

Meet county candidates

By Alexa Zoellner azoellner@dailyunion.com | Posted: Thursday, March 31, 2016 7:33 am

JEFFERSON — Here is a recap of the opening and closing remarks during Tuesday's debate among the candidates in two of four contested seats on the Jefferson County Board of Supervisors in the April 5 election:

District 27

Supervisor Glen Borland

"I've been on the board of supervisors since being appointed upon my retirement ... in 1996," Borland said. "They asked me, I thought about it, prayed about it, and said, 'yeah, I'll give it a try.' Well, here I am about 20 years later. Here's why I chose to run again: I look at it from the best interest of the county, not from any personal desire or anything that I might want to see happen. I'm not a politician at all."

Through his years as a football coach at Fort Atkinson High School, Borland said, he is used to making decisions after studying.

"I'm currently on the UW-Extension Committee and also the Economic Development Committee and there are some active things going on in both of those," Borland said. "I've served on the Parks, Highway (and many other) committees. I've had a variety of experience and I do understand the county government, I'd say, fairly well."

His main concern is what is happening to the University of Wisconsin-Extension.

"UW-Extension out of Madison, we work with them and they are undergoing a reorganization and I'm a little concerned that we might end up on the short end of many things," Borland said. "The Extension most certainly will not be like it is today. So I want to be there; I think I understand the situation and could be a good help in the transition. I see nothing major that we need to work on other than we need to protect our UW-Extension and I would like to be a part of that protective unit."

Challenger Robert Bennett

"I'm running for the supervisor in District 27, which includes Wards 3 and 4 in Fort Atkinson, because I see a very strong need for new people on the county board," Bennett said. "We have to have new members if we, as a county, are going to keep progressing and growing."

Bennett listed four main concerns he would like to address as a supervisor.

“Number one: I know I bring an open-minded look and fresh ideas from my constituents that will help lead and continue to develop Jefferson County as a very desirable place to live and raise a family,” he said. “Number two: as we have seen over the last few years, indecision by our supervisors have cost all of our taxpayers many, many dollars. It is time to stop kicking the can down the road and do the responsible and right thing for all of our county citizens.

“Number three: In doing the right things for the county, the time is now to evaluate all department spending and make sure the urgent needs of the county are properly met, not spend the money just because it’s in the budget year after year,” he continued. “Number four: when looking at previously approved department budgets, it is very apparent that some department dollars need to be reallocated so they bring a larger economic impact on sales tax revenue and benefit that benefit the most county stakeholders.”

Bennett said that 40-plus years of “experience and managing people” have given him a natural sense of listening and working with all county residents, who he said are a wealth of good information.

“I’ve built a company, met payrolls and understand very well that we all have to have attainable goals and still live within a budget,” Bennett said. “The needs of our citizens are our top priority in Jefferson County today and into the future as we face these new challenges in our changing world. I have the experience, qualifications, enthusiasm and energy to help take Jefferson County forward. I look forward to being part of our supervisor team and supporting our strong local government and would appreciate your support and vote on April 5.”

District 30

Supervisor Walt Christensen

“I’ve lived in Jefferson County since 1989, on Pond Road in the Town of Koshkonong a good amount of that time,” Christensen said. “I served four years on the Koshkonong Town Board from 1997 to 2001 and the past eight years on the Jefferson County Board of Supervisors. I was interested originally in running for local government office for the town board because I was concerned about the loss of farmland in the county. There was expansion of city limits into the township, there was expansion of highways and there was rural development that I thought needed to be considered more closely.”

The incumbent supervisor currently serves on five committees that all are “very enjoyable and interesting.” They are the Highway and Parks committees, the Farmland Conservation Easement Commission, the Lake Ripley Management District and the Wisconsin Counties Utility Tax Association.

Christensen said that serving on the county board, he has come to see that it serves many responsibilities and has many functions that benefit people.

“What I want to continue to do is to build good community,” he said. “Strong communities build strong economies and I think the county board and the county government is a good place to build a strong community.”

Challenger Gary Kutz

“My main purpose for wanting to be on the county board is to see if we can get the county to work a little closer with our townships, to possibly get some better allocations of the funds toward working together and accomplishing better roads and some of the other issues that I hope to learn about as we go along,” Kutz said.

“I hope to learn a little more. The county’s got a wealth of information for me in my position in the Town of Koshkonong public works. I know there’s a lot more things that I can learn and I would like a chance to give some of my knowledge at the county level along with where I’m at now.”