

# ★ Cleveland Town Board ★

Choose three

## On the issues...

What would be your top priorities if elected to the board?

What is the greatest challenge facing the town?

Why should the residents of Cleveland vote for you?

### "John" Osborne Brown



**Challenger**  
**Address:** 100 Neal Moore St.  
**Age:** 46  
**Background:** First-time candidate. Retired as Army lieutenant colonel. Now works as senior Army JROTC instructor at West Forsyth High School in Clemmons. Member of Cleveland First Baptist Church, where he serves as deacon and youth leader. Participates in World Changers missions.

"Based on the economy that we have today, my top priority would be trying to keep taxes low and still provide the same quality of services that the citizens of Cleveland currently have such as water, sewer, infrastructure and that type of thing."

"The biggest challenge is trying to keep taxes low and not burden the citizens of Cleveland anymore because they're strapped just like anybody else in the economy that we're currently facing ... The economy right now is very slow with people losing their jobs and things of that nature. It's just a very difficult time."

"I think that I bring a vast amount of experience having in various leadership positions in the U.S. Army. I have worked for the Corps of Engineers that deals with both the government and public with the type of construction that they perform. I worked for the Corps of Engineers in Little Rock, Ark., as a deputy commander ... I think I bring a lot of expertise from my military background that would help me be able to serve the citizens of Cleveland very well."

### "Danny" Michael Gabriel



**Incumbent**  
**Address:** 255 Bear Poplar Road  
**Age:** 53  
**Background:** Was first appointed to board in 1994, filling the unexpired term of Jeff Turman. Running for his fourth elected term. Works at Performance Fibers as machine operator. Serves on the Cleveland Volunteer Fire Department, has been on the board of directors for eight years.

"We have started doing some community activities with our festivals and everything, but we still need more people to get involved so somehow I need to get that across ... We also want to make sure that the town keeps its water resources independent and not have to be giving it out to anybody else to outsource it."

"Revenue. With the economy like it is, I think we have not seen the worst yet. I think the state will still not have its budget (balanced) by next year, and I'm thinking it's going to hit us harder next year as they don't get the funds back in. Having to maintain our low tax rate and still being able to provide the services, that's always going to be a challenge."

"I think I do a very good job of trying to represent everyone in Cleveland. I know in the past, I've been criticized for not doing some things in certain situations, but I felt that it did not benefit everybody or it put a burden on other citizens just to satisfy one person or group, and I'm just not going to do that. I'm there for everybody. That's just the way it should be."

### Patrick "Pat" Trent Phifer



**Incumbent**  
**Address:** 110 W. Cemetery St.  
**Age:** 46  
**Background:** First appointed to board in 2000 to fill unexpired term of Craig Myers. Running for fifth term. Co-owner of 4-R Recycling. Member of Salem Lutheran Church, where he serves on board of directors. On Rowan County Relay for Life Committee. Volunteers for West Rowan Booster Club.

"I think our infrastructure as far as ... finishing up what we've started. Everything as far as water and sewer has been redone. We'll probably have to go back and redo our sewer system because it's been at capacity for a while. And we have to make sure we keep our police and fire departments going ... Our tax base is pretty stable ... We provide a tremendous amount of services for the tax rate we have. We're in very, very good shape for a small town."

"Right now, I think to not control growth, but to be able to plan for any growth that's in the future because anything else that comes along, we will have to have the water. I think we're fine on that ... We will have to be able to supply some sort of sewer and wastewater treatment for it ... We have to do our planning for 30 years from now. We can't look at next week."

"I have more experience than anybody on there. I don't have any family ties or anything like that to the board. It's just me. I think our board has worked well together to keep the tax rate down. We have people fussing about it going up (2 cents last year from 19 to 21 cents), but goodness gracious, in 1938, it was 18 cents on the \$100 then. Now basically 70 years later, it hasn't gone up tremendously. We try to be good stewards of our money."

### "Travis" Eugene Summitt



**Challenger**  
**Address:** 105 Smith St.  
**Age:** 35  
**Background:** In his second bid for the board. Employed as offline mechanic for Freightliner. Served as Cleveland Volunteer firefighter for six years and is now on the department's board of directors. Attends St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Mount Ulla.

"With the completion of Highway 70, this is going to be a hot spot ... to try to attract businesses that are attractive for the people and the town ... I really do think growth is going to start coming to this area because we can offer water and sewer and plus, we're so close to the interstates. We're right dead in the middle of 85 and 77."

"Just trying to keep the balance in between the small-town atmosphere where you would like to raise your kids and small town businesses and everything ... We just don't want to overdo it as far as the industrial-type stuff, but just try to stay small and have the small-time feel but also grow at the same time. We have already got a land use plan in place, so just continuing with that."

"I think a younger perspective would benefit Cleveland along with older people. I've always been interested in local government ... I've been on the zoning and planning board of Cleveland for the past five years ... I've lived in Cleveland all my life, and I've been involved with community service for Cleveland for over 21 years ... One of the biggest things, I didn't just come out of the woodwork. I've been involved."

### Leonard Maxwell "Max" West



**Challenger**  
**Address:** 11110 Statesville Blvd.  
**Age:** 58  
**Background:** Retired in 1994 as infantry officer and finance officer for the Army. Works for Hershey Meters as assembler. Attends Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Salisbury.

"My top priority would be to be a fiscal conservative and to look for ways to reduce costs and be a responsible manager of funds ... I think the town ought to be run like a household budget. People have to tighten their belts during hard times, and I think the town should, too. One of my reasons for running was the 2-cent tax increase. I don't see why it was necessary to have a tax increase when 300 percent of the budget is already in reserve."

"The biggest challenge facing Cleveland is keeping a small town atmosphere if and when industrialization comes from the widening of Highway 70. I really don't want to see much change. I think change should be gradual, and it should come slowly."

"I have a background in finance, and I have the leadership experience from the time I served in the military ... I not only worked with the military, approximately two-thirds of the people in my office were civilians. I was a deputy finance officer in the 82nd Airborne Division. I was the dispersing officer in Korea, dispersing approximately \$100 million a year, and I was the defense accounting officer in Fort Dix, N.J., where there was a \$200 million account."

### William "Preston" Young



**Challenger**  
**Address:** 505 Mimosa St.  
**Age:** 23  
**Background:** First-time candidate. Works as licensed electrician. Member of Morning Star Baptist Church, where he is a deacon, Sunday school teacher and serves in the church's rest home ministries.

"To vote on things that are necessary for the town and leave that which is nice to the citizens ... I just believe government should help provide that which is necessary. That's what tax dollars should be used for ... but things that are nice or to benefit special interest groups, to me, that should be funded by individuals in the community. I would even be willing to donate to such things, but I do not appreciate the fact that taxes are being used."

"Probably special interests. The fact that there are some things that people use for their own ideas and benefits ... whether it be beautification ... The nicest vehicles are government vehicles, the nicest of jobs are government jobs ... When everybody else is cutting back, the government is still spending ... It goes back to the principle of taxes is to provide that which is necessary and not to provide the niceties of life."

"I don't have a political agenda of trying to promote myself. If people share my same ideas, I'm willing to be that candidate to stand up for that which I believe is right."