

Robert Desmond
Formal Announcement
Candidacy for Mayor of Deltona, Florida
Thursday, August 27, 2009

It is with great honor, pleasure and humility that I announce my candidacy as Mayor of the City of Deltona.

It is important to understand that I am not entering into this campaign as someone who is just going to bash the current mayor, although he has provided plenty of ammunition to do so. However, I am going to use the current Mayor's record to show the contrasting differences between him and me.

I pledge here and now, I will not use any personal attacks against the current Mayor or any other candidate for Mayor. I want to establish my candidacy as Mayor of Deltona based on my credentials and vision on where I would lead Deltona in the future.

I believe that we, the Citizens of Deltona, deserve better government than we are getting now, especially from the current Mayor.

I am entering into this campaign as a candidate with a clear vision of where I would like to see Deltona grow and mature in the years to come. I enter this campaign with strong leadership experience and a strong desire to do the right thing. I enter this campaign to lead by example, to make decisions based on sound facts and principles and provide fresh new leadership to the City of Deltona.

Here are some important credentials and facts:

I have 32 years of Information Technology experience – of which at least 16 of those years have been in the development and support of Local Government software systems and Law Enforcement software systems. I know and understand first hand the intricacies of how government and law enforcement works in its day to day operations. This provides me with the unique ability knowing how the bureaucrats work and how to leverage the daily operations of government into the needs of the people.

- **I am currently a member of the City of Deltona's Economic Development Advisory Board.**
 - One of the things that the City of Deltona needs desperately is more business. More business means more local employment opportunities, higher business taxes leading to lower property taxes for everyone in Deltona.
 - When Deltona was formed by the Mackel brother years ago there was not enough property zoned for commercial or mixed use which is having a huge negative impact on us today. We have to look to see what we can do to rezone major intersections and other properties as warranted in Deltona to make it easier for businesses to come into Deltona.
 - We also have to review our Development review process to streamline efficiencies and remove obstacles and barriers preventing growth from coming to Deltona.
 - I will work tirelessly to bring not only more business into Deltona, but the right types of businesses into Deltona. I will work to increase the corporate tax base and decrease the tax burden on the individual tax payer.

- **High profile executive roles.**

I have had 22 years of hi-level Information Technology management experience in my 32 year Information Technology career. I routinely have had to overcome complex business challenges and make high-stakes decisions within fast-paced, high-pressure environments using experience-backed judgment, innovation, strong

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work ethic, humor, and irreproachable integrity. I am respected as a motivational, lead-by-example manager and a proponent of personal empowerment and accountability. Based on my back ground I feel that problem identification and problem solving are part of my DNA.

- **Visionary thinker with national perspective and entrepreneurial drive.**

I have been a key contributor to enterprise-level planning and decision-making. I am a valued advisor to top-tier executives and top-tier customers.

- **Strong orientation in operations and finance.**
- **Corporate and business development experience.**
- **Marketing strategist and tactician.**
- **My family and I are members of Trinity Assembly of God Church in Deltona.**
- **About my family: My wife works in the medical field. I have two children (one boy and one girl) attending Deltona High School - playing in the high school band, one daughter who attended Deltona High School but graduated from Trinity Christian Academy soon to be attending Nursing School, one son with Down Syndrome that is involved in the Special Olympics while attending an adult day training program in Daytona Beach and one son serving active duty in the United States Army.**

I am currently a Project Manager for my current employer which is a Billion Dollar International Information Technology Management and Technical Services Company.

Prior to that, I was the Director of Software Development for a national Medical Billing software company. I had 43 direct employees in my chain of command and was responsible for 4 divisions within the company.

I believe I have the disposition and skills that the residents of the City of Deltona are looking for in their next Mayor.

Why am I a candidate for the Mayor of the City of Deltona?

Well, frankly enough is enough!

In recent months, the current Mayor has made a mockery of our beautiful city. He has made Deltona the laughing stalk of Central Florida. That's embarrassing. As a citizen of Deltona, I am dissatisfied with his performance and his representation as Mayor of my city government. The citizens of Deltona deserve better government than what we are getting now. I believe I can do a better job running the City than the current Mayor, I believe I can bring a higher level of professionalism, leadership and respect to the City of Deltona. I believe I will be more financially responsible with the taxpayers' money – the people's money! These are some of the reasons I am now a candidate for Mayor of the City of Deltona.

Lessons Learned: I am not the type person that sits back and just criticizes someone else's mistakes without first examining what those mistakes were and what lessons can be learned from those mistakes to prevent them from happening in the future. Yes, we all make mistakes, it part of life, generally we should forgive and forget and move on. However, when we elect and empower our elected officials we do have minimum expectations of them. I am referring to, in my opinion, high level profile mistakes that can not be ignored.

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What are some of the high profile mistakes the current Mayor made? In order to examine that question, we must examine documented facts, not here-say or voodoo. Some of the issues that have angered me and embarrassed me and many other citizens in Deltona are as follows:

- The attempt by the Mayor to silence his critics by violating their First Amendment Rights of the Free Speech guaranteed to all under the United States Constitution. This one act alone has caused the reputation of Deltona to suffer and make us the laughing stalk of Central Florida and the surrounding area. We were the top of discussion and ridicule with local radio station talk shows, television stations and newspapers. The citizens of Deltona were so outraged they demanded his resignation.
- The campaign of Misinformation about the City of Deltona's Police Department during the last election.
- The Mismanagement of Management – City Manager and two City Attorneys: \$517,000 and counting! Could the new City Manager Faith Miller be the next recipient of the City of Deltona's Golden Parachute Award?
 - It has been reported that during the candidate review process for City Manager the City Commission overturned the City Manager Selection Committee's recommendation and appointed City Manager Faith Miller even though she did not meet the commission's stated qualifications. The committee was chaired by a close associate of Mayor Mulder who had supported forwarding Ms Miller's name as a candidate for City Manager in two meetings of the selection committee. The committee overrode his desires to keep her name off the list of candidates but Commissioner Treusch made the motion to add her in the first commission meeting at which the City Commission reviewed the list of candidates. The vote was the same 4-3 split that has continued to create an atmosphere of division within the city government. Once again, the City Commission proved they did not care about the wishes of Deltona residents and decided on their own to hire a candidate that was not vetted by their own committee.
 - The point here is if you want to promote Faith Miller to City Manager, just make the appropriate motions and do it. Why go through the hoops of making it look like the City Commission is going through an unbiased national search for a City Manager when its obvious that Faith Miller was going to get the job? Just do it. Save time and money – on everyone's part.
- The lack of compassion for other peoples financial circumstances. Those people being the taxpayers of the City of Deltona.
- Out of control spending and fiscal irresponsibility.
- Thornby – Millions Spent, Million More Needed. Who is going to pay for that?
 - Millions of dollars spent on the purchase of the Thornby property (\$1.5 million dollars from the taxpayers of the City of Deltona) – for another park! Deltona already has 18 of its own parks! In addition, there are several County and State Parks in the local area. NOW was NOT the time to purchase this property to make another PARK.
 - I understand how the Thornby property in its current and natural state is important for its preservation – perhaps the City of Deltona could sell the property to the State of Florida or Volusia County Government or some other organization that's into historic preservation – but the taxpayers of Deltona should not have to foot this bill. In addition, if the City of Deltona is going to turn the property into a “Park” isn't that going to ruin the historic value and natural

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beauty of the property and destroy the preservation of the property the way it is now? I believe the answer to that question is YES.

- How much more of Deltona's tax dollars will go toward the development of the Thornby property?
 - Based on information provided at a Thornby Workshop and other reports it will cost at least \$1 Million to \$1.6 Million more dollars to develop the property, provide ample parking, build new buildings, improve the roads to be able to handle the expected vehicle traffic, provide restrooms, build the paths, purchase and install the playground equipment. Where is that money going to come from? What about the ongoing operating expenses, year after year after year forever? The citizens of Deltona are expected to pick up the tab for this. That's not right and it's not fair.
- Howland Crossing – Public Safety Complex.
 - The City paid \$7.57 million dollars for the purchase of about 19 acres of raw land for that site from the Cavallaro Group.
 - In 2007 the City Commission was going to purchase 18 acres nearby for \$2.5 million dollars but an effort lead by the current Mayor killed that deal resulting in the city paying \$5 million dollars more for about the same size property in about the same location.
 - One of the City Commissioners made a statement that we were paying more than the appraised value of the property.
 - Again, the theme here is another major acquisition or major decision is shadowed by controversy.
 - I will not lead this way. If I were to shift my position or try to sway the City Commission, I would articulate the reasons why – for full disclosure purposes and that would open up the opportunity for debate.
- In order to be an affective Mayor and leader of the city, the citizens need to know the basic thought processes of how the current Mayor or any candidate for Mayor thinks and reaches conclusions.
 - What is the foundation for some of the current Mayor's beliefs and what goes into his decision making process? In his own words: "The importance of the ACLU is immeasurable to me, my life, and my political philosophy."
 - Via public records requests it has come to light that the following official three emails were sent from the City of Deltona's official email system between the current Mayor and the Volusia/Flagler chapter of the ACLU:
 - Date: 2/10/2006 from the ACLU to Mayor Mulder
 - Subject – Volusia/Flagler ACLU Annual Meeting
 - The email invites Mayor Mulder to its Annual Meeting.
 - It states "As one of the few ACLU members that hold office in our area, and as mayor of the largest city in the county, I would be grateful if you would be willing to say a few words about the importance of the ACLU".
 - It also states "(And I can finally get you that ACLU baseball cap!)".
 - Date: 2/23/2006 from the ACLU to Mayor Mulder after Mayor Mulder had responded to the email above.
 - Subject – RE: Friday night ACLU meeting
 - In the email Mayor Mulder regrets informing the ACLU he can't attend the meeting because he has to go to the airport unexpectedly.

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- However, Mayor Mulder writes “The importance of the ACLU is immeasurable to me, my life, and my political philosophy.” It goes on to say “Please share my thoughts with the group. Thanks and I will see you soon. Dennis Mulder”.
- Date: 2/17/2006 from the ACLU to Mayor Mulder
 - Subject – possible solution to the painting controversy
 - The email explains how Mayor Mulder could get out of a controversy involving religious painting being hung at city hall while putting a spin on it that credits the Mayor, credits the ACLU “without capitulating to the Liberty Council”.
 - This email specifically refers to artist’s First Right Amendments! Sound familiar?
- The theme here is clear. The current Mayor and the ACLU have a tight relationship.
- What is the foundation of my thought process? First of all, I would NOT have had these self inflicted controversies as Mayor of Deltona if I were Mayor. My common sense and drive to do the right thing and respect for the Constitution of the United States and the voters of the City of Deltona would not have allowed me to get into these types messes in the first place. As a Christian, business executive, project manager, problem solver, systems analyst, Ronald Regan Republican, husband and father my thought process is to justify each project or major expenditure, define how each project or major expenditure will improve the quality of life for the Citizens of Deltona, prioritize the needs of the people, determine the return on investment, and allow unfretted public input on all issues. I am fiscally conservative. First, I will seek the will of the people. I will allow for as much open public input as feasible. I will work with other City Commission members, Constitutional Officers, City Directors and Mangers to always do what is best for the City of Deltona.

I GUARANTEE YOU – I WILL NOT SEEK THE GUIDANCE OF THE ACLU TO HELP ME RUN THE CITY OF DELTONA!

I will lead the City of Deltona by providing factual information, creating specific and individual project plans itemizing detailed information on total costs, dates, project milestones, who is responsible for each section of the project and how is it going to be paid for, etc. Projects will be prioritized and a Return on Investment or Benefit Analysis will be included with each project.

My Agenda:

These are some of the issues I will be addressing during the campaign.

1. Spending: Everyone talks about taxes, taxes, taxes – but what about spending? I will squeeze every penny out of our tax dollars to the point where Old Abe will be shedding tears because I squeezed him so tight. When you control spending – you control taxes. When you keep spending down you can keep taxes down.
 - a. In these current economic conditions, we need to look at all the spending the City is currently doing. I question some of the major projects now underway or planning to be underway shortly. I question the bad decision making of how the Mayor has spent millions of taxpayer dollars on unbudgeted land purchases and overpayment of land purchases for example for the Public Safety Complex. It is the responsibility of the City

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Counsel lead by the Mayor to understand the personal financial hardship of our citizens during these hard and difficult economic times.

- b. Property values have fallen, but the Mayor insists on invoking the “Rollback” option. For those of you unfamiliar with that term, it’s a nice sounding, tricky word that means that the amount of tax you paid last year is the same amount of tax you will pay this coming year – even though property values have gone way down. I think this unfair and unjust. The city needs to spend according to its needs – not its wants and desires. Where is the compassion for those who are suffering financially? The Mayor didn’t even consider postponing, canceling or reprioritizing any of the major projects that are on the board. As Mayor, I would prioritize all current and future projects and postpone those that could wait. After all, all of us in our personal lives and households are forced to do without and sacrifice, so why shouldn’t the City of Deltona?

2. Taxes.

- a. As our economy crumbles beneath our feet, unemployment hitting close to 11% in Deltona, 11% of the houses in Deltona are in foreclosure the current Mayor continues to want to increase our taxes! This is what I mean by enough is enough!
- b. Recently, the current Mayor voted to approve a special Fire District tax only to change his mind AFTER being pressured by the citizens of Deltona. Why does it always have to come to that? Can’t the current Mayor just say “NO” to new taxes? I will.
- c. The current Mayor wants to use the “Rollback” option for next years tax calculation. Well, although the word “Rollback” sounds like a good word that would mean you tax rate is going down unfortunately means just the opposite. The “Rollback” option means that each property owner will pay the same amount of tax this year as last year, although property values have declines by as much as 20%, if not more. This means that although the individual tax payer will pay the same amount of money this year in property taxes as last year, it really means your tax rate is going up by estimates as high as 31%. Where’s the compassion for everyone that is suffering during these hard economic times? The Mayor should cut taxes and make whatever changes are necessary in the city to meet next year’s revenues.
- d. As Mayor, I would do whatever is necessary to trim back spending during this economic hardship. Every option would be on the table. I would not invoke the “Rollback” option. I would try to stay within the current tax rate taking into consideration that property values have plummeted and I would try to pass on the savings to every taxpayer in the city.

3. Consolidated Services with other Governmental Agencies – Saving Money.

- a. One thing government agencies don’t do very well is share resources with each other. I will ask other local governmental agencies to join me in a joint session to discuss how we can combine some services or contracts together to reduce cost while maintaining quality.
- b. One area for example is Information Technology. All governmental agencies have the same need for many types of software such as General Ledger, Accounts Payable, Purchasing, Requisitions, Inventory Control, mandatory financial reporting and the list can go on and on. I would recommend that we combine our financial resources, invest in one centralized computer system and share costs. Currently, each city or government agency has their own computer system(s), I.T. staff’s, support contracts, training issues, etc. This is one area where we can save money!

4. Protection of our Seniors and our Children.

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- a. More details will be provided during the campaign.
5. Our Youth:
 - a. Finding meaningful ways for the City to help our young people volunteer for community service. This will help the City and in return help our high school students meet their mandatory graduation requirements for civic duty and volunteering.
 - b. Hold a series of “Getting ready for life” symposiums taught by volunteers to address some basic life skills our young people need today. Such as how to balance a checking account, how to budget, how to plan, how to think, how to set expectations or how to negotiate a major purchase, etc. I know these are things our young people are supposed to learn in school, but they don’t always know how to apply the academia to real life.
 - c. Build a community pool. More details will be provided during the campaign.
6. Gang presence and Gang violence. Keeping it out of Deltona.
 - a. I will work with Sheriff Ben Johnson, the Volusia County Sheriff’s Department and any other legitimate law enforcement agency to insure gangs do not become an issue in our community.
 - b. Our young people need to be held accountable for their actions.
7. Schools: I would like to help facilitate a regional vocational / technical school in Deltona.
 - a. More details will be provided during the campaign.
8. Law Enforcement:
 - a. I will work to restore a full faith relationship with Sheriff Ben Johnson and the Volusia County Sheriff’s Office.
 - b. Under the current Mayor, last year we lost 8 law enforcement personnel. These officers were patrolling the streets of Deltona and performing other vital and critical law enforcement duties for the citizens of Deltona. Isn’t one of the primary responsibilities of government to protect its citizens? As Mayor, I will work to restore these 8 positions and work my hardest to insure the safety of everyone in Deltona.
9. Water – Not just water and sewer services, but long term sustainable water independence for the City of Deltona and its residents.
 - a. More details will be provided during the campaign.
10. More open government – More Transparent Government:
 - a. During the budgeting process.
 - b. Making more information available to our citizens via the internet.
 - c. Allowing every citizen of Deltona to opportunity for their voice to be heard. Without the fear of retribution, intimidation or having your constitutional right to free speech violated or compromised as the current Mayor has attempted to do.
11. Budgeting:
 - a. Review all projects that are in progress or slated to be started.
 - i. Align current spending with current financial crisis.
 - ii. Cancel, hold, postpone, prioritize projects as necessary to reduce current spending levels and future spending levels.
 - b. Justification for new spending – if there is to be any new spending.
 - i. How will it benefit the citizens of Deltona
 - ii. How will new projects be paid for
 - iii. Full disclosure
 - c. Make the budget easier to read, understand and track how the dollars are being spent for every project.
12. Economic Development

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- a. Bring new businesses into Deltona.
 - b. Review the current development review process.
 - i. Improve efficiencies where possible
 - ii. Reduce cost where possible
13. Reduce the size of government when and where possible without compromising safety, value, quality or the standard of living for our citizens.
14. Bidding and Contract Awards
- a. Giving preferential consideration to qualified Deltona businesses and contractors where possible.
15. Transportation.
- a. Work with the State of Florida and Insurance companies doing business in Florida to allow a discount for people that verifiably commute or car pool to work. Example; Park and Ride.
 - b. Continue to work with the County to prioritize road improvements within the city.
 - c. Continue to monitor and work with other agencies related to mass transit projects.
16. Community Events
- a. Deltona is not known for any large, full scale, local or regional annual events. Its about time we put some energy and effort into some fun events for our citizens as well as our local and regional merchants.
 - i. As a member of the City of Deltona's Economic Development Committee I have submitted an idea to our Board called "Old Fashioned Bargain Days" . This could be an annual event where city and local merchants sell there wares in a festival like atmosphere, with live music, food and fun. This idea is actually making its way through the channels in city hall, but we'll see what the results produce.

With so much on the line and with so many areas of our lives that are affected directly by the decisions of our local government officials, I felt compelled to outline some of my areas of concern, share some of my ideas, provide positive input as how I would handle myself as Mayor of Deltona, share my thought processes, provide qualified credentials and reach out to the citizens of Deltona who want and deserve better government that what we are getting today!

For the last couple of months I have been quietly talking to people around the city about my intent to run for Mayor. The response has been overwhelming.

As in any major political undertaking, it takes people to get involved in order to make change happen. Therefore, I respectfully request for anyone, who is in good standing, who wishes to support by candidacy as the next Mayor of the City of Deltona, please contact me via email at DesmondForMayor@cfl.rr.com or visit my web site DesmondForMayor.Com. Of course financial contributions are always welcomed Continue to watch local newspapers and my web site for upcoming events.

If there are any groups or organizations that wish for me to attend one of their functions, please contact me. I am also available to anyone in good standing who wishes to invite me and at least 10 of their closest friends to "meet the Candidate" coffee hosted at your home, place of business or organization.

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In closing, I would like to say that I am not perfect. I have not had a perfect life nor have lived a perfect life all the time. I have made mistakes as many of us have. I learned from those mistakes.

But, today, I feel more confident in my life than ever, I am ready for this challenge and ready to lead the City of Deltona as your next mayor!

Thank you for the opportunity to share with you my Formal Announcement as Candidate for the Mayor of the City of Deltona, Florida.

God bless.

Robert Desmond