

# Candidate Responses – Orange County Board of Supervisors

**Ed Van Hoven**

Question 1: Position Seeking:

EH: Board of Supervisors District 2

Question 2: Have you Previously Held this Position?

EH: No

Question 3: Will you be attending the August 23, 2023, Orange County Candidate Showcase?

EH: Yes

Question 4: What is your plan for fostering business growth in the community for the next five years?

EH: The first thing in fostering business growth is by having a trained work force ready to go, CTE can accomplish this.

The second thing is maintaining a tax base that is acceptable, this can help to be accomplished by carefully examining the current budgets and making sure that there is no waste of funds happening.

The third thing is by fostering an environment that encourages additional business growth that coincides with the current vision of Orange County. As we all know successful businesses help the tax base tremendously.

Question 5: According to the 2017 Census of Agriculture, Orange County has nearly 100,000 acres of farmland, and is home to approximately 417 farms of all sizes and types. How do you envision your role can best support all types of agricultural operations?

EH: Orange County is home to several types of agricultural operations ranging from milking operations, beef cattle operations, grain crops, hay, poultry houses and horticulture to just name a few. I personally have been a part of this in Orange County for the past 30 plus years so this is passionate to me.

We need to maintain the agricultural presence that we currently have in the county. Again, one of the main things lacking is qualified, local professionals in their fields of work. CTE is the answer to many of the problems the local agricultural professionals are up against. I plan to expand and enhance the effort put behind the CTE programs in Orange to help foster the agricultural environment.

Question 6: What specific steps do you believe could be taken by the Board of Supervisors, other county officials, or others in the county to help the county attract businesses that will improve the economic well-being of the county without a negative impact upon the quality of life for the county citizens?

EH: We have some industrial sites already set aside in Orange, we need to make these sites available to different types of businesses. Studies have shown that businesses that are interested in making a move, time becomes of the essence, we need to make these

opportunities happen quickly. We need to realize the many support businesses that can come along with the business in question when making these types of decisions. We also need to realize the opportunities that come along side of this (job opportunities, etc.)

We also need to do a much more careful job on identifying other areas in the county that are currently under-served. By fostering the growth in the right places enables the county to have better services (fire, EMS, grocery stores, restaurants etc.) We can attract these businesses by showing them the client base. Orange County has the people to attract some of these local businesses and where we sit on the map, meaning close to highly populated areas like DC and Richmond, can attract larger types of businesses.

Question 7: What steps do you think are most important to support existing businesses and encourage healthy growth?

EH: By enhancing/establishing a much more proficient CTE (career and technical education) program. This will prep our youth and provide them with much needed "tools in their toolbox" to hopefully look within the local business community. We have local business already in place to provide good paying jobs for these types of work and as a local business owner myself this is one of the things lacking in Orange County.

Question 8: How do agriculture and forestry contribute to your vision for economic growth and development within the County?

EH: There is a vision in place within the Board to foster these environments. We need to continue to grow on this by providing both the agricultural and forestry sectors with the help needed. The challenge that we have is the aging of the operators involved in these operations with not enough young people realizing the benefits of the lifestyle that farming offers. Both of these sectors are much more complex than they once were. Not to over state but once again this ties into CTE and helping the younger generation realize the benefits of agriculture and forestry. We can also help with this by taking a much better look at the tax base associated with both agriculture and forestry and making sure that it is "fair" , one of the things to look for might be associating some additional tax relief to young farmers/foresters during a start up period in these operations.

Question 9: How do you define "social justice" and, from your perspective, how can the BOS ensure fairness for all Orange County residents?

EH: Equal opportunity for all is guaranteed under the US Constitution, the Board of Supervisors - following the lead of the constitution - needs to make certain that in every decision the Board makes effecting the citizens of Orange County that equality for all of the citizens are given the primary consideration.

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