County Board of Supervisors & City Council Candidate Responses to JMRL Survey

For the November 7, 2017 Election
ALBEMARLE COUNTY

Responses received from:

Ned Gallaway
John C. Lowry
Diantha McKeel
Liz Palmer
Candidate Ned Gallaway

Question 1: What is your view of the importance of library services to our community, and how would you rate library services in your list of funding priorities?

Public library services are integral to the county’s ability to live up to one of its four core values – learning. The core value defined - the county “encourages and supports lifelong learning and personal and professional growth.” The libraries are where our citizens – citizens of all ages and for variety of purpose – go to learn and to grow. I have always advocated and supported public education. My background of support was focused primarily on K-12 education. My concept of public education is not boxed in by the K-12 experience. Public education encompasses all ages and providing educational access to those not served by K-12 is a fundamental purpose of local government. Public education will be one of my budget priorities.

Question 2: Do you have a library card?

Yes.

Question 3: How often do you and your family use JMRL locally or regionally?

At least once per week.

Question 4: Please describe the extent of your personal experience with and knowledge of the JMRL system and explain what you will do to enhance the JMRL services provided to more than 1.2 million visitors annually.

The Northside Library is a weekly destination for my family. Checking out books is the primary purpose of our visits. The library is also where one of my children meets with their tutor. I have attended a variety of meetings in the different libraries over the years as it related to my public and community service. Prior to the budget process, I will look to the JMRL Board and JMRL staff for guidance on enhancements that are needed in our library system.

Jurisdiction-Related Question: Almost 60 percent of visitors to Charlottesville libraries are Albemarle County residents. A recent C-Ville Weekly article stated, “It’s clear that both Charlottesville branches need pretty serious upgrades as well. The Downtown Charlottesville library is sort of musty, has old furniture, old carpeting, inadequate parking.” Would you support an upgrade to Central Library if the costs could be shared with the City, the State, and the Friends of the Library?

Generally, yes - the details of the cost sharing will be the deciding factor in providing my support.
Candidate John C. Lowry

**Question 1:** What is your view of the importance of library services to our community, and how would you rate library services in your list of funding priorities?

*Libraries were important to Benjamin Franklin and they are important today. I go to the library, sometimes Alderman, every day. I do not want to go back to the recession days of friction. I do want funding for good service, no new locations and supporting to adapting to today’s technical needs.*

**Question 2:** Do you have a library card?

Yes.

**Question 3:** How often do you and your family use JMRL locally or regionally?

*Four of five family members use JMRL a lot.*

**Question 4:** Please describe the extent of your personal experience with and knowledge of the JMRL system and explain what you will do to enhance the JMRL services provided to more than 1.2 million visitors annually.

*Staff is stable and service is superior. Technology is biggest challenge. Library is adapting but technology will continue to be biggest challenge. Serving those who need technology.*

**Jurisdiction-Related Question:** Almost 60 percent of visitors to Charlottesville libraries are Albemarle County residents. A recent C-Ville Weekly article stated, “It’s clear that both Charlottesville branches need pretty serious upgrades as well. The Downtown Charlottesville library is sort of musty, has old furniture, old carpeting, inadequate parking.” Would you support an upgrade to Central Library if the costs could be shared with the City, the State, and the Friends of the Library?

*I am in the county but I do use the Downtown library regularly.*
Candidate Diantha McKeel (Incumbent)

Question 1: What is your view of the importance of library services to our community, and how would you rate library services in your list of funding priorities?

One of Albemarle County’s core values has been a commitment to lifelong learning and a vision of quality facilities meeting community needs. Our community library services are the lynchpin making these commitments possible and require adequate funding. I include JMRL on a list of funding priorities. Virginia’s failure to fund its own formula for library support needs to be a topic with the public as well as with our legislators.

Question 2: Do you have a library card?

No.

Question 3: How often do you and your family use JMRL locally or regionally?

I used the library and book-mobile often as a mother with children at home. I continue to strongly support and value that opportunity, not only for families, but for all residents.

Question 4: Please describe the extent of your personal experience with and knowledge of the JMRL system and explain what you will do to enhance the JMRL services provided to more than 1.2 million visitors annually.

It is important for communities to have public spaces available for a range of community events. During my visits to the JMRL facilities I have found them to be welcoming and used by a wide variety of residents. I am especially pleased with the opening of the Northside Library because parking downtown can present a barrier at times for AC residents. As a supervisor I depend on the JMRL Board of Trustees to determine long range planning and present to the BOS the necessary budgetary recommendations. I have always supported their recommendations, finding them to be data driven and well informed.

Jurisdiction-Related Question: Almost 60 percent of visitors to Charlottesville libraries are Albemarle County residents. A recent C-Ville Weekly article stated, “It’s clear that both Charlottesville branches need pretty serious upgrades as well. The Downtown Charlottesville library is sort of musty, has old furniture, old carpeting, inadequate parking.” Would you support an upgrade to Central Library if the costs could be shared with the City, the State, and the Friends of the Library?

JMRL system is an excellent example of how Charlottesville, Albemarle and the private and/or non-profit sector should partner to maintain facilities that are important to our community. This also provides opportunities to cost share the tax burden between localities and organizations. I believe JMRL is an appropriate and high priority use of limited tax dollars and serves to improve the quality of life for all residents.
Question 1: What is your view of the importance of library services to our community, and how would you rate library services in your list of funding priorities?

Very important. Libraries have become vital community spaces in our modern society offering programs and assistance to our heterogeneous population on a variety of topics from health to legal issues. Libraries offer much needed community meetings spaces, internet access, and in some areas have taken the place of the public square. With respect to my list of funding priorities, I can't give a ranking. It depends on many factors, the needs and what condition the libraries are in at the time the budget is developed.

Question 2: Do you have a library card?

Yes.

Question 3: How often do you and your family use JMRL locally or regionally?

I use it rarely except to attend meetings. Meetings are probably once a month.

Question 4: Please describe the extent of your personal experience with and knowledge of the JMRL system and explain what you will do to enhance the JMRL services provided to more than 1.2 million visitors annually.

As for my experience with the libraries, I have been in the Albemarle County and downtown libraries and attended programs and meetings in them. When my children were younger we used the libraries weekly. I have also gotten books for my elderly mother and in past years taken out books on tape for trips (I have audiobooks now). As for what I will do to enhance JMRL services, I generally rely on the library board's recommendations. They know the priorities much better than I. I will certainly seriously consider the budget request coming to the board in 2018. I have supported requests from the library board over the last 3 budgets and asked for extended hours for Scottsville Library in the past.

Jurisdiction-Related Question: Almost 60 percent of visitors to Charlottesville libraries are Albemarle County residents. A recent C-Ville Weekly article stated, “It's clear that both Charlottesville branches need pretty serious upgrades as well. The Downtown Charlottesville library is sort of musty, has old furniture, old carpeting, inadequate parking.” Would you support an upgrade to Central Library if the costs could be shared with the City, the State, and the Friends of the Library?

Yes.
Responses received from:

Heather Hill
Kenneth Jackson
Amy Laufer

Responses not received from:

John Edward Hall
Paul Edward Long
Nikuyah R. Walker
Candidate Heather Hill

**Question 1:** What is your view of the importance of library services to our community, and how would you rate library services in your list of funding priorities?

*Public library services enable citizens to learn how to access information, whether it be through physical books, as it has been traditionally, or technologies. These services reduce the digital divide between those who can and cannot afford this access. They also provide outlets for members of the public, both big and small, to step away from those technologies which have become mainstream and just enjoy a good book. Providing this access to our public is a high priority as these are important services to our community. Given this priority, we must ensure these services are meeting the current needs of the community and responding to those needs as they change.*

**Question 2:** Do you have a library card?

Yes.

**Question 3:** How often do you and your family use JMRL locally or regionally?

3-5 times per month.

**Question 4:** Please describe the extent of your personal experience with and knowledge of the JMRL system and explain what you will do to enhance the JMRL services provided to more than 1.2 million visitors annually.

*I most often use the JMRL system for visits with my children (to read with them or participate in children’s programming), regular meetings for my neighborhood association and other community groups, and at times when I need quiet place to work that also has internet access. I am not a librarian but believe that the core concept of a library is to make information access equitable. The way information is accessed is rapidly changing and the library system needs to be very responsive to these changes. Having fixed programming that is not flexible in meeting the changing demands of our community will not be sustainable. We need to continually have our finger on the pulse of visitors, ensuring the JMRL system is meeting their needs and being responsive when it is not.*

**Jurisdiction-Related Question:** Two state-of-the-art library facilities opened in Albemarle County, one in Crozet and the other at Northside. A subsequent C-Ville Weekly article stated, "It’s clear that both Charlottesville branches need pretty serious upgrades as well. The Downtown Charlottesville library is sort of musty, has old furniture, old carpeting, inadequate parking." Would you support an upgrade to Central Library if the costs could be shared with the City, the State, and the Friends of the Library?

*In my own experiences at the Central library, I concur that upgrades are needed. If this is a clear priority for the community, I would absolutely support the City sharing these costs with other funding sources.*
Candidate Kenneth Jackson

**Question 1:** What is your view of the importance of library services to our community, and how would you rate library services in your list of funding priorities?

*I rate the library the same as the schools, it not only provides services but helps better educate everyone.*

**Question 2:** Do you have a library card?

Yes.

**Question 3:** How often do you and your family use JMRL locally or regionally?

*Two to three times a week.*

**Question 4:** Please describe the extent of your personal experience with and knowledge of the JMRL system and explain what you will do to enhance the JMRL services provided to more than 1.2 million visitors annually.

*My experience has always been positive and uplifting, I remember as a child listening to old Perry Como and Bing Crosby records in the old library.*

**Jurisdiction-Related Question:** Two state-of-the-art library facilities opened in Albemarle County, one in Crozet and the other at Northside. A subsequent C-Ville Weekly article stated, "It’s clear that both Charlottesville branches need pretty serious upgrades as well. The Downtown Charlottesville library is sort of musty, has old furniture, old carpeting, inadequate parking." Would you support an upgrade to Central Library if the costs could be shared with the City, the State, and the Friends of the Library?

*I would not only support this upgrade but work hard to help find and procure funding for said project.*
Candidate Amy Laufer

**Question 1:** What is your view of the importance of library services to our community, and how would you rate library services in your list of funding priorities?

_I believe library services are very important to any community. I know that the City spends roughly $1.7 million on the Jefferson Madison Regional Library, which I would hope to maintain and evaluate the needs from the library and requests by residents._

**Question 2:** Do you have a library card?

Yes.

**Question 3:** How often do you and your family use JMRL locally or regionally?

_When I first moved to Charlottesville and was a classroom teacher, I would check out books for my classroom when we entered a new subject. Then, when my children were toddlers, we went to the library every week if not daily for programs that were offered and to check out books. When my children grew older, we went to the library every Friday to get new books, movies and books on CD for our times on long car rides. My children still participate in the summer reading log. For myself, I would regularly check out the books that just needed headphones for when I walked our dog. I now regularly meet people at the new Northside location and continue to attend other meetings and check out books and CDs, not as frequently as I would like. As you can see, I have been a strong user of the library and appreciate the great resource it is for our community._

**Question 4:** Please describe the extent of your personal experience with and knowledge of the JMRL system and explain what you will do to enhance the JMRL services provided to more than 1.2 million visitors annually.

_I have described my personal use of the library. I believe better online resources would be good, I know there is an audible download, which I think could be better advertised. I would be interested to see if you do a survey, which services people are interested in increasing or what they think are areas that need more support._

**Jurisdiction-Related Question:** Two state-of-the-art library facilities opened in Albemarle County, one in Crozet and the other at Northside. A subsequent C-Ville Weekly article stated, "It's clear that both Charlottesville branches need pretty serious upgrades as well. The Downtown Charlottesville library is sort of musty, has old furniture, old carpeting, inadequate parking." Would you support an upgrade to Central Library if the costs could be shared with the City, the State, and the Friends of the Library?

Yes.
Responses received from:

Marie C. Durrer
Bill Martin

Responses not received from:

Jim F. Frydl
J. Frank Morris
Candidate Marie C. Durrer

**Question 1:** What is your view of the importance of library services to our community, and how would you rate library services in your list of funding priorities?

Very important to all citizens of Greene County.

**Question 2:** Do you have a library card?

Yes.

**Question 3:** How often do you and your family use JMRL locally or regionally?

Very little.

**Question 4:** Please describe the extent of your personal experience with and knowledge of the JMRL system and explain what you will do to enhance the JMRL services provided to more than 1.2 million visitors annually.

I have visited our Library in Greene as well as in Charlottesville, and feel we need to continue supporting the JMRL system with support and more funding for more hours and staff.

**Jurisdiction-Related Question:** Please share any suggestions you have about how the Greene County JMRL and the Greene County PVCC could partner together to better coordinate their services, hours, etc.

As I know at this point I believe they both work very well with Greene County. Both facilities are very nice and I’m so pleased to have them both in Greene County.
Question 1: What is your view of the importance of library services to our community, and how would you rate library services in your list of funding priorities?

A public library is an essential component for a community. The Greene County Library is no exception. I consider the construction of the building that holds the library – and now Piedmont Virginia Community College’s Eugene Giuseppe Center – to be one of the most forward-thinking projects that Greene County has ever implemented. I am delighted at how the library has evolved over time and I am very grateful to the many groups and individuals who have contributed time and resources to make our library in Greene a true “community hub.” I rate the provision of resources for library services to be among the highest priorities in the county budget.

Question 2: Do you have a library card?

Yes.

Question 3: How often do you and your family use JMRL locally or regionally?

I use the library from time to time but when I am at a library event I am reminded how fortunate we are to have this fine facility. I have rarely if ever used my library card to check out books but it stays front and center in my wallet. I have used the Northside Library at Albemarle Square frequently, usually to gather my thoughts and prepare something for my job in the delightfully quiet setting that it provides. My wife and I attend the Friday Film Series frequently and find it a fine use of the facility for use by the public after hours. I have benefited from Greene’s library many times for its internet service when my home service provider is not functional. I do not take this free service for granted. My heart warms when I see children's events in process as I believe bringing the community together at the library’s central location in Stanardsville is an important part of helping the Town become more of the “social hub” that many of us would like to see. Whenever I need help and assistance, the staff members are friendly, welcoming, and helpful. I admire and respect the work that Branch Manager Ginny Reese does. She has become a very important resource person for the community and may well be one of the few “essential personnel” in the county!

Question 4: Please describe the extent of your personal experience with and knowledge of the JMRL system and explain what you will do to enhance the JMRL services provided to more than 1.2 million visitors annually.

I have grown increasingly familiar with the JMRL system and have grown to become a "booster" for the JMRL branch in Stanardsville. I am a "Friend of the Library" and my wife and strongly support the Greene County Library. It’s always a struggle at budget time but with each passing year our Board has found a way to gradually increase resources to our library, one of the greatest assets in our community.
Jurisdiction-Related Question: Please share any suggestions you have about how the Greene County JMRL and the Greene County PVCC could partner together to better coordinate their services, hours, etc.

The coordination between the Greene County JMRL, PVCC, County Administration, and the Board of Supervisors is excellent.
LOUISA COUNTY

Responses received from:

Robert F. Babyok, Jr.
Fitzgerald A. Barnes

Responses not received from:

Duane A. Adams
Tommy J. Barlow
Richard A. Havasy, Sr.
Stephanie L. Koren
Candidate Robert F. Babyok, Jr.

Question 1: What is your view of the importance of library services to our community, and how would you rate library services in your list of funding priorities?

Library services have always been an essential foundation for education, research and quality of life. Extremely high only behind safety and security.

Question 2: Do you have a library card?

Yes.

Question 3: How often do you and your family use JMRL locally or regionally?

We average 7 or 8 times a month.

Question 4: Please describe the extent of your personal experience with and knowledge of the JMRL system and explain what you will do to enhance the JMRL services provided to more than 1.2 million visitors annually.

We love the large scope and depth of services going way beyond just a place to check out books. The vast assortment of CD's, DVD's, magazines, and newspapers is impressive. The use of computers, copying machines and printers plus all the classes, guest speakers and tax assistance are all very important. The facilities are always clean, comfortable and well lighted. What makes it all work is the helpful, friendly and professional staff. Help ensure the funding meets the needs to maintain and advance services in the future. Unlike what just happened with the Louisa Board of Supervisors.

Jurisdiction-Related Question: Do you support funding for the Louisa County Library to enable it to be open 48 hours per week?

Absolutely! Very embarrassing to have had hours cut recently.*

*Since this survey was completed, the Louisa County Board of Supervisors and JMRL were able to come to an agreement that prevented decreasing the number of open hours for the library.
Candidate Fitzgerald Arnette Barnes (Incumbent)

Question 1: What is your view of the importance of library services to our community, and how would you rate library services in your list of funding priorities?

I view the services as important, I would rate the services on the same tier as nonprofits.

Question 2: Do you have a library card?

Yes.

Question 3: How often do you and your family use JMRL locally or regionally?

Five or six times annually.

Question 4: Please describe the extent of your personal experience with and knowledge of the JMRL system and explain what you will do to enhance the JMRL services provided to more than 1.2 million visitors annually.

Very helpful and used a lot by citizens, especially those seeking jobs and young readers.

Jurisdiction-Related Question: Do you support funding for the Louisa County Library to enable it to be open 48 hours per week?

Yes.
NELSON COUNTY

Responses received from:

T. D. "Tommy" Harvey
Ernie Q. Reed, Jr.
Jesse Rutherford

Responses not received from:

Shelby R. Bruguiere
   Allen M. Hale
   Ray H. Miles
   Justin M. Shimp
Candidate Tommy Harvey (Incumbent)

**Question 1:** What is your view of the importance of library services to our community, and how would you rate library services in your list of funding priorities?

*I have always been a big supporter of library; as far as ranking, not sure.*

**Question 2:** Do you have a library card?

*No.*

**Question 3:** How often do you and your family use JMRL locally or regionally?

*Grandkids. Not sure how often; one's in 8th, other in 10th.*

**Question 4:** Please describe the extent of your personal experience with and knowledge of the JMRL system and explain what you will do to enhance the JMRL services provided to more than 1.2 million visitors annually.

*I am always open to requests. I talk to local board members and librarians.*

**Jurisdiction-Related Question:** The Nelson County branch of JMRL has outgrown its current facility, which was opened almost 29 years ago. In addition to an increase in the books, periodicals, and audiovisual materials available to Nelson patrons at the library, space for an adequate number of computer terminals, for children's and young adult sections, and for staff work areas are desperately needed. Would you support an upgrade and expansion of the Nelson library branch if the costs could be shared with the state and local fundraisers?

*This is a cost the board is aware of and I feel the board will be trying to support what's needed. Also a branch is needed in the Rockfish Valley.*
Question 1: What is your view of the importance of library services to our community, and how would you rate library services in your list of funding priorities?

Library services are extremely important in Nelson County and are of high priority.

Question 2: Do you have a library card?

Yes.

Question 3: How often do you and your family use JMRL locally or regionally?

About once a month.

Question 4: Please describe the extent of your personal experience with and knowledge of the JMRL system and explain what you will do to enhance the JMRL services provided to more than 1.2 million visitors annually.

The library hosts various community meetings comfortably and with excellent wifi services which is extremely important in Nelson County.

Jurisdiction-Related Question: The Nelson County branch of JMRL has outgrown its current facility, which was opened almost 29 years ago. In addition to an increase in the books, periodicals, and audiovisual materials available to Nelson patrons at the library, space for an adequate number of computer terminals, for children's and young adult sections, and for staff work areas are desperately needed. Would you support an upgrade and expansion of the Nelson library branch if the costs could be shared with the state and local fundraisers?

Absolutely!
Candidate Jesse Rutherford

**Question 1:** What is your view of the importance of library services to our community, and how would you rate library services in your list of funding priorities?

*The literacy and academic success of our kids is a major importance of mine. I would love to see a thriving community library. It is a major importance of mine that the proper funding for activities is done.*

**Question 2:** Do you have a library card?

Yes.

**Question 3:** How often do you and your family use JMRL locally or regionally?

*It has been a while. I have no idea.*

**Question 4:** Please describe the extent of your personal experience with and knowledge of the JMRL system and explain what you will do to enhance the JMRL services provided to more than 1.2 million visitors annually.

*My family has had extensive use of the library for its various resources. I was homeschooled and it was a great option for internet to do homework and also place of study. My brother’s family is also homeschooling their children and attend various events.*

**Jurisdiction-Related Question:** The Nelson County branch of JMRL has outgrown its current facility, which was opened almost 29 years ago. In addition to an increase in the books, periodicals, and audiovisual materials available to Nelson patrons at the library, space for an adequate number of computer terminals, for children’s and young adult sections, and for staff work areas are desperately needed. Would you support an upgrade and expansion of the Nelson library branch if the costs could be shared with the state and local fundraisers?

*[The candidate did not respond to this question.]*