

## ELECTIONS 2012

# Keys to the Candidates: Monroe County Commissioner, District 2

League of Women Voters of Bloomington-Monroe County  
October 4, 2012

**Julie Thomas, D**

**Nelson Shaffer, R**

### What are your qualifications for the office you are seeking?

**THOMAS:** County Councilor since 2009 (President 2011); Plan Commissioner since 2009; host monthly Residents' Breakfast meetings; small business owner and educator; resident since 1993. See [juliethomas.us](http://juliethomas.us).

**SHAFFER:** Geologist with 40 years of research experience at IU, former Executive Director of the Indiana Academy of Science, officer of scientific and civic groups.

### Where can county government collaborate with Bloomington city government for more efficient service?

**THOMAS:** City and county government have already established a successful cooperative relationship in the provision of services — for example, central emergency dispatch, animal control, and fueling fleet vehicles. I will investigate additional ways to reduce costs and improve efficiencies in providing these services. I will endeavor to ensure that the county, city and Indiana University have a coordinated emergency management plan. Additionally, I will work with city officials to identify other areas where city and county collaboration can improve services and save taxpayer dollars. An example of potential city-county collaboration for cost reduction is in the provision of parks services.

**SHAFFER:** The county and city could work together to promote job growth by attracting new businesses, encourage expansion of existing ones, support more Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts and a functioning technology park. They should work together to speed permitting, to lessen restrictions that cause impediments to business growth, and make clear, fixed technical requirements for those businesses. The two could collaborate to attract tourists, convention goers, etc. They can have more combined purchasing, and intergovernmental agreements (for example, the 2-mile fringe). Evening and weekend meetings should be instituted and an expanded transit system promoted.

### What two/three major issues are facing county government and how would you address them?

**THOMAS:** The most significant issue is declining tax revenues. One way to address this is to improve efficiencies in use of human resources by reorganizing county government. This must be an inclusive process that relies upon the knowledge and experience of our county employees. We can also increase efficiencies in our use of county buildings and vehicles, to help reduce costs. A third important issue is drafting new land use ordinances based upon the county's new comprehensive plan. My tenure on the Plan Commission has provided me with the experience to make sound and informed decisions in this area.

**SHAFFER:** The county should work to increase opportunities for good jobs to help keep creative young people here with less restrictive planning and permitting processes. There should be more responsible business practices regarding spending with more oversight and also a diversity of views for committee appointments with more citizen input and professional advice. The county can work to attract more visitors (and potential investors) by promoting tourism. A limestone heritage park with a venue for outdoor concerts could help with this. Monroe County could partner with surrounding counties, cities, IU, Crane and nonprofits to promote tourism and efficiency of operations.

# Keys to the Candidates: Monroe County Commissioner, District 3

League of Women Voters of Bloomington-Monroe County  
October 4, 2012

**Iris Kiesling, D**

**John Newlin, R**

**David W. Nakarado, L**

## **What are your qualifications for the office you are seeking?**

**KIESLING:** Monroe County Commissioner. Bloomington City Council member. Monroe County Solid Waste Management District Board member. Bloomington Economic Development Corporation Board member.

**NEWLIN:** I served on the plan commission for 8 years, I am a small business owner and been in management for 40 years. I know what it takes to be successful.

**NAKARADO:** Experienced in business, twenty years working within organizations required to make a profit, eight years self employed/understanding of regulations and requirements for small businesses.

## **Where can county government collaborate with Bloomington city government for more efficient service?**

**KIESLING:** Monroe County and the City of Bloomington already collaborate on many services. For example, the Monroe County Building Department issues building permits and does inspections throughout the county and the city. The Monroe County Health Department inspects restaurants, on-site sewage systems, and pools throughout the county and the city. In addition, the county and the city have interlocal agreements for animal control, purchase of fuel for our vehicles, and for the 911 Unified Dispatch Center. Additional areas of cooperation in the future may include agreements for economic development, planning and zoning, public transit, I-69 issues, homelessness, and justice-related initiatives.

**NEWLIN:** In all areas. It is up to the county and the city to decide how much time a effort will be used along with give and take. However there is a large amount of collaborating now. Possibly to much. It looks like to me that the two governments city and county have collaborated so much that they become bigger than the people of monroe county. The government works for the people not the people for the government.

**NAKARADO:** Health and safety issues have many areas of overlap. The cost to provide public safety and judicial services for Monroe County requires tax dollars from all residents. Decisions to alter services within the city/county does affect both budgets directly or indirectly. County tax payer dollars spent at the Judicial Center is an example of how changes in policy affect other areas of county and city government. As Commissioner I will encourage combined goal oriented decision making and not just independent budget decisions.

## **What two/three major issues are facing county government and how would you address them?**

**KIESLING:** The immediate need in Monroe County is to encourage job creation through entrepreneurship and local business growth. Using well-crafted incentives for business investments will help attract and retain industries and jobs. We can continue to help prepare citizens for the changing job market through education and training. We must create appropriate ordinances to accompany the Comprehensive Plan, and I propose hiring a consultant to help staff with this large undertaking. Significant related issues exist, including the potential development of I-69, which will require funding the construction of frontage and connector roads and other public sector improvements in the I-69 Corridor.

**NEWLIN:** Theft and Fraud-It is the commissioners responsibility to over see all branches of government if they were looking at each departments spending and receipts and a whistle blower protection policy in place it would never got as far as it did. Property rights-government has no business dictating what you can and can not do with your land. Planning and zoning has to be amended then work with property owners, builders, realtors, and engineers for sensible planning. Smaller government-cut the fat

**NAKARADO:** Increases in energy cost, salaries and the health care will make the task of creating practical budgets priority. Dreams and wishes of expanded government services may need to wait for sunnier days, right now rainy day funds must not be raided to expand government. Interstate 69 is going to be built, my opponent is still saying "if and when" (as recent as 9/11/12). Monroe County government officials need to engage now and make the building of this road a positive addition to our infrastructure and not let design mistakes happen during construction, because we failed to participate.