

## PATRIC FLAHERTY

1. Are you a CCFB member? Have you attended CCFB events in the past?
  - a. No and no.
2. Do you have any personal experience or connection with agriculture?
  - a. My mother was raised on a working produce and animal farm in San Marcos Texas. We canned what we grew. Growing up, my father and mother gardened, taught me to garden. I currently garden to this day.
3. Do you support continued annual funding of at least \$1.5 million for the Purchase and Retirement (PAR) Fund Program for the purchase of Transfer Development Rights (TDRs) at a minimum price of \$4,500 per TDR to support agricultural preservation and maintaining the rural character of Calvert County?
  - a. I do not support the use of Calvert County taxpayer tax dollars being used to purchase TDR's. There are other ways to preserve the rural character of Calvert County.
4. For many CCFB members producing and marketing locally raised beef and pork, the biggest challenge is the lack of local facilities to process, inspect, and package meat. As Commissioner would you support investing funding and approving permits for such facilities in Calvert County or contributing funding for facilities in Southern Maryland?
  - a. I would support outside investing funding and approving permits for such facilities. But not funding such a venture using taxpayer funds.
5. Farmers Markets are important to producers. As Commissioner, would you maintain county support and funding for Farmers Markets, including the use of county property and facilities to host Farmers Markets?
6. I would consider, with caveats, continued county support allowing the use of county property and facilities to host Farmers Markets, but not taxpayer funding for Farmer's Markets. One caveat is that only Calvert County produced items, be it produce or meats, only, be sold at Farmer's Markets. Another caveat is that all farms that sell any produced items at Farmer's Markets on County owned or control properties, or that are supported by the County, have their soils tested for polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), also known as forever chemical contamination, since many farmers have used sewage sludge, biosolids, as fertilizer for their fields, which may have been contaminated. And to have sample produce and meats tested as well. Every year. And to submit the testing results to the County for review.
7. The CCFB recognizes the difficulty that the county Ag Development Specialist position has in effectively marketing perishable products. We want this position to be able to perform the marketing duties in a timelier manner and not rely on other departments within Calvert County government. Do you support streamlining the process so this position can more effectively accomplish agricultural marketing tasks?
  - a. Yes.

I understand the importance of farming in Calvert County. I am open discussion on the topic, and am flexible in my thinking when presented with new information or different viewpoints.

Patrick Flaherty

[1of5@electflaherty.com](mailto:1of5@electflaherty.com)

## **TODD IRELAND**

1. Are you a CCFB member? Have you attended CCFB events in the past?

I am not a CCFB member. I have attended and volunteered at CCFB events in the past. I enjoyed the farm to table breakfast event and helped Wilson Freeland crack many eggs in the Fairgrounds kitchen.

2. Do you have any personal experience or connection with agriculture?

I have lived on my family farm on Wilson Road, in Huntingtown my entire life and helped raise tobacco until the buyout. We attempted to raise wheat and bale straw which was not very lucrative given the minimal acreage involved. The farm is currently in CREP.

3. Do you support continued annual funding of at least \$1.5 million for the Purchase and

Retirement (PAR) Fund Program for the purchase of Transfer Development Rights (TDRs) at a minimum price of \$4,500 per TDR to support agricultural preservation and maintaining the rural character of Calvert County? I do support the TDR program and understand the importance of maintaining the rural character of Calvert County.

4. For many CCFB members producing and marketing locally raised beef and pork, the biggest challenge is the lack of local facilities to process, inspect, and package meat. As Commissioner would you support investing funding and approving permits for such facilities in Calvert County or contributing funding for facilities in Southern Maryland?

There needs to be a USDA approved facility in the Tri County area.

5. Farmers Markets are important to producers. As Commissioner, would you maintain county support and funding for Farmers Markets, including the use of county property and facilities to host Farmers Markets?

I will support Farmers Markets and will do everything I can to assist with providing facilities to host such markets.

6. The CCFB recognizes the difficulty that the county Ag Development Specialist position has in effectively marketing perishable products. We want this position to be able to perform the marketing duties in a timelier manner and not rely on other departments within Calvert County government. Do you support streamlining the process so this position can more effectively accomplish agricultural marketing tasks?

If elected I will make certain this issue is taken care of. Without knowing all of the details surrounding this problem, I would venture to say this is definitely a training issue and could be fixed rather quickly.

## **CHELSEA MONTAQUE**

1. I am not a member nor have I attended events in person in the past.

2. I grew up in St. Mary's County in Mechanicsville, surrounded by farmland. My mother grew up on a tobacco and produce farm in PG county in Upper Marlboro. I have family that are still farmers in St. Mary's and I have a deep love for local farms and the products they produce.

3. Yes, absolutely. Preserving farm land and our rural area is incredibly important.

4. Putting Calvert County agriculture on the map and showing new generations that family owned farms are a viable, sustainable, and worthwhile endeavor needs to be a top priority. I would absolutely support this because it would also be better for local consumers, especially with rising food prices. Small local farms are a model for land stewardship and need to be embraced and protected with better economic opportunities.

5. Absolutely. I would also like to work towards better stand alone facilities like what is seen in St. Mary's county with the new Amish market and the red barn market (Home Grown) past gate 3 of the base. I would especially like to see

those in areas where people will be able to access them via public transportation or walking to increase the visibility and accessibility for everyone.

6. Yes! Let's work together to find a solution that uplifts the farming community and shows everyone that quality products come from Calvert County farms.

### **Darrell Roberts**

1. Are you a CCFB member? **I am not a member.** Have you attended CCFB events in the past? **I have not attended any past events.**
2. Do you have any personal experience or connection with agriculture? **Yes, as a child I helped my uncle on his 200 acre cattle farm. We cut, hauled and stacked square bales most of the summer. My brother and I raised a hog. My uncle used the experience to teach us about the cost of feed, and how to follow the price at market. We did not make any money, but we learned a great deal. I would also cut and hang tobacco for money to buy school clothes. I was never very fast but I could climb to the top rails in the barn. We always had a garden growing up and today I raise tomatoes and other vegetables.**
3. Do you support continued annual funding of at least \$1.5 million for the Purchase and Retirement (PAR) Fund Program for the purchase of Transfer Development Rights (TDRs) at a minimum price of \$4,500 per TDR to support agricultural preservation and maintaining the rural character of Calvert County? **I support keeping Calvert Rural and the programs that ensure our farmland and farmers are protected.**
4. For many CCFB members producing and marketing locally raised beef and pork, the biggest challenge is the lack of local facilities to process, inspect, and package meat. As Commissioner would you support investing funding and approving permits for such facilities in Calvert County or contributing funding for facilities in Southern Maryland? **I believe in supporting local businesses and that includes Farm Owners and their efforts to have a sustainable way of life. I would support the efforts to see a local facility built and maintained here in Calvert County. I would also work with the appropriate team to check for grants at the state, federal, nonprofit and foundation levels that may assist in this area.**
5. Farmers Markets are important to producers. As Commissioner, would you maintain county support and funding for Farmers Markets, including the use of county property and facilities to host Farmers Markets? **Yes, I would support these efforts.**
6. The CCFB recognizes the difficulty that the county Ag Development Specialist position has in effectively marketing perishable products. We want this position to be able to perform the marketing duties in a timelier manner and not rely on other departments within Calvert County government. Do you support streamlining the process so this position can more effectively accomplish agricultural marketing tasks? **I believe in instances when processes can be streamlined in a manner that does not cause safety issues or harm to anyone. Then those efforts should be explored, tested and implemented.**

### **Buddy Hance**

1. I have been a member of farm bureau since 1974. As a member, board member, and officer I have attended many farm bureau events in my 48 years of membership.
2. I have been a farmer my entire life and am the fourth generation on our family farm in Port Republic.
3. I strongly support full funding of Ag Preservation and as a current commissioner I voted to designate a portion of the county transfer tax for preservation. This board has also done a round of PAR purchases all of my three years. And recently raised the purchase price to \$4500 while I cannot vote on that issue because of a conflict

I fully support that decision. Every year since being elected we have had a carryover of funds in the preservation program and we need to work together to see that all of those funds are expended.

4. Ever since the buy local movement became a significant market force and helped our local producers be profitable processing has been the limiting factor for meat production. Having USDA inspection is the biggest impediment for growing markets. The inspection service is highly regulated and expensive to develop. As Secretary of Agriculture I worked across the state to address this statewide issue with limited success. Watching the Southern Maryland Ag Development Commission struggle for the last several years is a prime example of the challenge it is to get an inspected facility in Southern Maryland which hopefully will come to fruition in the near future. I will always support our county producers to address their needs in whatever issues arise.

5. I hope that county staff is always working to support our local farmers markets. Especially with the addition of Julie Oberg, the new director of EC, her experience at MDA should be a great asset in this area. Farmers markets can be challenging determining the needs of a particular community and the availability of local producers to meet their needs.

6. If there are any issues addressing the farm community needs I hope that either your organization or county staff would bring them to my attention. Then it would be my job to bring those involved to the table to find solutions.

### **MIKE HART**

1) I am not a member but I have attended events in the past.

2) My uncle used to raise chickens for Perdue Farms. I used to help him on his farm when I was growing up.

3) Yes, I would support increasing the PAR program more than the 1.5 million dollars already in place. I'm in favor of increasing the TDR price more than it's current cost to help preserve the rural character of Calvert County.

4) Absolutely, I think it's extremely important to support our local farms.

5) I would absolutely support continuing this. In fact, when winter comes, I miss going to my local farmers market.

6) Yes, I do support streamlining the process.

### **MARK COX, SR.**

1. Are you a CCFB member? Have you attended CCFB events in the past? Yes, I am a CCFB member and have been for several years. I have attended many CCFB events over the years including several Farm Bureau days in Annapolis.
2. Do you have any personal experience or connection with agriculture? Yes, I am a fourth generation farmer that began on my family's tobacco fields here in Calvert County. My wife and I currently live on our farm in Huntingtown.
3. Do you support continued annual funding of at least \$1.5 million for the Purchase and Retirement (PAR) Fund Program for the purchase of Transfer Development Rights (TDRs) at a minimum price of \$4,500 per TDR to support agricultural preservation and maintaining the rural character of Calvert County? Yes, I support the PAR Fund Program. There is also 3 million+ in the TDR program.
4. For many CCFB members producing and marketing locally raised beef and pork, the biggest challenge is the lack of local facilities to process, inspect, and package meat. As Commissioner would you support investing funding and approving permits for such facilities in Calvert County or contributing funding for facilities in Southern Maryland? As Commissioner, I will support any and all efforts towards processing facilities.
5. Farmers Markets are important to producers. As Commissioner, would you maintain county support and funding for Farmers Markets, including the use of county property and facilities to host Farmers Markets? As

Commissioner, I will support funding efforts for Farmers Markets. We need to find more ways to get local produce into the hands of all citizens.

6. The CCFB recognizes the difficulty that the county Ag Development Specialist position has in effectively marketing perishable products. We want this position to be able to perform the marketing duties in a timelier manner and not rely on other departments within Calvert County government. Do you support streamlining the process so this position can more effectively accomplish agricultural marketing tasks? We must do all we can to help streamline this process.

**District 2 Commissioner, Chris Gadway**

1. Are you a CCFB member? *No*

Have you attended CCFB events in the past? *Yes, I have attended all events I have been aware of since being in office. Thank you for the invites and the education I have received at each*

2. Do you have any personal experience or connection with agriculture?

*As a child, relatives and friends farmed. I did work as a teen on farms, primarily bucking hay. My wife and I own a small piece of land that we lease (for free) to a local farmer who grows soybeans on it. My household tries to support local growers whenever possible through "buying local"*

3. Do you support continued annual funding of at least \$1.5 million for the Purchase and Retirement (PAR) Fund Program for the purchase of Transfer Development Rights (TDRs) at a minimum price of \$4,500 per TDR to support agricultural preservation and maintaining the rural character of Calvert County?

*Yes, I have already voted to continue the program and have no intent of changing my support*

4. For many CCFB members producing and marketing locally raised beef and pork, the biggest challenge is the lack of local facilities to process, inspect, and package meat. As Commissioner would you support investing funding and approving permits for such facilities in Calvert County or contributing funding for facilities in Southern Maryland?

*Yes, I have already started and currently participate in discussions and solutions to do just this. We need to work together to ensure the best cost approach to the local food process. We cannot afford to be reliant on others.*

5. Farmers Markets are important to producers. As Commissioner, would you maintain county support and funding for Farmers Markets, including the use of county property and facilities to host Farmers Markets?

*Yes, I would also like to work with local producers to determine best place or places for permanent locations that could be established for convenient access to all of Calvert's citizens.*

6. The CCFB recognizes the difficulty that the county Ag Development Specialist position has in effectively marketing perishable products. We want this position to be able to perform the marketing duties in a timelier manner and not rely on other departments within Calvert County government. Do you support streamlining the process so this position can more effectively accomplish agricultural marketing tasks?

*Yes. I would like to have the CCFB help me understand their ideas on how this can be done. My Job is to ensure common sense is applied whenever possible. I look forward to working together to find the right solution.*

## Catherine Grasso

June 20 2022

1. Are you a CCFB member? Have you attended CCFB events in the past?

No, I am not a CCFB member. I attended your banquet in the Fall 2021.

2. Do you have any personal experience or connection with agriculture?

I worked for USDA in Washington, D.C. My agency was Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration. We regulated the stockyards. If there were any infractions, such as weight fraud, putting downed animals into the food chain, I would review the case and recommend sanctions. I have been on the kill floor, in a processing plant, etc. I always felt that the poultry farmers were not getting a fair deal from Perdue, Pilgrim's, etc. I drove my bosses crazy when we put out a Federal Register notice that would affect the poultry growers and I read their comments. I would say this really isn't fair. I have a working knowledge of the grain side but was not as heavily involved.

3. Do you support continued annual funding of at least \$1.5 million for the Purchase and Retirement (PAR) Fund Program for the purchase of Transfer Development Rights (TDRs) at a minimum price of \$4,500 per TDR to support agriculture preservation and maintaining the rural character of Calvert County?

Definitely!

4. For many CCFB members producing and marketing locally raised beef and pork, the biggest challenge is lack of local facilities to process, inspect, and package meat. As Commissioner would you support investing funding and approving permits for such facilities in Calvert County or contributing funding for facilities in Southern Maryland?

Yes! My husband and I raised hogs. When Calvert Meats closed, we stopped raising hogs. Now, I must tell you we raised only for ourselves. I can't even imagine the extra cost and inconvenience that this presents for CCFB members who want to produce and market locally raised beef and pork.

5. Farmers Markets are important to producers. As Commissioner, would you maintain county support and funding for Farmers Markets, including the use of county property and facilities to host Farmers Markets?

Definitely!

6. The CCFB recognizes the difficulty that the county Ag Development Specialist position has in effectively marketing perishable products. We want this position to be able to perform the marketing duties in a timelier manner and not rely on other departments within Calvert County government. Do you support streamlining the process so this position can more effectively accomplish agricultural marketing tasks?

I am really excited that we have Julie Oberg in Economic Development because she has an agriculture background. To have this Ag Development Specialist working separately but with the support of Economic Development to me, would be ideal. There are so many facets of farming withing the farming community, it is not possible for one individual to know all of the State and Federal rules and regulations. I really am for less government and for us controlling our own farming destiny in Calvert County.

Catherine Grasso

Board of County Commissioner Candidate

District 3

Integrity Matters

## **Paul Harrison**

1. Are you a CCFB member? Have you attended CCFB events in the past?

No, I am not a member. I attended a CCFB Candidate Forum in 2014. At the time, I cautioned against government intervention in the land preservation effort and championed the efforts of the American Chestnut Land Trust (ACLT).

2. Do you have any personal experience or connection with agriculture?

I spent a few summers when I was young at my uncle's farm in upstate New York. His fields were leased to a local man who planted about 80 acres of feed corn.

3. Do you support continued annual funding of at least \$1.5 million for the Purchase and Retirement (PAR) Fund Program for the purchase of Transfer Development Rights (TDRs) at a minimum price of \$4,500 per TDR to support agricultural preservation and maintaining the rural character of Calvert County?

Here's where I think Calvert farmers are getting short-changed. I was approached by an attorney in this space and I am concerned that developers may be "gaming the system." As predicted, we are now subsidizing the TDR program. I support a thorough review to mitigate and unhelpful influence and if any discovered, I would lobby to release impacted properties from the program or work to remedy inequities.

3. For many CCFB members producing and marketing locally raised beef and pork, the biggest challenge is the lack of local facilities to process, inspect, and package meat. As Commissioner would you support investing funding and approving permits for such facilities in Calvert County or contributing funding for facilities in Southern Maryland?

I am very fond of Susie Hance-Wells and Battle Creek Beef. I have also purchased pork from Scaggs Farms and understand what they have to go through to get product to market. St. Mary's County had a big blow up about this same issue. We literally regulate ourselves into bankruptcy. I would champion and all actions that would clear the way for local meat processing, including pushing back against the state and federal governments.

3. Farmers Markets are important to producers. As Commissioner, would you maintain county support and funding for Farmers Markets, including the use of county property and facilities to host Farmers Markets?

Absolutely! I love the rural character of Calvert and that character is furthered by the existence and proliferation of Farmers Markets. I would also champion relaxed or eliminated zoning restrictions to permit these activities on farms.

3. The CCFB recognizes the difficulty that the county Ag Development Specialist position has in effectively marketing perishable products. We want this position to be able to perform the marketing duties in a timelier manner and not rely on other departments within Calvert County government. Do you support streamlining the process so this position can more effectively accomplish agricultural marketing tasks?

The County staff was just given a 21% raise. That person better be the best person ever at their job or we need to replace them with someone who is.

## **Kelly McConkey**

Question 1 I am not a member. I have attended many events in the past.

Question 2 I have been in Agricultural Business most of my life. I have a nursery business and also own many pieces of agricultural land in the county.

Question 3 I support to continue to fund the PAR as long as we have the available funds. We visit the price of TDR's annually.

Question 4 I support.

Question 5 I support

Question 6 I support.

Thank you

Kelly McConkey

## **Myra McGowans**

**I am running for Commissioner at Large and my answers are as follows.**

### QUESTION ONE:

At this time, I am not a member of the Farm Bureau; however, over the years (50) I have attended numerous events up and down the county (and indulged in the best fruits and veggies from your fields with lip-smacking glee and satisfaction)!

### QUESTION TWO:

I am from a prominent farm family in Whiteford, (and the surrounding countryside) in Harford County, Maryland. In the past, one of our farms was one of the largest dairy farms in Maryland. My family also ran the Whiteford Packing Plant, which has since closed. The Amish families have moved from Pennsylvania and purchased farms in an around Whiteford. So the farms are still producing!

### QUESTION THREE:

Most definitely! Our Farmers and our Watermen are the “backbone” of our rural culture and identity. Calvert Citizens United has over 100 pages of BACKROOM MEETING MINUTES which outline the sellout of our county by and between 4 local builder/developers and members of our county government. Since December 2015 the builder/developers lobbied for less TDR’s per development. Local builders acquired hundred of TDR’s and naturally banked them for future development purposes. They bought low so they could control the ‘end cost’ bypassing the farmers and running down the individual price. Three Commissioners approved this methodology in 2018. Thus, an individual TDR price was no longer \$7,500 (or higher allowing the market to determine). Some of the Commissioners negotiated on behalf of the builder/developers (referring to them as stakeholders) placing a low-ball value of \$2,500 for acquisition of each TDR into the newly formed PAR program. The farmers rightly protested the \$2500 pittance thereby eliminating whatever “market conditions would determine” and the BOCC were obliged to renegotiate to \$4500 per TDR. This is a very far cry from letting the market determine the value of each TDR.

### QUESTION FOUR:

I would be in favor of supporting our farmers in raising, production and getting to market their farm owned and raised meats. I am certain the U.S. Department of Agriculture has grant funding for such processing, inspection and packaging center. It is my understanding that most national grocery store chains do not employ meat cutters or butchers because all the meats are prepackaged and the source is not identified for the purchaser. The meats are just laid out in the case for the consumer to select by weight and appearance. As a designated ‘Agriculture County’ we will need the support of federal, state and local governments. I am willing to perform all the due diligence necessary to promote this endeavor and lobby for our farm community.

#### QUESTION FIVE:

ABSOLUTELY!! County Property belongs to the citizen/taxpayers. In the past the county STAKEHOLDERS have been identified by Ms. Linda Vassallo and Mark Willis as the Builder/Developer (Small Business Interest Group). Farmers markets help us retain our premiere Agriculture status throughout the county and the region. Local farmers are, in and of themselves, independent small business entrepreneurs who need all the support and advocacy of local citizens, other businesses as well as the BOCC and entire Administration.

#### QUESTION SIX:

Agriculture is all about FRESHNESS and COLOR. With our new Economic Development Director In charge, perhaps this is the time to rethink and reevaluate the multi-faceted dynamic of our Farm community. After visiting the Swann Farm with the Chesapeake Garden Club of Calvert County, even though farms can be used for destination events, 'a day on the farm' for educational purposes and the like, it requires additional staff for the events and time away from the land. I would like to see identifying plaques placed strategically along Rt. 4 touting Calvert's Farm Abundance with an identifying logo all our own. Calvert should also advertise in the adjoining northern counties the bounty that exists within the border of the Chesapeake Bay and Patuxent River.

Lastly, thank you for all your dedication to protecting Calvert and our glorious countryside. Thank you for raising the crops that keep us healthy and well fed. Thank you for raising families that appreciate hard work and enjoy team effort. Thank you for your great-great grandparents who instilled the necessity and appreciation of rainfall. Not too much and not too little! Thank you, your children and your children's children (yet to come). I was taught that farming isn't a job; IT IS A WAY OF LIFE!

Myra Gowans, Founder, Calvert Citizens United, Inc.

And Candidate for Commissioner At Large

#### **Steven Jones**

1. Are you a CCFB member? Have you attended CCFB events in the past? A. No I am not a current member
2. Do you have any personal experience or connection with agriculture? A. No I do not, other than family gardens etc.
3. Do you support continued annual funding of at least \$1.5 million for the Purchase and Retirement (PAR) Fund Program for the purchase of Transfer Development Rights (TDRs) at a minimum price of \$4,500 per TDR to support agricultural preservation and maintaining the rural character of Calvert County? A. I do support the current program. Ensuring that the funding is there is a top priority
4. For many CCFB members producing and marketing locally raised beef and pork, the biggest challenge is the lack of local facilities to process, inspect, and package meat. As Commissioner would you support investing funding and approving permits for such facilities in Calvert County or contributing funding for facilities in Southern Maryland? A. If funding is available yes, I believe small business and agriculture is a good investment for Calvert County.
5. Farmers Markets are important to producers. As Commissioner, would you maintain county support and funding for Farmers Markets, including the use of county property and facilities to host Farmers Markets? Yes
6. The CCFB recognizes the difficulty that the county Ag Development Specialist position has in effectively marketing perishable products. We want this position to be able to perform the marketing duties in a timelier manner and not rely on other departments within Calvert County government. Do you support streamlining the process so this position can more effectively accomplish agricultural marketing tasks? A. Removing red tape from anything in Calvert County is a plus. In short yes.