

Candidate Questionnaire:

NAME: John M Fleming  
SEAT RUNNING FOR: Charlotte County Commissioner  
DISTRICT: 2

**1. CAMPAIGN VIABILITY**

- My opponent has abandoned the core Republican philosophy of limited government and fiscal discipline.
  - Unmanaged development has led to environmental issue such as increased flooding, water quality degradation and loss of wetlands and natural habitat
  - Out of control spending has left senior citizens vulnerable. Charlotte County has the second oldest median age group in the State. 4 out of every 10 citizens live paycheck to paycheck. Without strict fiscal control more seniors will be forced to move.
- 

- My path to victory has been my ability to create a strong community coalition of senior citizens and younger working-class families to focus on affordability and role of developers in land use matters like rezoning.
- 

- \$30 - \$35,000
- 

- Burnt Store Developers Group - \$1,000
  - Private citizen - Chris DeLuca - \$1,000
  - Private citizen - Richard Pitz - \$750
- 

- Private citizen groups
  - Law enforcement groups
  - Grassroots political groups
- 

- I am the co-founder and Chairman of the largest Community Coalition in Southwest Florida. My extensive background in this area is unmatched by any other candidate in the area.
- 

- Protecting our environment, responsible growth, and Government accountability.
- 

- Use of social media, podcasts and HOA & POA town halls.
-

## 2. CORE IDEOLOGY & PRINCIPLES

- I believe every election is vulnerable due to the political nature of staffing at local voting stations.  
-----
  - What began as a protest became a riot which was fueled by political leaders who used the participants as pawns. I believe there were citizens who were targeted who did nothing than exercise their 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment rights.  
-----
  - Established Republican
- 
- American citizens come first. Prioritize those policies designed to benefit the American citizen.
  - Trump related policies dealing with how Republican's decide priorities.
  - Long standing beliefs and practices of limited government, fiscal responsibility and lower taxes.
- 
- Absolute parental responsibility in all matters. Strict interpretation of men & women, no gender reference only by sex.  
Absolute border security and arrest and removal of all illegal aliens.
- 
- Strict Accountability of government spending. Limited use of consultants and decentralized delivery of services.
- 
- State rights are paramount for local issues related to land use matters, delivery of services. Federal government can work with local law enforcement in taskforce setting for suppressing criminal activity.  
Federal government has full control over national security like border security, terrorist investigations.
- 
- No. The RPOF just endorsed a Republican candidate after a state policy saying that local party cannot. Also, they have removed local officials including Charlotte County.
- 
- 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment is absolute in all matters related to freedom of expression. 10<sup>th</sup> amendment is necessary to protect from federal overreach
-

### 3. DUE DILIGENCE QUESTIONS

- No. I am a retired police detective
- No
- No
- No
- No
- No
- Union President NYC Detectives Union regarding lobbying by unions.

### 4. CONSTITUTIONAL INTERPETATION

- Originalism

---
- No

---
- The president should must abide by rulings from the Supreme Court and the original make up of the Court must not be changed.’

---
- The Government must make no laws or policies that limit 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment rights.

---

\* Yes. As a retired homicide detective in NYC, I investigated many homicides where a spouse killed another spouse with a firearm. Also, the availability of a firearm has led to a larger than average amount of police officer suicides.

---

- The appointment of federal judges for lifetime tenure. I also believe any roll backs on penalties for violent crimes at the State level must be reversed especially raise the age and no bail.

---

## **5. FISCAL & ECONOMIC POLICY**

- I have fought against rezoning laws that result as increased density, endangered wildlife, and encroaching on wetlands. As Chairman of the largest community coalition in Florida, I have successfully fought against developers who wanted density increases. As County Commisso I will not allow any development in an area that already does not have it. If it does not developers must pay for it.
- 

- I would raise impact fees and TAP fees developers pay to hook-up to utilities. I would also restrict increasing increases in new hires until proper authorization through independent audit is done. I am against using private consultants. I also will fight for DOGE audit in my County.
- 

- I would only support additional debt if it were tied directly to making citizens whole as a result of a natural disaster like a hurricane. As a mentioned I would want annual audit of State spending by outside agency.
- 

- I believe Medicaid recipients should be routinely checked to see if it was still necessary. I believe in preserving Social Security and Medicare. I also believe illegal aliens, incarcerated violent felons are excluded from these programs
- 

## **6. SOCIAL & CULTUTAL ISSUES**

- Parental rights are an absolute right.
  - Every school should respect the right of every student to have right an opinion and when appropriate that student may be asked to support that position through open debate. School grading must be merit based and American history must be taught in a traditional way with no room for personal bias by teachers. I also believe students should not have the right to protest during school hours and if they do after school hours it must be with parental consent peaceful and with the consent of the school. Schools should not be teaching TGBT related topics nor should they be allowing men in women's sports events or lockers
- 

- Every citizen has a right to practice their religion and the government must make every effort to ensure that right is secured.
- 

- I do not believe Sharia Law should be taught in schools. I also believe it encourages its followers to violates human rights and democratic governance. It also treats women as

sub-servant to men. As retired police detective I have seen it used to promote terrorist activity in NYC.

---

- Abortion should be limited to victims of sexual abuse, rape, incest or medical necessity.
- 
- Border security must be a priority for every president. ICE must be allowed to enforce immigration laws and target violent offenders. Legal entry must include passing a background check and being able to speak or read English. Driver's licenses should only be issued to residents.
- 
- I believe foreign influences in our private schools is much greater than reported. I am concerned with how much influence China, Russia, North Korea and Cuba have in the schools. I believe their needs to be an elimination of State University Partnerships that are linked to the Countries I already mentioned. I believe TikTok must be banned from high schools. \
- 

## **7. ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE**

- I am against relying solely on green alternatives.
- 
- Yes
- 
- I believe every transaction of large parcels of land by a foreign country be vetted by County government and if necessary be referred to a federal law enforcement agency. Governments must strictly enforce legal compliance and act like regulators to protect public interests. I also believe zoning and land use rules be strictly enforced at the County level.
- 
- It is my opinion that every measure must be taken when land use matters may negatively affect wetlands, wildlife or environmentally vulnerable waterways. As Chairman of my Coalition we strongly advocated for strict oversight over projects that increased pollution of our water supply and air quality. Transfer of density policies will be heavily securitized by me when I am County Commissioner
- 
- Infrastructure programs that reduce flooding and promote resiliency should be prioritized. I live in a coastal Community that has experienced 5 major hurricanes. I have advocated for seawalls to be built or secured as part of our list of priorities with my Coalition. My opponent has advanced no projects like these. I believe the State must protect our waters from pollution and keep our fishing industry healthy. I also believe policies to protect our

coastal waters like restoring our wetlands and restoring natural barriers to protect against storm surge are important.

---

- I believe technology must lead the way in helping us identify solutions. I believe in sustainable agriculture and forestry measures that incentivize farmers and landowners to implement voluntary conservation policies.
- 
- I favor the use of oil as our primary energy with other renewable sources playing a secondary role.
- 

## 8. LOCAL ISSUES

Every County must be allowed to create its own comprehensive plan with public input through public hearings. I believe Charlotte County has allowed developers and special interests like realtors to control the public narrative in on this topic and the consequences have led to our budget exploding and the addition of a 20-year extension of a 1% sales tax.

---

- Yes. Charlotte County lacks affordable housing which is having a negative effect on hiring and maintaining quality candidates. I believe a certain percentage of new residential units should go to affordable housing for public servants like first responders, teachers and nurses.
- 
- No. I believe the State is infringing too much on home rule related matters and this could be one of those areas. As a Republican I believe in Home Rule and any legislation to change that must be vigorously opposed by County government.
- 
- My extensive background as a police detective and Chairman of a Coalition has provided me the communication skills to bring citizens together for a common purpose. I also have been successful in gaining the trust of Citizens. I also have extensive experience negotiating with government entities which allows me to effectively strategize my position.  
Specific problems include wildlife protection, prioritizing infrastructure projects and ways to control the budget and reduce wasteful spending.  
I also favor citizen led government as a way to control the budget and empower citizens.
-

- I live in a fast-developing County that was just recently a rural one. That policy is not possible at this time. I do support smart meters and want to advocate for them once I am elected.
- 

- I do not understand how that is related to a County Commissioner.
- 

- While on the campaign trail I have met extensively with small business owners. I have said during those meetings that I support relaxing certain rezoning and permitting rules that place small business owners at a disadvantage. I have an agenda that focuses on workforce development that encourages vocational training programs. I also favor County policies already in place that simplify licensing and allow better networking between small businesses. In my meetings with the County Chamber of Commerce, I have gained support for many of these policies.
- 

- As retired police detective I prioritize spending initiatives that are designed to add personnel to our Sheriff and Chief of Police. I also do not support the State taking control away from the Sheriff and Police Chief. I want to make sure our budget allows for the purchasing of the latest equipment in officer safety and tools to allow officers to do their jobs more effectively. I also understand the importance of rigorous training for in- service officers and strict merit-based policies in hiring. I also do not support any County policies that lower the standards for entry level officers and support recruitment of older veterans and retired officers to serve in roles outside patrol function.
- 

- Since property tax reform is being contemplated and will be on the ballot, I believe spending in our schools must be tied to student achievement levels. The Charlotte school budget in my opinion is to large based on student achievement.  
I have long been a critic of Charlotte County Commissioners decision to keep impact fees below State average. If Charlotte had kept pace with the State average they would have accumulated an extra \$105 million dollars over the past six years. All impact related policies are first vetted with the Charlotte DeSoto Builders Association. This quid pro quo has shifted the burden of development onto the shoulders of residents. Charlotte Commissioners approved a ballot proposal to extend the sales tax for 20 years which I strongly oppose.