

1. What are your top three goals for the city in the next four years (term of office)?

First and foremost we need to restore the trust and confidence of the public. We have made headlines in a lot of negative ways over the past year. Now is a pivotal time to elect the right leaders that best represent our town. Let's think proactively and develop a sense of unity and mindset that we are all in this together for the greater good of moving forward in a positive direction. When we make negative headlines we are dissuading potential investors in doing business with us and in turn losing out on revenue opportunities. We can turn the tide on negative publicity by putting our best leaders forward.

Secondly, I will focus on creating incentives for development and encourage investment in our community to support our long term growth. We need to make it easy for interested businesses and developers to invest in the community. We do this by creating tax incentives that will help revitalize areas and over time bring in additional revenue for the city. We also do this by streamlining the development process by providing technical assistance and informational guides. We can create a "code team" that brings together code officials, firefighters, engineers and zoning staff to meet with new or expanding business owners to assist and clarify requirements. There is no denying the fact that we have great talent within the city, we need leaders who demand the best out of those individuals and set a high standard.

Thirdly, a common and recurring issue the city is faced with year after year is the condition of our roads, drainage and infrastructure. I will focus on creating a strategic plan to address this by performing an annual internal road inspection and audit to determine the areas of most concern. By developing a four year plan we can prioritize areas that require the most attention and address our most immediate needs and then work on our secondary and tertiary areas of concern.

We need to take advantage of outside funding. We have done this with projects such as the Amtrak station restoration; however, we need to continue this effort. Even a small amount of external funding applied strategically can increase local interest and commitment and spur private investments. We can apply an increased focus in providing safe routes to school for our students not only to promote safety but to provide an avenue to encourage our youth to be more physically active.

2. How would you foster cooperation between the City Council and Mayor?

Bottom line this is in the hands of the voters. I am proud to be among a very competitive field of candidates that have the ability to establish a positive and productive relationship among the

executive and legislative branches. It is imperative that we choose the right candidates that have a proven professional background to facilitate a better sense of cooperation.

One of the unique aspects in serving on the council is the diverse backgrounds and perspective that each councilperson brings to the table. Every person is not going to agree on every issue; however, the key to success is a mindset of objectivity and doing what is in the best interest of the citizens. We can disagree with each other; however, in doing so we must be civil in order to gain and keep the respect and trust of the citizens.

We are in the era of social media. Everything that we say and do these days can be broadcasted for all of the world to see. This can have a very positive reach but it can also bring about much scrutiny and negativity. We can use social media to our advantage by embracing a sense of pride and willingness to work together to achieve success.

It is also of importance to work with and not against our Hancock county board of supervisors. I am a strong proponent in reaching out to fellow local leaders to gather as much insight to make the most informed and educated decisions. Bay Saint Louis and Hancock County will only be successful if we encourage a strong and productive working relationship as city and county leaders.

3. What measures would you support to increase the city's revenue?

Bay Saint Louis has many great things going for us. We have very unique existing assets that have a great opportunity to support growth and development. We must continue to support local entrepreneurs and small businesses. Small business growth not only supports a diverse economy but also provides more services that have the ability to attract industrial employers. We all know that downtown is the front door to our city; however, we also need to think outside this area to attract larger industry. The downtown area appeals to a great niche but I also think there is much room to expand and to revitalize areas near highway 90.

Nobody is more thrilled than me to see the residential development and growth up and down the streets of Bay Saint Louis. Many of these homes are being built as secondary homes and that is wonderful as it is not only revitalizing our area but it is bringing up property value for those around them.

This is also making it more difficult for locals to find affordable homes and to rear a family. I say this because my wife and I experienced this very thing years ago when we finished college

and set out to begin our careers her in the Bay. Any young family will tell you it is not easy to both live and work in the Bay. We were fortunate to find careers close enough to Bay Saint Louis while fulfilling our dream of raising our family here. So how can we appeal to young families relocating or starting their careers in Bay Saint Louis? We start by placing a greater emphasis on the quality of schools and providing amenities geared toward the youth. Young families and professionals will be more than willing to live in Bay Saint Louis and commute if they know their children have access to quality education and amenities that will keep their children involved. We need to build on the momentum we have going in recent additions of a new sports complex, harbor and fishing pier and splash pad. We still have work to do in providing safer routes to school for our children. Federal money is out there. We need to have leaders who are determined in obtaining this money and will not settle for anything less. We need to invest in our city by investing in our youth and encouraging our fellow citizens that grew up here to COME back and write a new chapter for the Bay generation.

4. List three ways you would foster support of and communication with the city's appointed commissions (Planning and Zoning, Harbor and Historic Preservation).

Planning and Zoning, Harbor Commission and Historic Preservation are all integral commissions dedicated in making Bay Saint Louis successful. By working together and not against each other this will only solidify the success we have. The key to success is open and objective communication and relying on the expertise of all entities in making the most prudent and fair decisions. We achieve success by appointing people to these groups that do not have alternative agendas and are striving for the goal of cultivating a better Bay St Louis.

5. What are your ideas for preserving our community's unique character while supporting residential and business growth?

There is no denying that downtown Bay Saint Louis is the heartbeat of our town. I grew up in the downtown area and there is nobody more proud than me to see this area prosper. The downtown area has so many unique opportunities for dining, shopping and lodging that truly do set us apart from every other city on the coast. I want to see the continued growth and success of downtown and believe this is vital for the success of our town but I think it is also time we shape our focus to another vital area.

With that being said let us not neglect our focus on another major artery of the town and that is the area along Highway 90. I think it is safe to say many of our visitors come from the Louisiana area. And what is the first impression these visitors get when they cross over to the Bay Saint Louis city line, abandoned businesses and buildings. I believe we have a great niche in appealing to those visitors who want a quaint small town atmosphere. However, I believe we are only capturing a small piece of the pie by missing out on another market of visitors such as young families that attend local sporting events or festivals. We have been fortunate enough to host many great events such as the Dixie World Series and multiple festivals but we are losing out on revenue growth by not having an affordable family friendly hotel. We will soon be competing against a Hampton Inn across the bridge so we must figure out a solution to keep our visitors in town which will in turn increase revenue from dining and shopping.

Bottom line is we have a great opportunity to attract investors to Bay Saint Louis. Look at similar towns along the coast such as Pass Christian and Ocean Springs that are bringing investors into the area. We must make the process as easy and seamless as possible for those businesses wanting to invest in our future.

6. What actions can the city take now to maximize benefits when it becomes a stop on the future Amtrak route?

I think this can be an economic game changer for Bay Saint Louis. Senator Cochran and Senator Wicker alongside Amtrak are committed to making this a successful opportunity. Bay Saint Louis and Hancock County have already invested and matched a grant which will make capital improvements to the platform and station. The good news is that our station is generally in good condition which puts us ahead of the curve compared to other cities.

Keep in mind that Louis Armstrong airport is in the midst of offering direct flights from Paris and London. With New Orleans and Bay Saint Louis being on the same route we need to embrace and capitalize on this opportunity to show the world the uniqueness that we have to offer. I envision fundraising events or festivals that bring commuters from New Orleans to stay in our bed and breakfasts and enjoy local shopping and dining. We can use our current trolley system to pick up weekenders directly from the station and bring them on a tour of the city. This can be as successful as we want it to be. We must

have the support of our local leaders and most importantly the citizens of Bay Saint Louis.

7. Should the city provide financial support to economic development organizations like the Hancock Chamber and Hancock County Tourism? Support your answer.

First off let me say the Hancock Chamber and Hancock County Tourism provide a great service not just for Bay Saint Louis but all of Hancock County. The Hancock Chamber of Commerce does amazing services in supporting economic and small business growth. In light of funding doubts for Hancock County Tourism I am a proponent of doing what it takes in finding a solution. But let me say this, the solution has to be more than simply pledging or giving tax dollars away. We need a more long term and sustainable fix. I will use the analogy in answering this question by relating it to personal finances. First and foremost my bills must be paid. If I am struggling to pay my home and car mortgage, my water bill, cell phone bill, cable bill the list goes on then I am not in a position to donate money to any organization no matter how great the cause is. The same principle applies to the city.

If we are struggling or forced to borrow money in order to meet payroll or pay our bills we are not in a financial position to allocate money to organizations. The late congressman Daniel Boone said it best when he said “it is not our money to give away.” When these decisions are made it is the responsibility of the elected official to gather feedback from their constituents to make the most prudent decision with taxpayer’s dollars. The main duty of a councilperson is to insure the city is working in the confines of its set budget. If this goal is not met they are held personally liable for the expenditure variance plus some. The answer to this question is simple, when and only when, the city is in a financial position to support organizations with taxpayer’s dollars we must make the most informed decision based on the input of the citizens that are being represented. I do believe both of these organizations are important in the continued growth of Bay Saint Louis but I also believe we must place ourselves in sound financial status before we can give our tax dollars to any organization. I am a strong proponent in working with these organizations and doing what it takes in achieving success but doing so in the most fiscally responsible manner.

8. What importance do you place on proposed community amenities such as a swimming pool, additional bicycle paths and dog parks?

I may have a personal bias towards the idea of promoting safe walking routes due to my earlier running days when I could be seen running and most certainly dodging cars throughout the streets. I can honestly say we have come a long way since then in promoting safer walking paths

around town but we still have many areas within the city that would benefit from safer walking paths. My concern shifts as to not one that concerns me but rather my children and the children of Bay Saint Louis. We must continue in establishing safe walking routes for students. It is imperative that we advocate for walking friendly areas especially in highly residential school zone areas. Bay Saint Louis needs to work closely with agencies such as Gulf Regional Planning Commission (GRPC) to develop and fund safer transportation methods such as sidewalks, bike paths and streets. Federal grant money is out there for safe routes to school we just need to have a continued and emphasized focus in doing what it takes in obtaining this money.

I also believe we can utilize areas already established and convert them into serving a better functional area. In order to draw young families wanting to rear their children here we need to make a concerted effort in improvements such as the city tennis courts and Larroux park in the Cedar Point area. As we all know recent discussion concerning transforming Larroux park into a dog park is underway. We need to determine the most financially prudent decision in either revamping the play area for children or allocating a portion of the park into a dog park. Let us not forget this area was given to us by the Larroux family for a safe area for children. I can attest as a recent park goer with my children that this park is in great need of repair and is honestly not safe for children to utilize. By converting this park into a pet friendly area we have a great opportunity to appeal to not only local pet owners but also residents from visiting towns to get them into our wonderful city. These type of amenities are what visitors are looking for in a town that I believe will set us apart from other towns. Many details need to be considered prior to implementing any change but we need to make these decisions with an open mind of what is in the best interest of the citizens.

Let's discuss the idea of a city pool. I love this idea but we need to think long and hard about this investment. First, the initial cost to start this is exponential but we can look into grant money to help. Secondly, the main goal is to attract families who do not have the financial means or access to a swimming pool. Any city pool comes with fees or dues from those using it so how do we propose enforcing this if families cannot afford to pay the fees. The fees help offset the high maintenance fees and liability factors in hiring supervision. I am all ears for solutions in making this a true reality; however, we must make a decision that is sustainable by the city throughout both good and bad financial times. The last thing I want to see is making the huge financial investment in obtaining a city pool and not being able to financially sustain these efforts and risk the possibility of a dormant or unused pool. At this point in time, the city has enough difficulty maintaining landscaping and parks so we need to truly strategize how maintaining a city pool is a feasible feat.

Other candidates will advocate we need a city pool, hands down. These are very easy words to say when campaigning. We need leaders who are open to these amenities but astute to the realities and limitations of the city. Real leaders can figure out a way in making these ideas a reality without increasing the financial burden on the backs of the taxpayers. I am open to the possibility of a pool but let's figure out a tangible plan in making this a viable and sustainable option.

9. What is your position on the possibility of the Hancock County Sheriff's Department managing the BSL Police Department. State the advantages and/or disadvantages you foresee.

This is not a new concept. Many cities around the country have arrangements such as this. With that being said, I do not think this arrangement would work for Bay Saint Louis. I am one that will be the first to admit I will check my pride at the door if I am not an expert in a topic area and ask the experts in that field. I am not in law enforcement so I consulted with the experts. I spoke with numerous retired and active law enforcement officers and the resounding response to this question is "NO." As a nursing home administrator, one of my job duties is contract management. I ask myself two main questions when considering contracting services: is this in the best interest of the residents I serve and is it financially viable? Based on these two questions this is a contract I would not pursue.

At what point do we value safety over the potential to save money. I am well aware of the proposed amount of dollars this could save taxpayers. I am also aware of the fact that numbers can be construed on paper to give a favorable result. I have a difficult time believing outsourcing these services could save the proposed hundreds of thousands of dollars.

The last time I checked we are more than 30% the national crime average per capita. This means our officers are doing their job in keeping us safe. I think our focus needs to be on how we can both recruit and retain quality law enforcement. We need to put an increased effort as city leaders in supporting training and recruitment in filling our current police vacancies. I understand the constraints we have with the pay scale for our officers compared to other areas. We need to figure out how we can offset the pay scale by offering other advantages to insure we are putting the amount of officers needed to protect our streets and equally important keeping our officers safe.

10. The number of golf carts on city streets continues to grow. How should golf cart use be regulated?

We must propose regulations on golf cart usage. This begins with advocating the importance in regulation with our state representatives and state leaders. Senator Moran advocated for regulation of golf carts and was able to pass the bill in the Senate; however, the Bill died in the House committee. We must continue to communicate with our local and state representatives in stressing the importance of this safety issue otherwise we will have no support at the city level. Just a few months back I was taking a walk with my family. Fortunately we were paying attention to a golf cart coming our way. This young lady who was clearly not old enough to even have a driver's license was driving a golf cart. She was looking straight down at her phone with no awareness of pedestrians or traffic around her. Fortunately, we were able to get out of her way but it could have been much worse. I share this story because what will it take for us to recognize the dire need in regulating golf carts in the city for the safety of all. We need support by our city and state leaders in adopting specific guidelines for golf cart use before an injury occurs.

I propose the following in an ordinance governing golf cart use on a public roadway:

- Be issued a permit for the golf cart use by the local government
- Display a sticker or permit that identifies the golf cart is allowed to be operated on a specific roadway by the local government
- Be inspected by a certified inspector to insure the golf cart complies with the basic safety requirement on an annual basis
- The operator of the golf cart has a valid driver's license
- The operator of the golf cart does not cross a roadway at an intersection where the roadway being crossed has a posted speed limit of more than thirty-five miles per hour
- The golf cart is being operated between sunrise and sunset

11. As the city grows do you think it should consider changing its present form of government? Explain your answer. Note: The page on our Serve BSL website contains information and resources that might be helpful in answering this question.

The main disadvantage that presents itself in our current strong mayor-council form of government is conflict and disagreement between the mayor and council. As in any business model we are only as strong as the staff that we surround ourselves with. As a nursing home administrator I must have complete faith in the abilities of my managers and team members. I

Kyle Lewis
4th Ward Council Candidate

9 of 9

must give them the autonomy to succeed and allow them to make decisions but also be in the complete know of what is going on around me. The true sign of a leader is to give all of the credit to your staff when things go right and take the full blame when things go wrong. Our current form of government can be successful by electing the right leaders that hold a strong sense of accountability and integrity in doing the job they were chosen for. The formula is simple, elect a mayor with strong administrative and management experience and allow that person to lead the day-to-day operations of the city. Allow the city council to focus on policy and budgetary needs while working in congruence with an objective mindset and we WILL be successful.

Please vote on May 2 for Republican candidate, Kyle Lewis. I would appreciate any opportunity in hearing from you so please call me anytime, 228-342-0023.