



# ALERT

October 31, 2018

## The Partisan Non-Partisan Election

One word best describes the city's 2018 election: Confusing.

**Proposition 420:** One group wants to change the City Charter to prevent commercial development in the Preserve. Another group says the Preserve is already protected against commercial development and the proposition creates a chain reaction of unintended consequences.

**Question 1:** Even though \$800 million is needed to restore the city's failing infrastructure, the majority of the City Council rejected placing a bond on the ballot that would not have raised taxes. Instead councilmembers unanimously support raising the sales tax that would generate \$100 million over 10 years, dedicated to repairing roads.

As if Prop 420 and Question 1 haven't already confused voters enough, unexpected alliances in the City Council race have people puzzled even more.

Five candidates are running to fill three council seats. Four are Republicans and one is a Democrat. Incumbents Kathy Littlefield, Linda Milhaven and David Smith are Republicans, as is challenger Bill Crawford. Solange Whitehead is the Democrat.

That's where the clarity stops and more confusion begins.

Councilwoman Littlefield, the Republican, has aligned herself with Whitehead, the Democrat. Both are advocates for Prop 420. Crawford is too. But there's bad blood between the Littlefield and Crawford clans. Crawford, also a Republican, didn't just support Mayor Lane in his re-election bid two years ago against Kathy's husband, Bob, he attacked Littlefield repeatedly.

The Littlefield-Whitehead alliance has thrown dyed-in-the-wool Republicans for a loop. It didn't, however, prevent Councilwoman Littlefield from being the only candidate for City Council that the Maricopa County Republicans endorsed - not Milhaven, Smith or Crawford.

To make matters even more confusing, a local precinct committee person produced campaign material patterned after the Maricopa County Republican group. The look-alike literature endorsed Littlefield and Whitehead. That forced the Legislative District 23 Republican Committee to disavow the fraudulent material and remind its members that Whitehead is a Democrat.

In reaction, the three "unendorsed" council candidates by Maricopa County Republicans (Milhaven-Smith-Crawford) pooled their resources and created a mailer touting their Republican values. Republican Kathy Littlefield was excluded.

And, last at least for now ... Mayor Lane's political action committee, At Our Best, also got in on the action. The PAC sent two mailers to voters asking them to "keep Scottsdale headed in the right direction" by voting for Milhaven and Crawford. Incumbent Councilman David Smith was left out.

The 2018 election is arguably the most confusing election the city has ever experienced. Even the experts are confounded about the possible outcome.

Nevertheless, it raises intriguing questions:

When voters are confused, they typically vote No on issues. So does that mean Prop 420 and Question 1 will be rejected? Will this be the first time in the past 10 years a Democrat is elected to the City Council? Will the three incumbents be re-elected or will one of the challengers unseat an incumbent? If so, which one?

These questions and many more will be answered in less than a week.



## **BITE ME!**

This week's best sound bite comes from community activist Emily Austin. Last week Austin asked:

**"When did partisan politics enter into non-partisan races, specifically the Scottsdale City Council race? I didn't know for the longest time what a council member's political affiliation was because I didn't think it was supposed to matter."**

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