

Holly Davis

Email: holly@hollydavisforcitrus.com

City: Hernando **Length Of Time At Residence:** 2 1/2 years

Url: <https://hollydavisforcitrus.com/>

Office Sought: County Commission, District 5

Have You Run For Office Prior To This Election: No

Have You Held Other Elected Office: No

Detail Your Educational Background: University of Texas at Austin, Bachelor of Science
Substantial continuing education since that time.

List Your Community Involvement: I have made it a priority throughout my career to donate an average of 10% of my billable hours each year to help charities market their mission. For example, the first agency I founded (outside of Washington DC), participated in Creatathon. Our team selected the recipient local charities from a huge stack of applicants, and in a 24 hour period produced what each charity needed most. This included brochures, press kits, a website, full brand identity development, newspaper ads, radio spots and more, with a combined value north of \$30,000. With each person on the team getting to choose a recipient, the final list included an educational foundation, a women's shelter, a black history museum, an animal rescue, and an organization that provides seed money to small businesses coming from areas of economic marginalization. Now that I am back home for good, I welcome the opportunity to donate the same 10% of billable time to help Citrus charities with what they need. Recently, I have assisted Covenant Children's Home, and the Mid-Florida Homeless Coalition with some small marketing needs. I readily donate air tours to various fundraising auctions local charities host. Additionally, last year I volunteer-taught a class on social marketing for Corporate College, and will be doing the same this October, as well as a Marketing & Branding class in July.

What Are The Top Three Priorities Of Your Campaign: I did a lot of research, reading and talking with citizens, to prepare for applying for the job to be one of your commissioners. What I heard over and over is "roads, trash, and limiting or stopping our growth to preserve the nature coast."

As a citizen of this county, I agree that roads and trash need to be addressed, and we need to protect the beauty of our nature coast. As a strategic planner and candidate, I believe we need to think much bigger-picture, with the following three goals:

1. Drive a long-term vision and strategy for how the county will grow in the coming decades.

The current board (as a whole) is not looking five years out, let alone decades out. This is not a vision that any one person, or even the five commissioners, can do alone. We must invite all

citizens and stakeholder groups in the community to help craft what they want to see.

The year 2020 will drive rapid change in how people live and work globally, such as a greater percentage of telecommuting, and a desire to live in more rural, idyllic places such as Citrus County. None of us want rampant growth and random sprawl, so it must be thoughtfully and strategically planned to ensure we maintain our green spaces and not only continue the recent gains in protecting our waters, but also increase those efforts.

For example, one large part of this vision is infrastructure, which might be considered the “skeleton” of the body that is our county. Florida’s DOT has engaged cooperatively with the City of Crystal River, that in turn had engaged with their citizens on what residents want their SR 44 entrance to the city to look like. As a result of this engagement, the city’s consultants produced detailed illustrations of options, to poll citizens on what they wanted that entrance to look like. A substantial majority elected eliminating the “suicide lane” in favor of trees and landscaping down the center and to both sides, along with bike and walking paths. The DOT has not had that engagement with Citrus County as a whole, and we need to do this, and ask our citizens what they want.

2. Support our county government in providing citizen- and business-friendly services, which leads to increased efficiency and our tax dollars going further.

Have you ever been frustrated by unclear government instructions, either in person, or on a government website? The people who work for the government suffer too, because often the tools they’re given (written and online materials, and their own training) tie their hands.

We need to foster a spirit of partnership between business owners and the government to benefit us all. This is not to say throw regulations out the window – I am absolutely committed to conserving environment, and I have a long history of both word and deed that backs up that statement – but red tape and needless bureaucracy must go. This new spirit of working together would have the same effect on private citizens’ interaction with the government.

While we’re at it, if 2020 has taught us anything, we also need to prepare for a future of digital communication to entirely new levels, including government in the sunshine. Our citizens who lack the resources to engage with the government digitally must be considered, to ensure we do not further marginalize our neighbors.

3. Work to attract the right kinds of new businesses here to expand the middle of the economy and bring it more into balance.

We are too heavily weighted to low-paying service and tourism jobs on the one hand, and retirees on the other. As retirees age, they want younger family nearby, and they additionally need professionals (medical, et al) on which we need to remain competitive to attract and retain to work in our county. Those professionals are often married to other professionals who may not have a future in this county in their career, without a broader base of higher-wage businesses.

On the other end of the age spectrum, we have youth who need more and better career choices to aspire to, here at home. They may leave for education or experience opportunities, but in filling out the middle of the economy with more choices, we allow them to either stay right here, or come home sooner.

In creating higher-wage jobs, this enables all of us, but especially seniors, to have a greater support network, both paid and familial. It additionally boosts our tax base, to help pay for repairs and improvements in the county while keeping taxes in check.

These issues have confronted Citrus County for virtually decades and I am running for county commission to bring my best efforts to make real progress.

What Differentiates You From Your Opponents: I have a 30-year career in strategic planning for a wide array of industries to inform my decision making, tackle complex issues, and drive smart change in the county. I am proactive in my thought processes, not reactive. This career gave me an excellent high-level overview of many types of businesses, leading to an intuitive grasp of how a community's various companies feed the local economic engine, and how best to support them. Even more importantly, I have seen over and over again the critical nature of "strategic plan first!" and the universally poor results when you don't start with a sound strategy and a long-term vision. I am a skilled consensus-builder, to lead the creation of a vision through the input of all stakeholders (citizens who wish to take part). I don't go into this thinking I have all the answers to set us on a better path, far from it! As a community, we do. That takes proactive thinking across county leadership. One of my go-to decision processes is to ask "what's in 'head and heart'?" I went through exactly this process prior to deciding to run for county commission. The answer: Having grown up here, I am passionate about the giving nature of so many of our citizens, and the blessings we have here in the nature coast. That is something I feel deep in my heart, and am fiercely protective of it. This is why I came home to stay. Yet, my 22 years away before my return to Citrus County gave my head a wealth of knowledge and experience, watching some communities I lived in thrive with quality of life as they grew intelligently, and others who completely sold out and destroyed it. I believe my unique experience and passion makes me well-qualified to guide and shape decisions that increase our quality of life in Citrus.

What Are Your Sources Of Information On Local Policy Issues: The Chronicle, the Chamber of Commerce, online research, and talking with citizen.

Party Affiliation: Republican

Occupation : Business Owner (marketing firm, and a barn dealership)

Prior Two Jobs: I have been a business owner for 25 years, primarily taking the roles of strategic planner and creative director. Prior to that, I was a senior copywriter and junior strategist for two different ad agencies, working on national and international aviation brands such as Aerospatiale, Gulfstream, and Mooney Aircraft.

Have You Ever Been Arrested: No

Have You Ever Been Sued: No

Have You Ever Had Property That Has Been Foreclosed On: No

Have You Ever Declared Bankruptcy: Yes

If You Have Declared Bankruptcy Please Explain: Wisdom comes from experience, and my work history has a mark on it that is not easy to talk about, but I have learned from it.

When I was 28 years old, with just five years' experience working for two different ad agencies, I founded my first company, an ad agency on the outskirts of Washington DC. For seven years we logged excellent growth, including handling over a million dollars in client media money annually.

Then the dot-com bust knocked out 80% of our clients and income virtually overnight.

I must say, I struggled mightily with shame at the time. It was then that I came across a quote that gave me some measure of peace, and has guided me ever since: "If you've lost wealth, you've lost nothing. If you've lost health, you've lost something. If you've lost integrity, you've lost everything."

I set out to live up to my personal integrity to the very best of my ability, given the end result that there was no escaping bankruptcy. I went to great lengths to ensure that all media and other vendors were paid in full, along with the local bank who had issued an expansion loan the year prior. The end result was that only credit card companies were harmed, along with my pride.

I say all this not to skate on the responsibility. The buck does always stop at the top, and I owned the company. Although painful, it was a valuable lesson, and I have successfully applied the learnings in my two companies since that time.