that way again, however I feel confident that we will do what it takes as Americans and Franklinites to get through it together. I only hope to emerge less divided than we currently are. Relative to other communities, whose residents now call Franklin home, we rebounded much more quickly, yet we all still battle with the stresses our society endured during the pandemic.

Today, we know that due to several real-world factors, mask mandates in Franklin are not as effective as it once was thought to be, yet this topic still stirs great controversy among our community. With this knowledge, I would have encouraged the leaders never to have imposed the mandate on our youth population and instead educated and encouraged social distancing, hand hygiene, covering a cough or sneeze during the height of the infectious spread and to protect our more-vulnerable citizens.

5. As a citizen and a voter, do you think the county and the state have any election integrity issues? If so, what are the issues? I am the only candidate on the ballot in our city to have requested and submitted multiple ballots while living abroad. While the process of voting from abroad was not simple, I checked regularly to ensure the vote arrived. I do not question if the document I sent in containing my votes while abroad was counted. I do appreciate TN requiring government identification to vote. I have faith in our poll-workers, redundancy of machine and hand-filled ballots, and our election commission. I do appreciate the rights and efforts of citizens who pursue and question election integrity.

6. How should the City of Franklin make decisions regarding the placement of historical markers?  
Franklin is a historic town and historic tourism is a significant contributor to our balance sheet. Our residents and I take great pride in preserving and protecting the historic markers in Franklin. However, we can have too many historical markers. Rather than removing monuments of the past, I appreciate the efforts to tell the “Fuller Story” and take pride in our city making efforts to memorialize a comprehensive story of our history. The markers we place should be historically accurate, tell our story, and aid current and future generations’ better understanding of the past.