

## Friendly advice about the upcoming election issues

Ah, where to even start.

Like many of you, the piles on my desk got too big for me to see over last week, so I worked on Sunday to get things cleared up. The pile on the right side was all ideas for this column. It was a foot high with notes from meetings with all kinds of groups and people.

As I was going through it, I realized the majority of the pile was information about the upcoming election.

Well, I was able to get it settled down a bit and realized that I again have to tell you how to vote. Because there are so many issues facing us during the coming elections that the numbers are flying around like some kind of programming code — 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 200, 201 3c — I thought I should try to help make things a bit clearer.

**Vote yes on the Downtown Development Authority.** It is simply good business. The more downtown thrives so does our region. Passing the DDA will provide financial tools for a variety of new developments and redevelopment.

Think about it.

How much would a 1 acre parcel cost downtown compared to, say Calhan? Now, say you are a developer and could get a better return on your investment on the acre in Calhan verses downtown simply because of the cost of the property.

The money raised by the DDA tax (which would cost about \$75 annually if you own a \$185,000 home in the downtown area, according to Downtown Partnership literature) will help jump-start the development.

As downtown becomes even more vibrant, your house value will go up. It makes sense to me. Lots of new buildings and companies downtown would add to our region. Now if we could just get the Sky Sox to move downtown.

**Amendment 38:** Petitions. Vote no, and with authority. Why even have elected officials if they can't make decisions? This would weaken representative government.

**Amendment 39:** School District Expenditures for Instruction. I am not fully up on this one, so make up your own mind.

**Amendment 40:** Term Limits on Supreme Court and Court of Appeals Judges. Vote no on this. Why turn over a large percentage of our judges?

**Amendment 41:** Ethics in Government, pre-

venting officeholders and public officials from receiving anything valued at more than \$50. I am not convinced either way on this one. The military already has this rule and I suppose restricting public officials and government employees from accepting any amount of money or any gift worth more than \$50 is probably a good idea. I could also argue that this might not be good for business and could hinder a small business' ability to make friends and influence elected officials.

**Amendment 42:** Colorado Minimum Wage. Vote no. I already covered this one in another column. Increasing payroll expenses wouldn't be good for business and could adversely effect hiring more people.

**Initiative 200 and 201:** I can say with some certainty that anything Doug Bruce is involved with should prompt a "no" vote. We have to have money as a community to continue to grow and prosper. These initiatives would substantially reduce our city revenue. They would reduce the city's general fund by \$19 million annually and it only gets worse. If these initiatives were to pass, the city would not be allowed to ask voters to use any surplus revenue for any improvements. Vote no with authority.

### State referenda

**Referendum E:** Property Tax Exemption for Disabled Veterans. No opinion.

**Referendum F:** Recall Deadlines. No opinion.

**Referendum G:** Obsolete Constitutional Items — removes provisions, dates and references to laws that are obsolete from three sections of the constitution; and eliminates specific gender references in one section of the constitution. Vote yes, the less burdensome the constitution the better.

**Referendum H:** Elimination of a State Business Tax Deduction — increases state income taxes owed for some businesses that pay wages to unauthorized aliens; and defines an unauthorized alien as a person who is not eligible under federal immigration law to work in the United States, including an illegal immigrant and a person who is in the country legally, but not to work. No opinion here.

**Referendum J:** School District Expenditures for Instruction. No opinion.

**Referendum K:** Immigration Lawsuit against Federal Government — requires the state of Colorado to sue the federal government to demand enforcement of existing federal immigration laws. No opinion.

### El Paso County ballot measures

**1A** – Shall voters have the right to elect the clerk and recorder to a third consecutive term, bypassing current term limits? Vote yes.

**1B** – Shall voters have the right to elect the sheriff to a third consecutive term, bypassing current term limits? Vote yes.

**1C** – Shall voters have the right to elect the treasurer to a third consecutive term, bypassing current term limits? Vote yes.

**Congressional District 5** – Republican Doug Lamborn vs. Democrat Jay Fawcett. Interesting race here. Seems more and more people are becoming Republicans for Fawcett. Fawcett did reach out to your local business journal publisher and we had a nice lunch. Lamborn ... no calls, no contact. Fawcett is very knowledgeable about the needs of our military bases. Could a Democrat actually get elected? There has not been a Democrat representative since the district was created in 1972. The time may be now. I think it is all about moderation. People are getting tired of the far right and far left noise. As I have said before, I am a registered Republican but the common sense party will get my vote.

**3C** – Monument Academy needs a new building and it will only cost the owner of a \$350,000 home about \$25 a year. Vote yes on this one if you live in Lewis Palmer School District 38.

So there you have it. Vote early and vote often. OK, this isn't Chicago, so you can only vote once.

### Congratulations Southern Colorado Economic Forum

On a lighter note, I want to congratulate all of the people and organizations involved with the 10th annual Southern Colorado Economic Forum. There are too many to list here. The brainchild of Ron Chernak of First Business Brokers and Tom Zwerlien of UCCS, this event really brings the components of our community together in an informative and community-minded way to discuss our economy.

Fred Crowley did a great job of gathering data and presenting it in a fashion that was understandable. Thank you, Gene Sullivan and Wells Fargo, for stepping up to the plate on this year's event. I encourage readers to think about sponsoring this worthwhile event next year.

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