

Tim Carroll announces re-election bid

BY DAVID S. RODOCK
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VALDOSTA — Tim Carroll announced on Tuesday his plans to run for re-election to the Valdosta City Council District 5 seat.

Carroll said that one of the main reasons he is interested in serving on the city council again is to finish business started during his first term, such as Land Development Regulations (LDR) adjustments through the Special Ombudsman Committee (SORT), an organization co-created by Carroll and the Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce president, Myrna Ballard.

"These projects still have a ways to go that I cannot get them done in this year," he said. "SORT does a terrific job at identifying the specific issues within the LDR that are causing problems for local businesses."

During his first campaign, Carroll wanted to make himself accessible to constituents from his district in particular. He sends out a regular email newsletter to update constituents and he said that he will continue his open door policy.

"I can't think of an occasion where a constituent called and I didn't call them back," said Carroll. "I didn't always make them happy, but I always called them back and tried to respond quickly. I'm going to continue this because it's some-

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thing all citizens deserve."

Carroll acknowledged that local and national economies have suffered lately but also pointed out that the City of Valdosta enjoys one of the lowest millage rates and property tax rates in the state.

"There has been some pressure from some staff that we needed to raise millage, but we've made it clear that it's not an option," said Carroll. "As long as we continue operating in the fiscally responsible manner as we are, we will be able to maintain the current rates."

Another achievement Carroll is proud of during his first term is the water and sewer extensions to the annexed islands, such as Cherry Creek Southlake Shore. Another smaller water and sewer project he anticipates will be located on the Smith Briar Pine Point annex. He said that during Cherry Creek construction he made three to four visits each week to view progress and

respond to citizen concerns.

During his first term, Carroll attended educational classes through the Georgia Municipal Association about government finances and budgets. Upon re-election, he plans on attending as many educational courses as possible in order to have the knowledge to serve his district.

When it comes to travel expenses, Carroll has supported and sponsored amendments to the travel policy that would set a specific dollar amount for each trip for council members and the mayor:

"Travel is necessary, but I do agree that there has to be a return on the taxpayer's investment," said Carroll. "If we're going to spend money traveling, it needs to be done in an appropriate and responsible manner."

Upon re-election, Carroll said that he will forego any retirement and health care packages that are offered to council

members. He said that, through his business, health care and retirement are provided and he would not need additional coverage.

"I didn't get into office for that stuff," said Carroll.

When asked if he would accept the yearly salary, he said that he would. However, he said that if the salary was eliminated he would still run for the council seat.

As Carroll explained, since there is no party affiliation for city council members, he does not associate with a political party.

He also said that he tries to reach out to both Republican and Democratic parties by attending their respective events.

"I have received a tremendous amount of support from citizens for re-election, which has factored very heavily into my consideration," he said. "I sincerely have been honored to serve the citizens of District 5 and have gotten the opportunity to know some of the really fine folks in our city. It's a very humbling and enjoyable endeavor to serve."

Tim Carroll is the general manager of Farmers Home Furniture in Valdosta, where he has been since he opened the store in 1984. He is married to the former Clinton Roberts, who is a special education teacher at Lowndes High School. He has one son, Nathan, who resides and is employed in Albany.