

The Informed Democrat

~ of SWFL ~

Curtis Sheard: Fort Myers' next Mayor?



"Democrats are flexible, adaptable—we don't follow the status quo, we look for alternatives.

If we take this opportunity to get people energized and **get out to vote**, it can pay great dividends," says Mayoral candidate Curtis Sheard. Raised in Fort Myers, he served as an officer in the US Army, is a licensed general contractor, and now owns Big Bois BBQ. Being in business, solving **budget and personnel issues**, "makes me uniquely qualified to be Mayor."

His policy priority is toxic waste cleanup in **Dunbar**. He wants the Freeh report to guide how the **FMPD** is evaluated, and says "citizens must be aware of, and included in, the Citizen's Police Review Board's decision making."

He also highlights **Parks & Rec.**'s importance. "If people see that Fort Myers has great parks and is family oriented, they'll want to move here, and that's tax dollars." He sees other benefits, too: "My philosophy is that if you give kids a place to play, they stay out of trouble and **free up police to solve crimes.**"

24%

Lee Co. voter participation;
2013 Mayoral election

Will Fort Myers' election be over **September 12?**

A quirk of the City of Fort Myers' electoral system: if a candidate receives **50% plus 1** of the primary vote they win outright—so **the election is over** without a general election in November. Even if only 100 people vote in the primary, if one candidate received **51 votes** they win the election. There is no minimum requirement for ballots cast.

America's electoral system is a patchwork of tiny systems. Not only are election dates irregular, but rules vary too. In both **Cape Coral** and Fort Myers, if there are only 2 candidates, they advance to a general election in

November. If there are 3 or more candidates in a race, a primary is held in September. In Cape Coral, the top two primary candidates advance to the general election—but Fort Myers voters **may not get an election** in November.

This makes it vital to **get out to vote** if you want change. A well-known incumbent is more likely to get 50% of the primary vote and win the seat, eliminating fresh voices before mainstream voters would see them.

Fort Myers has faced **repeated scandal** and residents want change, but the local electoral system appears to discourage it.

POLITICS MOVES FAST

Get our latest updates at: leecountydems.org

Facebook: 'Lee County Democrats'

Twitter: [@leecountydems](https://twitter.com/leecountydems)

Cape Coral: please VOTE!

Want to **vote for a Democrat** in November? Don't forget to vote in the primary on September 12.

Cape Coral races are all city wide.

You can vote for all districts up for election, as well as mayor this year.

Running for City Council is expensive as candidates must campaign city-wide,

instead of just their specific ward (like **Fort Myers**).

The 2013 Mayoral election had 23.9%, and 2015 City election just **14.8%**, voter turnout county-wide. Primary turnout is lower.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY CANDIDATES

CITY OF CAPE CORAL

Mayor: April Freeman

District 1: Graham Madison Morris

District 4: Jennifer Nelson

District 5: James Schneider

CITY OF FORT MYERS

Mayor: Nicole Dillon, Curtis Sheard

Ward 1: *Teresa Watkins Brown* (incumbent)

Ward 3: Minnie Jackson, Crystal Johnson, *Terolyn Watson* (incumbent)

Ward 5: Steve Hooper, Lydia Lowell-Sherman

Candidate profiles: leecountydems.org

News-Press endorses Dems

Democrats won News-Press' endorsement in three primary races: Curtis Sheard for Fort Myers' Mayor, Minnie Jackson for Ward 3, and Graham Morris for Cape Coral's District 1. *Congratulations!*

Transgender ban

15,000 transgender people currently serve in the U.S. Military, politifact.com estimate.¹ Their futures are now uncertain—all thanks to a presidential tweet. We must show our support for these very brave individuals. They **risk their lives** to help protect us and our nation, *and* by **living openly** as who they are.

The LGBTQ community waits on tenterhooks for a tweet that might remove our newly gained rights, such as marriage equality. We must all **stand up for the rights of everyone**. Please get involved, and help us work to elect compassionate, progressive candidates. **You may be next.**

Abbe E. Forman, Ph.D.
President, *LGBTQA Caucus*

READ MORE at leecountydems.org

KEY DATES: FALL ELECTIONS 2017

- 14 Aug.:** Voter registration deadline (*Primary*)
- 5-9 Sep.:** Early voting (*Primary; 10am-6pm daily*)
- 12 Sep.:** **Primary** [50% wins seat in Fort Myers]
- 22 Sep.:** Ballots mailed to military & o/s
- 3 Oct.:** Ballots mailed
- 10 Oct.:** Voter registration deadline
- 30 Oct.-4 Nov.:** Early voting (*10am-6pm daily*)
- 7 Nov.:** **General Election (7am-7pm)**

Burgers for Benefits

Dine out for a Good Cause!

When: Friday Sept. 15th, 5-9 PM

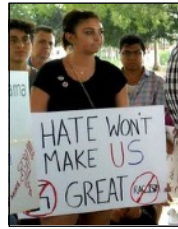
Where: Fuddruckers
5050 Daniels Pkwy, Fort Myers

Be sure to mention you are with us at the register. Fuddruckers will donate a percentage of every check to Lee County Democrats!

¹ It is difficult to confirm numbers as prior to 2016, transgenders who revealed their identity were discharged for “psychosexual conditions,” per Defense Dept. Instruction 6130.03.

Charlottesville

Rally Against Extremism



On August 15, hundreds gathered in Centennial Park to protest extremism and hate, and mourn protestor Heather Heyer’s murder in Charlottesville, VA.



Lee Dems' Chair Yoseph Tedros addresses the crowd

Lee County Democrats’ Chair, **Yoseph Tedros** was one of over a dozen speakers. He urged the crowd to be active in politics and especially to vote if they want change. He said, “I never thought I’d see this happen. I thought those days were gone.”

Devin Carver & Sky Shaw organized the rally on social media in two days.



Over 200 people braved rain to protest hate in Centennial Park

SWFL Mayors oppose hate

Cape Coral’s outgoing Mayor Marni Sawicki and Fort Myers’ Mayor, Randy Henderson joined a national effort of the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the Anti-Defamation League in response to Charlottesville. They are among 240 mayors (35 in Florida) who signed the “Mayor’s Compact to Combat Hate, Extremism and Bigotry.” It says:

“Mayors and their cities must continue to be a beacon for inclusion, tolerance, and respect for all. We will continue to create stronger cultures of kindness and compassion in our communities.”

Are you a resident?

Are you a resident of either the City of Cape Coral or Fort Myers? **Not sure?** You aren’t the only one!

You can check your voter registration card, OR find out at:

Cape Coral: <http://bit.ly/2eHJ1kd>

Fort Myers: <http://arcg.is/2iMy9WWW>

(Links also at leecountydems.org)



Get Out the Vote (GOTV)

We need your help! We are calling Democrats to let them know about the upcoming elections in Fort Myers and Cape Coral.

We have **over 8,000 calls** to make before the primary. We hold Phone Banks on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday from 1-7:30pm at the Democratic Office at 10051 McGregor Blvd. Suite 101.

Please call (239) 939-2866 if you can help, and let us know what day(s) you can make calls.



Political memorabilia

Come see our new display of **political signs, posters, badges** and other memorabilia at the office.

Donations welcome!



Did You Know?

Lee Co Dems receives no financial support from the State or National Parties: all funding is self-generated through events and donations.

Please donate if you can!

Monetary donations are essential, but you can also help by donating **office basics** like: paper towels, toilet paper, soap, antibacterial wipes, coffee, tall trash bags, tissues and cleaning supplies.

Thank you!