

## [View Woodford County Magistrate Candidate Responses](#)

- 1. How long have you lived in your district? Please provide an example of one way that you have contributed to your community to date. Why are you the best candidate for the position you seek? (in order by District)**

**Liles Taylor-** Born and raised in Woodford County, I know how special it is to grow up in this community. That's why my wife, Robin, and I knew we wanted to raise their family in Woodford County. We have lived in Midway for 5 years.

I strive to make a difference in our community through my work as a member of the Versailles Kiwanis Club and advisor to the Woodford County High School Key Club, board member of Walter Bradley Park, and a Deacon at Midway Baptist Church.

I'm the proud product of Woodford County Public Schools, continuing my education at Asbury University, where I received a BA in media communications and a Masters in public administration from Morehead State University.

I have extensive governmental experience, climbing the ranks of state government and serving in multiple roles within Governor Steve Beshear's administration and gaining valuable legislative experience serving as Chief of Staff to the House Majority Whip. My work in the Executive Branch culminated with my service as Deputy Chief of Staff to then Lt. Governor, Crit Luallen.

I proudly now serve the working families of Kentucky as the Political Coordinator of the Kentucky State AFL-CIO.

- 2. What is the biggest challenge, and biggest opportunity you see facing Woodford County and your district?**

**Liles Taylor-** The most important responsibility of the Fiscal Court is crafting a budget that meets our community's current needs, while investing in solutions for tomorrow. I will strive to set budget priorities that carefully balance vital investments in public safety, education (early childhood, K-12, & post secondary), infrastructure, senior services, public health, middle-income housing, parks and recreation, competitive wages for county employees, and economic development.

The greatest challenge facing Woodford County is likely the relative full-employment of our workforce, limiting the labor pool of new and growing economic investment.

The biggest opportunity facing Woodford County is likely Frontier Nursing University's new Versailles campus, coupled with a thriving Midway University and the KCTCS System Office. Such a significant higher education presence allows for a uniquely positioned Woodford County for research and innovation.

**3. What do you believe are the main economic pillars in Woodford County, and what are some specific planning policies that you propose to further economic growth?**

**Liles Taylor-** My campaign is built on a motto of: “Proud of our Traditions, Excited for our Future.” I believe our traditions are also our signature industries, or main economic pillars. Our traditions are also our branding. And our traditions are largely agricultural.

These signature industries are some of our largest employers, our greatest source of tourism, and our identity. As the home of TWO—Triple Crown Winners, there is no disputing that we are the “Horse Capital of the World.”

Woodford County is also THE Brand Name in bourbon. Woodford Reserve is not only a top-shelf brand, but is the official bourbon of the Kentucky Derby and is now the presenting sponsor of the Derby. The recent ribbon cutting of a beautifully restored Castle & Key distillery will not only bring about the production of new spirits, but also another significant destination for our tourism industry. Woodford County also enjoys a burgeoning wine industry with 4 wineries, offering venues for concerts and special events, as well as their own products.

As previously mentioned, our three institutions of higher education: Midway University, Frontier Nursing University, and the KCTCS System office provide a pipeline of well-educated workforce participants and a pool of scholarly human capital for collaboration, research, and creativity.

**4. Would you support a tax increase, such as Local Investment for Transformation (LIFT), a 1% local sales tax increase, for a specific project? Please explain what capital project(s) you might support as leveraged through additional taxation.**

**Liles Taylor -** I am very familiar with LIFT, as I had the opportunity to work for the serve as Chief of Staff to the State Representative who was the initial, primary sponsor of the LIFT legislation, Representative Tommy Thompson. I worked closely with advocates, bill drafters, and legislators for the drafting of the legislation. Although it is not likely to become an option for a local municipality for the foreseeable future, I support the idea of such a limited, short-term, project-specific revenue stream. There is nothing more democratic and self-governing than the ability for citizens to approve or reject such a project (and consequential sales tax levy).

LIFT would be just another tool in the toolbox for our communities, but with many Woodford County residents recently expressing their disapproval of an increase in more traditional revenue streams (real and personal property taxes), and the willingness of both sides (for and against) to participate in the electoral process of deciding such an issue; it should be considered for extraordinary circumstances.

However, given the more regressive nature of sales taxes, I would approach any such proposal for our community with careful consideration. At this time, I cannot think of any capital projects that I would currently support as leveraged through the levying of a local sales tax.

**6. In your opinion, is our transportation and infrastructure adequate to support our community? If not, where would you like to see improvements made?**

**Liles Taylor-** We unfortunately face an aging infrastructure all over America, and Woodford County is not immune. As a consequence, much of our current roads, bridges, and waterlines need serious improvements or replacements. There isn't a better example of the need for investment (from all levels of government) than the shamefully slow replacement of Wiesenberger Mill Road Bridge; which also happens to be the issue I hear most about as I campaign door-to-door around our community. Currently, for the 1<sup>st</sup> Magisterial District, I would first like to see the state complete that bridge replacement project, followed by addressing the flooding on Williams Lane.

**7. What role should regional land use planning play in our local planning & development moving forward?**

**Liles Taylor-** Northern Kentucky has seen very significant successes through their utilization of regional planning, and there certainly are opportunities for using regional planning in Central Kentucky as well. With that said, Woodford County is also unique from many of its neighbors, and much of that unique identity would likely be attributed to the differences in our local planning and development.

**8. What are your plans for improving the environmental sustainability of our county? How would you support investments in more renewable alternative energy development?**

**Liles Taylor-** I cannot say that I currently have any significant plans for improving the environmental sustainability of our county, but I would happily entertain any ideas presented to me and support any of those that are financially reasonable for our community.

**9. Agriculture is an annual \$565 million-dollar industry that supports 1 in 3 jobs (specifically 2,783 jobs) in Woodford County. Woodford County farmland also anchors a burgeoning travel and agri-tourism industry. To ensure continued viability of our agricultural industries and productive farmland, would you support an annual funding allocation to the Woodford Rural Land Board's Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Program? Why, or why not?**

**Liles Taylor-** I would support an annual allocation of funds to the Purchase of Development Rights Program, particularly if it were a dedicated share of surplus funds and/or a dedicated revenue stream. Additionally, with any such allocation of taxpayer money, protections and oversight are necessary. Recently suggested changes to Lexington's programs should be considered, adopted, and possibly expounded upon in Woodford County, if they haven't already done so.

Agriculture, travel, and agri-tourism are truly some of our greatest traditions in Woodford County, and are undoubtedly an exciting part of our future. We must commit to making the necessary investments to secure that future.

**10. What other ideas and specific policies do you have to ensure the continued growth and viability of our agriculture industry?**

Liles Taylor- I would like for the Fiscal Court to study the possibility of other/additional revenue streams, that allows for some real property tax relief for small, family farms. Too often, these family operations are just one or two bad years away from being forced to sell their farms. One potential option might be a small fee placed on ticket sales, recouping the additional costs associated with increased road maintenance and emergency response calls; shifting those costs to the actual consumers, and off everyday Woodford County citizens.