

Teacher by day; Councilman by night

The Hyphen sits down with City Councilman, and JHS teacher Scott Hawkins



(Phillip Steinmetz): Describe what you went through to win the election. What was the night of the election like?

(Scott Hawkins): The polls close at 6 p.m., but it takes longer than that for them to get the results. So you usually go get something to eat and

they have a big board, so as the results come in they start updating the board. Pretty soon, before all of the results are in, you can tell who's going to win and who's going to lose.

Then after the results become official, they announce the winner. They push you up on a podium to say a couple words and then you hang around there for a while and wait for other results because you are rooting for your friends you worked with and the results are still in the air. Then, you go home but you are so excited you can't sleep for two days.

After, you have a long waiting game because the election is the first Tuesday of November and you don't get into office until January. So for two months, you meet people so you don't show up on day one having to learn everything. It's fairly anticlimactic after you win. Your life didn't really change -- you're still the same person.

PS: Did you have any doubt that you would be elected? How confident were you in the election?

SH: I was pretty comfortable. I've been a teacher here for 20 years, coached a lot of sports, grew up here -- that gives you a lot of advantages going in. I went door-to-door to every house in my

district, so I knocked on 4,000-4,500 doors. I thought I had a pretty good plan together. Of course you never know, so I was still worried when they came in.

PS: How do you juggle being in that position and full-time teaching with having a family, as well?

SH: It's taken a lot of time. It's an important job; Jeff is just growing like mad. There is always something everyday. There's not a day where I don't deal with something at night. It's either answering citizens who will call and ask questions, or I have a planning meeting or a city council meeting.

Right now, we are negotiating contracts with police and fire. There's always something. So yes, it's taken away time in my personal life. But at school, I don't answer my phone. So it's nice during school I get to turn it off and not be a city councilman for eight hours. But that's about it. It's been a little more time than I thought it would be.

PS: Why did you want to be a city councilman?

SH: I thought as a teacher I had a pretty good perspective of the city. I've seen the richest of the rich and poorest of the poor, and everything in between. But I thought I had a pretty good perspective in that way. I really see Jeffersonville as on the cusp of an explosion. If you don't get the first few steps of that right, then you are always cleaning up your own mess. So I wanted to make sure it was getting done right. If you want something done right, you better do it yourself. That was my grandpa's best advice to me. It just made me want to be a part of it.

You win some, you lose some

The Hyphen catches up with teacher Steve Cooley, a former city council candidate

(Cameron Wood): What was it like to lose the city council election?

(Steve Cooley): "Disappointing, (but a) great experience. It was something I always wanted to do. I lost by 200 votes out of 3,000 votes. Any of the people running would have been great. Spending more time would've been better, but I had a lot going on. I won the Republican contest in May, but I lost in November by the 200 votes. The city is going in the right direction."



CW: What did you learn from the experience? Will you run again?

SC: "I met wonderful people: Mike Moore, Tim Young, Jamie Noel. A lot of people in

Jeff are unique. It's a learning experience that helped me with my teaching ... Yeah I could see myself running again. My wife said 'If you win, we will stay living in Jeff and if you lose we're going to move to Floyds Knobs.' So if I run again, it will be in that area."

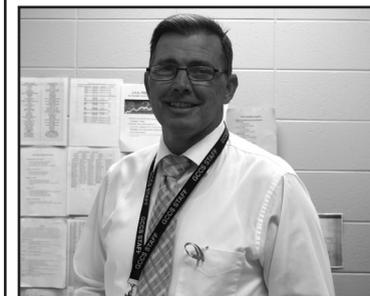
CW: Any tips for people who are running or going to run?

SC: "Network, network, network. It is a political game and you must have the time to go door-to-door and network."

CW: Did it help you become a stronger Government teacher?

SC: "It makes you have great learning experiences and helps you know how things work. Being able to tell teens from start to finish the process is a unique experience. It's real life, so you can explain it better, much better than showing a movie on it."

Runnin' with Felix



The Hyphen talks to JHS track and cross country coach Mark Felix about running for office, how it feels to lose a close election

(Kyle Sanders): How was your experience running for office?

(Mark Felix): It was a blast! I loved meeting so many new people and learning so much about Clark County.

KS: What did you learn from this experience in running for a political position?

MF: I learned that name recognition is extremely important. But mostly I learned that you can't have distractions to run effectively. It is like taking on a full-time job if you are going to do it right.

KS: Even though you didn't win, would you like to run for office again?

MF: I will run again, but perhaps for another position. I would really like to serve my community and work to make it a better place to live and work in. This area has a lot of potential and I would love to be a part of helping it grow and helping the people here in anyway that I can.

photos by Sam Gatewood, Greg Johnson and Cody Polk