

Candidate Endorsement Criteria

by Ken Larsen, last updated: 10:18 AM, November 24, 2019

Attribute/want	Weight	Explanation
Comply with the Orange County Mission Statement	MUST	<p>Orange County exists to provide governmental services requested by our Residents or mandated by the State of North Carolina.</p> <p>To provide these quality services efficiently, we must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve the Residents of Orange County – Our Residents Come First • Depend on the energy, skills, and of all of our employees and volunteers. • Treat all of our Residents and all of our Employees with fairness, respect, and understanding.
Serve your constituents	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willness to reach out to and support your constituents. • Willing to use data as a guide in the decision making process. • Knowledgeable about decision analysis methodology such as Kepner-Tregoe • Commitment to bringing voices of under-served communities to the table. • Transparency • Commitment to ethical behavior that would avoid even the appearance of improper behavior • Willing to listen to all stakeholders • Ability to clearly communicate reasons for unpopular decisions • Not obligated to special interest groups. • “Unbiased” is impossible to find. Everyone has biases. It’s a matter finding someone who has the fewest/least harmful. • Is open-minded and will change their stance on an issue if the preponderance of data indicates that they were wrong.
Experience	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience could include serving on any board, community, or religious organization where management and fiscal decisions were some of the responsibilities. • Has no history of voting for or endorsing harmful projects <p>The most harmful recent project was DOLRT (Light Rail). It wasted \$ 159M of taxpayer money. The 2014 Ephesus-Fordham project is another example. Any candidate who fell in this category would score negative in my rating of them.</p>
Knowledge of issues	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the County’s key issues, what the priority of each is, and a plan to address each. • Compatibility with Ken’s list of the same <p>(Schools, Flooding, traffic, Affordable Housing, Climate change, etc.)</p>

Attribute/want	Weight	Explanation
Sustainability	4	<p>Committed to policies that protect the future of Orange County.</p> <p>Has a “Ken Larsen perspective” on handling growth:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Our region is already too populated. (too much traffic and flooding) 2. Local governments should cease incentivizing companies to move here. The threshold was reached when flooding and gentrification began. 3. If we grow much more, we should impose impact fees on any company which wishes to move here. [NC laws currently prohibit this, but those laws need to be overturned.] <p>Roseanne TV scene from 1992</p>
Has plenty of time, energy, money, and supporters	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Running for public office is enormously time consuming and expensive • A lot of backers are needed. • Compensation for the elected office pays barely above what can be made working at McDonalds. <p>(Ken’s opinion: I’d give a high score to an affluent retired person who has lots of family and friends nearby.)</p>
Good public servant skills	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Williness to explore reasons behind dissenting views. • Willingness to ask the tough questions • Willingness to consider the world outside of Chapel Hill ... even outside the U.S. to search for optimal solutions. • Seeing small issues in context of overall town policy and trends. • Inclination to explore how other towns (both in the U.S. and outside) address complicated issues. • Effective collaborator: Works with colleagues and citizens effectively. • Follow through: Commitment to making steady progress toward community goals through effective collaboration and execution. • Responsive to colleagues and citizen requests for help. • Makes educated decisions based on facts. • Optimistic outlook • Regarded by others as a person of integrity and trustworthy. • Willing to listen • Good public speaker • Gregarious • Diplomatic
Helps diversify the board	0	<p>“Good leadership requires you to surround yourself with people of diverse perspectives who can disagree with you without fear of retaliation.” –Doris Kearns Goodwin</p> <p>Ken: The key word is “perspectives”. That’s not the quite the same as diverseness based on traditional stereotypes.</p>

I've set this table up as the first step in a "Kepner-Tregoe-like Decision Analysis" for evaluating candidates. A brief explanation of what Kepner-Tregoe is can be found on [this page](#).

Request of reviewers: Column 2 is “Weight”. It’s the word MUST or a number between 1 and 10.

The word “MUST” means that the criteria is obligatory. If a prospective candidate is not willing to comply with that criteria, then they must be immediately excluded from being endorsed.

A weight expressed as a 1-10 number identifies the importance of the criteria. Let me know if you think any of my numbers should be changed.

This table currently has too many criteria. I'd like to reduce the number to five or six and simplify the wording.

Next Steps

After consensus has been reached on the candidate criteria table, the next steps are:

1. Identify possible candidates.
2. Evaluate each candidate against each criterion. Score each on a scale of -10 to +10. Minus numbers should only be used if the candidate's attribute is negative ... e.g. supporting DOLRT which would have had a deleterious effect on taxpayers.
3. Do the math, and score each candidate. Highest score is your best candidate.