

Candi Rawlins

From: "James Reesor" <jamesreesor@jamesreesor.com>
To: <candi@trpa.net>
Sent: Saturday, June 26, 2010 2:03 PM
Subject: For Candi from James Reesor: 2010 Campaign Issues #1
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The following eight questions for gubernatorial candidates was distributed by the Tennessee Recreation and Parks Association's Executive Director Candi Rawlins. The letter to me was dated 23 June 2010. My responses are shown below.

"1. Tennessee encompasses some of the most beautiful undisturbed natural resources left in the United States, yet ranks as the seventh-worse state in the nation for conservation efforts. What would you do to protect these areas for future generations?"

James Reesor Response: I would not be proposing more interstate highways, apartment complexes or retail shopping centers in those areas of our state that remain "undisturbed" by profit-motivated entrepreneurs. My spiritual philosophy includes five lifetime priorities in this order: God first, Planet Earth second, followed by Family, Community and Nation. This 'speck of dust' in space is our home and we depend upon it for our survival. Any form of pollution, or misuse of natural resources should never be tolerated by a civilized society. If we are to be responsible caretakers of land and waterways, it must be done in the right way for the right reasons. We here in Tennessee are blessed with an abundance of God's blessings. Wherever there is a strong desire to maintain our heritage, it can be done – but, hopefully, with diminishing attachments to federal complicity.

"2. State Parks has an estimated \$100 million backlog in maintenance needs. How would you fund these repairs and ensure adequate maintenance money in future years?"

James Reesor Response: Maintenance requirements need to be prioritized to assure efficiency after we have evaluated current assets from the perspective of taxpayers. The "State Parks" belong to the people – not the government – and we will need to elicit their involvement before making arbitrary expenditures. The only suggestion I can make prior to a full briefing, before being sworn into office, is to raise funds through voluntary "user license fees." Once an evaluation of all factors has been carefully completed, my proposals will be made known.

"3. In 2007, Tennessee State Parks was nationally recognized by the National Parks and Recreation Association's Gold Medal Award as America's best state park system. What is your vision/long range plan for the future of Tennessee's State Parks?"

James Reesor Response: Disengagement from federal entanglements is important if we are to regain our sovereignty as a state. We need to exist without excessive interference from outsiders. Our fellow citizens must understand through programs designed to enlighten them how important it is to cherish what "nature" provides. My particular brand of "idealism" would probably be directed from the basic values of stereotypical native Americans. Their love for "Mother Earth" is an example we all must attempt to emulate. Our parks could provide enjoyment for families on camping trips, children in need of a hands-on introduction to natural environments, and countless opportunities for students to engage in exploration and education. "State Parks" could become the ultimate escape from the rat race so often equated to urban lifestyles. Freedom from contemporary traditions is an appealing concept – if only for short

periods of time during vacations.

“4. Integral to the overall delivery of parks and recreation services across Tennessee are the local (city and county) parks and recreation departments. How will you support the need of Tennessee’s cities and counties to provide diverse, close-to-home recreation opportunities for all their residents?”

James Reesor Response: The first order of business must include transformation of rules and regulations currently impacting the system. All personnel coming in contact with the public will need to learn the art of good manners, servitude, and compassion when needed. The “people” are the “boss” in our state – and when they choose to visit their parks or take advantage of their recreation services, the job of “servants” should be to make their experiences meaningful. We must assure the safety of each person while properly enforcing legalities pertaining to various locations and recreational facilities. Maintaining and managing all assets can only be done if citizens are benefitted. Lack of interest or misuse should lead to a lowering of budgets – rather than wasting money on obsolete programs.

“5. An integral part of the development of local parks and recreation facilities is a viable program. The state of Tennessee is fortunate to have such a program, Local Parks and Recreation Fund (LPRF). In recent years, legislation has been introduced that would redirect such funding into the state general fund. What measures would you take to ensure that a strong parks and recreation structure continues in Tennessee? Assure that these revenues are not diverted from this program?”

James Reesor Response: People currently employed in any state capacity, county or local governments, have a vested interest in raising their pay scales. They might want to see their daily activities enhanced by some form of improvement – no matter what the cost. It is this same kind of psychology that permeates “Tennessee Recreation and Parks” endeavors. Any candidate for public office that is making promises they can’t keep should never be elected. As we know, statistics are not always reliable – whether they pertain to state tax revenues or the world economy. Tennessee legislators are not gods and they have no printing press to compete with the United States Treasury or the Federal Reserve. The next governor will be handicapped by “reality” in 2011. It would be a mistake to predict what portion of funding will be allotted to appease the desires and requirements to keep our state moving forward. Those decisions will need to be determined at a later date. I will be praying for LPRF – even if all the money needed is not available.

“6. Several talking points introduced in the campaign for Governor thus far have addressed making State government smaller and more efficient. What is your vision and would you implement the changes? What is your decision process when determining what services are reduced, combined or eliminated?”

James Reesor Response: Cutting the size of government is a necessity – not some kind of political game to entice voters who are sick of paying high taxes. I first recommended a 30-50% reduction as a gubernatorial candidate in 1974. I’ve made this an important issue for consideration since announcing my current candidacy on 18 May 2008. If I was miraculously elected, lowering taxes and reducing our state budget would be done during a seven-year transition. Existing departments, commissions, boards, agencies and all other entities need to be merged into seven levels for the purpose of cutting the cost of operations and increasing efficiency of services: (1) Amerijericho Advisory Council (2) Governor (3) General Assembly (4) Human Services (5) Natural Resource Services (6) Lifestyle Services (7) Arbitration Services. More information can be found on one of my web site pages:
<http://www.jamesreesor.com/PickYourNextGovernorOfTennessee.html>

Generally, my “vision” includes focusing on self-sustaining lifestyles for families within a “free barter market” system rather than attempting to keep government programs that denigrate individualism. The value of “collectivism” is grossly overrated in this time of ever-increasing fiscal demands. We need

communities that are self-contained and capable of supporting limited numbers of residents. My introduction of new economic/education/healthcare concepts will be compatible with all existing traditions as we strive to refine and expand.

“(7) The Tennessee 2020: Vision for Parks, People and Landscapes – state recreation plan, identified the need of children to interact with nature as a necessary part of their healthy development. In addition, the Every Child Outdoors (ECO) Coalition was formed in 2008 to address these issues. How would you support and promote the benefits and resources to increase children’s outdoor experiences?”

James Reesor Response: State government should work closely with school and church groups to encourage assorted “Earth Day” adventures. Using hi-tech techniques to communicate information in a way that is both informative and entertaining is necessary to promote popularity. Specific “locations” could be developed to emphasize various “parts” of the total conglomeration we know as “Mother Nature.” I can imagine microscopic penetration of the elements, under the guidance of monitors, to help “students” envision the complexity of the outdoors. It is with this new understanding that greater appreciation for everything from dirt, leaves, water to insects and wild life could become more fascinating.

“8. The obesity epidemic has an increasing negative economic impact of \$2.7 billion in Tennessee, a significant one that can result from failure to adequately fund Tennessee’s parks and recreation infrastructure. Tennessee has the nation’s 4th highest rate of adult obesity, 30.2%, and the incidence of obesity has risen steadily for the last ten years. What role do you see both state and local parks and recreation governments take part in the battle against obesity”

James Reesor Response: Fat people hate exercise. Obesity is a problem because of many circumstances other than a lack of interest in parks and recreation. Our fast-food, candy, soft drink society is the easy way to satisfy appetites. Poor folks rely on bread, buns, cookies, cake and pie to stay alive and happy. If we want to change how culture impacts our eating habits, nutritionists and physical therapists need to keep their advice simple and to the point. Let’s start focusing on the joy of gardening – fresh vegetables and fruit as a start. Some of our public lands would be more productive if we had “gardens” and “orchards” – along with all kinds of other consumable stuff growing in picturesque settings. We could organize a few “Pick ‘N Eat” outings for willing participants – that involved long walks to get it done. Saving billions of dollars in healthcare might translate into more money for the finer things found in “outdoor” life?

Posted to my message board: <http://amerijerichoadvisorycouncil.yuku.com/topic/765>

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JAMES REESOR for GOVERNOR 20TEN TENNESSEE
A White Horse Independent