

Citizens for Purcellville Candidate Survey

Candidate Name (As listed on Ballot): *Kevin B. Wright*

Candidate Age: *58*

Occupation / Employer (Employer Optional): *Retired / Loudoun County Fire-Rescue*

Education: *12+*

How long have you been a resident of the Town of Purcellville?

I have proudly called Purcellville home for over 50 years, following in the footsteps of two generations of my family who have also made Western Loudoun their home. I remain committed to Purcellville because I believe there are few places better to live and raise a family.

Please provide a short biography of your experience and qualifications for the office that you seek.

As a lifelong resident, I have witnessed the evolution of our town, observing both its successes and the challenges that have arisen from inadequate planning. I am currently in my second year on the Town Council, where I have been at the forefront during some of the most challenging times our community has faced. My professional and personal experiences have equipped me with the knowledge and leadership necessary to navigate these complexities effectively.

Throughout my adult life, I have dedicated myself to being a first responder, focusing on helping others and managing urgent situations. Additionally, I have held several senior management positions within local government, providing me with invaluable experience in budget processes, including planning, procurement, and oversight. Most importantly, I understand the critical need to listen to residents and business owners, and I am committed to maintaining high ethical standards in all my endeavors.

Please describe some of the ways or organizations in which you have been involved within our community outside of elected public service (Please include relevant dates):

I am honored to have been involved with several outstanding organizations within our community:

- *Purcellville Vol. Rescue Squad (1983-1984) – Volunteered as a first responder*
- *Purcellville Vol. Fire Company (1984-1999) – Served as a dedicated volunteer fire fighter.*
- *Upper Loudoun Little League (2016-2022) – Actively volunteered to support local youth sports.*
- *Special Olympics Virginia – Loudoun (2022-Present) – Engaging as a volunteer to support athletes and their families.*
- *Board of Directors – Purcellville Vol. Rescue Squad (2025-Present) – Currently serving to help guide and govern the organization.*

These experiences have deepened my connection to the community and reinforced my commitment to public service.

Citizens for Purcellville Question: Describe your personal vision for the town over the next 5-10 years?

My vision for the town over the next 5-10 years is to establish a strong economic foundation that actively supports existing businesses while attracting new ones that enhance the quality of life for our residents.

I envision a collaborative approach with commercial property owners to revitalize and improve their properties in ways that benefit the entire community. Additionally, I aspire for our town to implement a solid financial plan that responsibly addresses both current and future improvement needs.

It is essential for us to proactively shape our future rather than allowing external factors to dictate it. Ultimately, I hope our town will be recognized as a model for others, demonstrating how to grow and thrive while preserving its unique charm and character.

I am also committed to fostering strong working relationships with the county and neighboring towns to plan for future growth across Western Loudoun. This collaboration will help address current impacts from growth in the region and minimize potential negative effects on our town from future developments

Citizens for Purcellville Question: Looking back at the previous 5-10 years of town history and governance by the town council, if you could change one significant action or decision by town council, what would it be?

Hindsight provides valuable insights, making it easier to evaluate past actions and decisions. I understand that past councils operated under circumstances that I may not fully grasp, and I trust they aimed to serve the town's best interests. Nevertheless, I believe that had they placed greater emphasis on the advice from consultants and staff regarding necessary utility rate increases, we might be in a stronger financial position today.

As I look to the future, my goal is to proactively tackle the town's challenges while ensuring we have a solid foundation for growth. I am committed to making well-informed decisions based on the best information available, hoping that future councils and residents will recognize these efforts as advantageous for our community.

Citizens for Purcellville Question: What do you consider the most important issue for the new Town Council to address at their first meeting in January?

There are several key issues that I believe the next Town Council should address at their first meeting in January:

- *Stabilization of the Town Manager Position: It's crucial to have a qualified Town Manager with the experience needed to effectively guide both the town and its staff into the future. Stability in this role is essential for fostering confidence among staff, residents, and the council.*
- *Restoring Trust and Ethics: Residents must feel confident that their council is acting ethically and in their best interests. Rebuilding this trust should be a top priority.*
- *Updating Town Policies and Charter: Many of our existing policies and sections of our charter are outdated and in urgent need of revision. Addressing these updates will help ensure our governance remains relevant and effective.*

Resident Question: In 2025, the Town Council took initial actions to defund and disband the town's police department. What is your position regarding the town's police department and will you affirm to voters in your answer to this question that you will not support or empower any future attempts to eliminate the Purcellville Police Department?

To address the most critical part of this question: I will not support or empower any attempts to eliminate the Purcellville Police Department. My actions and statements during the recent council's attempt to defund our police made it clear that I do not support such measures and will vigorously fight against them.

The police department is an essential component of what makes our town special. They provide a critical service that cannot be replicated by the Sheriff's Office. Our officers engage in true community policing; they know our children by name, are familiar with our local businesses, and are attuned to any unusual activities in the area. Most importantly, they are a key reason why we are considered one of the safest towns in Virginia.

Resident Question: The cost of improvements to aging infrastructure, particularly the town's water system has been a big topic during the current term. Actions by previous town councils in the form of maintenance deferrals, utility rates not rising in conjunction with rising costs, and not following recommendations by staff or independent consultants, has resulted in the prospect of significant financial burden to both the town and to residents. What are your plans to address the issue of infrastructure and utility rates?

My approach to addressing infrastructure and utility rates starts with listening—specifically to our consultants and the experienced staff we have. Failing to fully consider their expertise has played a role in the challenges we now face.

While there's no straightforward solution to avoid raising utility rates, we can explore alternative revenue sources to help ease these necessary increases.

To begin, we must work on re-establishing our relationship with the County. Building a trusting and collaborative partnerships with the county and state could unlock potential opportunities for financial support.

We should also recognize that neighboring towns are in similar situations. By collaborating with these communities, we can develop solutions that are advantageous for everyone involved.

Moreover, the multiple funding grants are a testament to the hard work of our staff. Ensuring we have adequate resources to pursue additional funding opportunities is a concrete example of what can be achieved through commitment and collaboration.

Business Question: The matter of water and sewer rates seems to be a regular topic for the Town. As I understand, current budget policy is to divert funds from the general fund as well as part of the meals tax revenue to subsidize water rates. Do you feel that this is fair and in the best interest of businesses/restaurants in town who already pay proportionally more for water per month than the majority of households?

The use of general funds and meals tax revenue to subsidize water rates is not a practice I, nor those experienced in managing enterprise funds, would recommend or support. This approach not only places a strain on the town's ability to fund daily operations adequately, but it also disproportionately impacts a specific segment of our local businesses.

Given that we already have the highest meals tax in the county—a tax initially implemented to support general town operations and alleviate increases in personal and real property taxes, it's essential to reassess this practice.

Restaurants typically operate on very tight financial margins and are often among the first to feel the impact of economic downturn. The combined effect of meals and sales tax can raise the cost of a meal by as much as 10% to 12%, further straining these establishments. It is vital that we utilize these funds for their intended purposes and in ways that genuinely benefit our local businesses.

Resident Question: One of the first split decisions of the current town council regarded the annexation of the property upon which the Valley Commerce Center is now approved to occupy. Can you speak to your opinion about future annexation, if such action may ever be warranted, or what might have been done differently with regards to the VCC project?

By the Council voting to discontinue the review of the annexation application for the Valley Commerce Center (VCC) property, we lost valuable leverage in negotiations and missed an opportunity to secure potential benefits while mitigating impacts on our town.

I believe that each annexation application should be rigorously evaluated and adhere to established processes. History has shown us that rejecting an application doesn't necessarily halt development; in fact, by considering it, we open the door to negotiations that can yield positive outcomes for the town while minimizing adverse effects. Should an application ultimately be deemed not in the best interest of the community after thorough evaluation, it can then be justifiably rejected.

Business Question: The Town of Purcellville requires businesses to pay a business license tax. This tax amount is directly tied to the annual gross income that a business conducts, as such, larger businesses pay larger taxes to the town. What value or services does the town provide for these fees and what do you believe that the town should be doing to support local businesses or economic development?

The services each business receives from the Town of Purcellville vary based on its specific needs. However, it is clear that the overall support provided to our business community needs substantial enhancement. One critical step in this direction would be to hire an Economic Development Advisor.

This individual would work directly with both existing and prospective businesses to foster growth and attract new enterprises that align with our town's character and needs. A thriving business environment benefits not only the businesses themselves but also the entire community.

By having a dedicated Economic Development Officer focused on promoting Purcellville, we can gather valuable insights into what types of businesses would best serve our residents as well as complement existing businesses. This information is essential for the Town Council to make informed decisions that drive economic development and create a vibrant local economy.

Business Question: In 2025, the Town Council removed support for the Purcellville Main Street Program. Do you believe that this action was appropriate / in the best interest of the town and why? What is your personal position on Economic Development within the Town of Purcellville?

The decision to withdraw the Town Council's support for the Virginia Main Street Program was, at best, a short-sighted move and, at worst, an irresponsible one. This program comes at no cost to taxpayers while offering significant benefits for our local businesses and facilitating the revitalization of our downtown business district.

I firmly believe that it is the town's responsibility to actively support our local businesses to foster economic development. A thriving business community directly contributes to a stronger and more financially healthy future for Purcellville. When our businesses succeed, the entire town benefits, creating a vibrant environment that attracts residents and visitors alike.

Resident Question: What steps will you take to improve working relationships between town council members and/or town council and town staff?

To foster productive and professional relationships among council members, it is crucial that each member upholds high standards of ethics, honesty, and transparency. If re-elected, I am committed to working alongside others who share these values, as they are essential for enhancing collaboration within the council.

Improving relationships with town staff will take time and dedication. It's important to allow staff the opportunity to regain trust in the council, while also demonstrating our trust in them. Showing the respect they deserve—respect that they have earned through their hard work—will be foundational in rebuilding and strengthening these relationships.

Resident Question: Do you feel that tourism is important to our town? If so, what steps will you take to grow or encourage tourism within the town limits?

I believe that tourism is vital to our town's economic growth. Unfortunately, Purcellville has not fully capitalized on its potential as a tourist destination. Our town is ideally located amidst numerous attractions in Western Loudoun, yet we have not done enough to attract visitors who often drive past us on their way to Leesburg, Charles Town or Frederick.

To enhance tourism in Purcellville, we need to focus our efforts and resources on attracting businesses and establishments that cater to visitors. This includes promoting local attractions and creating appealing accommodations that entice tourists to stop and explore our town. By fostering a welcoming environment for these visitors, we can generate significant revenue and support the overall economic vitality of Purcellville.

Resident Question: "Slow growth" is a phrase often used in campaign literature. Define the term, provide examples of "slow growth" or where we have NOT seen "slow growth", and explain what initiatives you will establish to achieve it.

The typical definition for "slow growth" when used by government officials is Low GDP increase: An economy expanding at a weak or sluggish percentage rate over quarters or years.

I view this term as more than just a slogan; its a tactic used to instill fear among residents. Often, it's wielded by those who want to suggest that their opposition aims to introduce unwanted developments, like big-box stores or large data centers. Unfortunately, those who use such rhetoric frequently lack a viable plan to address growth, instead choosing to isolate certain areas of the town from new opportunities.

To achieve meaningful, sustainable growth in Purcellville, we must focus on encouraging diverse business development that aligns with our community values. This involves open dialogue with residents to understand their concerns, actively attracting businesses that enhance our town's character, and implementing policies and initiatives that promote responsible and inclusive growth.

Resident Question: "Transparency" is another phrase used in this election's campaign literature. Define the term, provide examples of "transparency" or examples of actions where we have NOT seen "transparency", and explain what initiatives you will establish to achieve it.

Transparency in government refers to the principle of making public sector operations, decision-making processes, budgets, and data open, accessible, and understandable to citizens. It is essential for fostering public accountability and building civic trust.

Examples of transparency in local government include holding open debates on agenda items, clearly articulating the reasons for supporting or opposing particular proposals, and disclosing any potential conflicts of interest, whether perceived or real.

However, transparency can mean different things to different people, leading individuals to form their own conclusions about where the current council may have fallen short.

To promote transparency moving forward, it is crucial to adhere to existing policies and procedures diligently.

Resident Question: Data centers and high voltage transmission lines are a hot topic in Loudoun County right now. Please provide any commentary you may have on the issue.

I fully understand the concerns that residents of Purcellville have about the potential development of data centers within our town. However, I find it difficult to envision a scenario where the town could adequately meet the utility demands of such facilities. Moreover, I question whether a data center would provide sufficient financial benefits or enhancements to justify its support from the community.

On the other hand, the prospect of building high-voltage transmission lines near the town is a more immediate concern. Should this situation arise, I would advocate vigorously for the town's interests, ensuring that our community has a substantial voice in the decision-making process.

Please feel free to add any additional comments or discussion you would like to include:

I urge every resident to educate themselves about the issues impacting our town and its future. Don't rely on a single source for information. Make sure the candidates you choose to represent you can address your questions to your satisfaction and have realistic plans to tackle the challenges ahead. Avoid being swayed by empty slogans. Every vote counts, but a well-informed vote truly matters.