

GREGORY GUSTEK

1. Why are you running for treasurer? I am running for re-election because I enjoy my position and I am doing important work for my hometown.

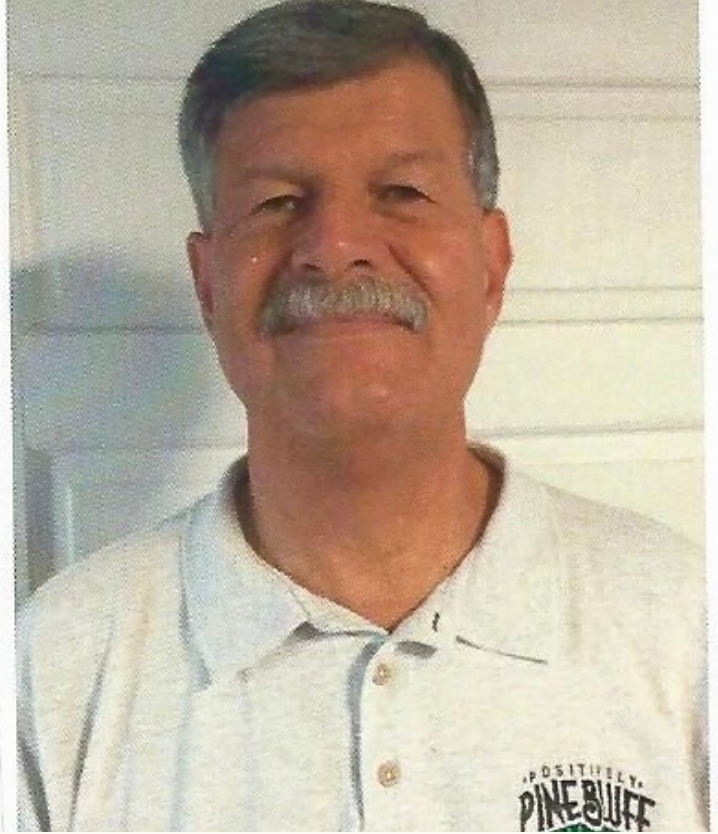
2. What is your experience in bookkeeping? Manager for Music Land, Business Manager for Jefferson Motors, General Manager for Vic Brown Motors, Director of the Pine Bluff Convention & Visitors Bureau and Executive Director of the Pine Bluff Festival Association. Every position required me to keep records, make contracts and stay within budget parameters with twenty-four years of experience as City Treasurer. In the Convention & Visitors Bureau (taxpayer's money) I was director for 14 years, prepared the budget each year, and in that time I never had to request a budget adjustment.

3. What are some of the specific steps you would take if elected? The job description for City Treasurer is determined by the State of Arkansas' State statutes, which I follow and have abided by my whole tenure. If I have an issue or concern, I meet with our City Attorney to make sure I am in compliance.

4. What will be your top three goals or initiatives as treasurer? To keep doing my 7 pages of reports that I do each month, so the Mayor and Council are aware of the city's financial status.

Continue to handle any banking issues that arise and fix them immediately.

Continue to work well with the Mayor, Council, other elected officials and Department Heads.



5. The treasurer cannot vote on ordinances but plays a vital role in the city's government. What do you believe is the most critical duty of the treasurer, and why? The Treasurer is listed as the checks and balances, and the banker. I do my monthly reports separately from the Finance Department. My reports are not even done on the city's bookkeeping system. They are done on my computer, a different system and then taken into the Finance Department and are balanced with the Internal Auditor. The great news is we balance to the penny. There is no rounding off of numbers, by my rules we must balance to the penny or we find the problem and fix it. As a Banker, if there is an issue on an account or problem, I am informed and I contact my high-ranking officers at the financial institutions to get it fixed.

6. The treasurer's office tends to be opaque to residents. How will you, as treasurer, work to make the treasurer's office more transparent and responsive to residents' concerns? The finance office, because of security is really not open to the public. The Treasurer is a position that is never really off, I am on duty all the time and the public can and has contacted me to ask questions and get answers in the past.

However, some questions cannot be answered because of security issues. If I do not know the answer I will do my best to find someone that does. My email is greggl@cityofpinebluff-ar.gov.

7. What are ways you will collaborate with other city officials to make Pine Bluff's budget process more efficient and participatory with residents? The budget process takes a lot of meetings with department heads, the mayor, and appropriate city council members. The finance director handles that which is her job as she is over all of the day-to-day operations of the finance department. I have attended meetings through the years, and have never seen a person from the public. Any committee meeting is open to the public as it is to the press.

8. What distinguishes you from other candidates? Twenty-four years of experience and have great working relations with the Mayor and City Council, Department Heads and the financial institutions, which means if we have an issue we work together and resolve it. And besides: I AM PINE BLUFF PROUD!

LORETTA WHITFIELD



1. Why are you running for treasurer? I am running for City Treasurer to restore transparency and accountability to the city's finances. I also want to continue serving the citizens of Pine Bluff by utilizing the municipal training my employment has provided me for over 30 years. I was the City Clerk for 16 years of my 34-year career.

2. What is your experience in bookkeeping? As the City Clerk, I processed financial transactions for more than 20 million dollars annually. I developed powerful skills in managing my own department's budget. I also prepared financial reports for the City's Non-uniform Retirement system.

3. What are some of the specific steps you would take if elected? If elected, I will seek to restore public trust and enhance transparency and accountability. I plan to make financial information easily accessible to the public by creating a website for all citizens to view all financial reports at their leisure.

4. What will be your top three goals or initiatives as treasurer? As City Treasurer, my goals are financial transparency, accountability, and community engagement.

5. The treasurer cannot vote on ordinances but plays a vital role in the city's government. What do you believe is the most critical duty of the treasurer, and why? The City Treasurer's most critical duty is to enhance public trust by ensuring the accuracy of the financial information provided by the city and the bank are identical.

6. The treasurer's office tends to be opaque to residents. How will you, as treasurer, work to make the treasurer's office more transparent and responsive to residents' concerns? I would make the treasurer's office more transparent and responsive to residents by making financial information easily accessible to citizens through a City Treasurer's Website, which I plan to create.

7. What are ways you will collaborate with other city officials to make Pine Bluff's budget process more efficient and participatory with residents? By law, the mayor and city council prepare the budget. However, I would work closely with the Finance Department and City Clerk's Office to monitor and ensure the numbers are accurate. I will prepare monthly reports that are filed with the city council, which will help residents have faith in their elected officials.

8. What distinguishes you from other candidates? The depth and breadth of my experience with law enforcement and municipal administration set me apart from my opponent. I worked with the Police Department in every division for 18 years. Consequently, I oppose white-collar crime and public corruption.

As the City Clerk, I worked with the Finance Department for 16 years. I oversaw monthly financial reports on the City's Non-Uniform Retirement System for more than 400 employees. I processed invoices and printed checks for all 14 departments weekly for 16 years. I managed the City Clerk's budget each year and successfully maintained clean audits from the Legislative Auditor.

