

To the office of President of the Monroe County Council it is my hope to be an efficient facilitator between the council, auditor, and department heads. I'll charge liaisons through whom information will be gathered and prepared in an organized manner. I intend to encourage helpful communication between council liaisons for more streamlined work and training sessions. It is time for the council to assume responsibility and preparedness for the annual budget sessions while maintaining a focus on the ongoing development of clear goals that will be reflected in the budget. The budget is a statement of county government's goals.

I am very happy to report that I am confident in the considerable skills and care that each council member brings to the process. I believe the council has an excellent combination of members with institutional knowledge, individual expertise with looking at budgets, an ability to prioritize and mindfully convey their perspectives and cooperate through respectful communication. About my own skills I would say that the most valuable asset I bring to the duties is a willingness to commit the time to collecting information from county government department heads, elected officials, and most importantly, our citizens. Additionally, I am tirelessly curious about and inspired by the hard work our county employees and citizen appointees put into their jobs.

During the ensuing election year I realize that campaigning will have an effect upon our conduct but I also look forward to the heightened awareness it will elicit from the public and media. I hope to have a balanced and disciplined approach to maintaining order during meetings but will not sacrifice the sunlight it will shine upon the values and beliefs of incumbent local elected officials.

I have outlined some personal goals I am interested in pursuing this coming year and discussed them with our Council's Legal counselor, Margie Rice. Included in these goals are ideas that will reflect my approach to being an administrative style of president. It is my plan to maintain "office hours" at the courthouse as soon as my calendar can be planned. These hours will be planned around checkpoint meetings with the Auditor's office twice monthly-- and a round table time that might include guest speakers or visitors. Working in tandem with this plan will be my sharing of a basic calendar of my appointments for knowledge of my availability and whereabouts to be known. The office hours I plan to schedule will be approximately an hour in the courthouse once a week with a fixed regular location (TBA).

Finally, I have a strong consensus from fellow council members that training is a much desired and needed aspect of developing as a council person. This will be more easily developed through the regular meetings and office hours I will keep. Undertaking the development of interns for supplemental help is also something I hope will come to fruition. Ideally, a simple and practical annual or semi-annual council report or newsletter could grow out of the combination of goals I have described.

Sophia Travis,
County Council at Large
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