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Lewisville: Edmondson files for mayor post

By Dan Eakin, Staff Writer

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Winston Edmondson Jr. filed Wednesday as a candidate for mayor in the May 9 Lewisville City Council election.

Edmondson, 31, has been a resident of Lewisville off and on for the past 20 years. His family moved to Lewisville in 1989 and he attended DeLay Middle School and Lewisville High School. After living in Denton and Carrollton, Edmondson moved back to Lewisville about four years ago. He has been the host of the Innovation at Work Radio Show which was aired on two radio stations and is now working on a new talk show project with Time Warner Cable.

Edmondson will face Dean Ueckert, longtime member of the Lewisville City Council. Ueckert filed on Feb. 7 to run for mayor rather than seek re-election to his Place 4 position. Other candidates may file before the March 9 deadline.

Edmondson and Ueckert will be campaigning to seek to replace Gene Carey, who is not seeking re-election after having served nine years as mayor and seven years as a member of the city council.

As of late Friday, John Gorena and Margie Rochelle were the only two candidates seeking to replace Ueckert in the Place 4 position, and Edmondson and Ueckert were the only two who had filed to run for mayor.

Gorena filed Tuesday morning and Rochelle filed late Tuesday afternoon.

Ueckert will continue in the Place 4 position until he is replaced by whoever is elected either on May 9 or in a runoff election. His term as Place 4 councilman expires next year, so candidates for Place 4 are seeking to fill his unexpired term.

Gorena ran unsuccessfully last year against Place 1 incumbent Greg Tierney. Gorena received almost 38 percent of the votes cast in that election.

Gorena, 46, has been a resident of Lewisville for the past 21 years. He has attended most city council workshops and council meetings for more than a year.

Rochelle, 49, is a medical billing specialist and a former Lewisville police dispatcher. She began working as a dispatcher for the Lewisville Police Department in 1985 and, in 1991, became a supervisor for the newly-created 9-1-1 dispatch center. She has been a resident of Texas for 28 years and of Lewisville for 12 years and four months.

Also, the term of Place 2 Councilman David Thornhill expires this year. Thornhill filed as a candidate for re-election Feb. 7 and, as of late Friday, had not drawn an opponent.

Ueckert has served on the city council since 1998 and Thornhill has served since 2006.

Candidate packets may be picked up in the city secretary's office at Lewisville City Hall

between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. March 9 is the final day to file as a candidate.

Ueckert, Edmondson and Gorena have offered reasons as to why they have chosen to run for the office they are seeking.

Ueckert said, "The city of Lewisville, along with the rest of the country, is going through a period of change and difficult challenges. Lewisville needs leadership from a respected and trusted individual who they will be proud to call mayor.

"I have lived and owned my own business in Lewisville for more than 25 years, and believe I have established that respect and trust with the citizens of Lewisville, our business community, and our surrounding cities through my involvement, and commitment to help make Lewisville a home to be proud of," Ueckert said.

"It is vitally important to have a strong and respected leader to turn the challenges over the next few years into opportunities for new and renewed growth for Lewisville," Ueckert continued. "We need a mayor who will command the respect and cooperation of developers and make them stakeholders in our community. We need a mayor who will have the business knowledge and experience to lead our great city. Lewisville deserves a mayor who will make himself available, and listen to our citizens. We need someone who has demonstrated their resolve and determination to always put forth the best interests of the entire city.

"Retiring Mayor Gene Carey always made sure that every citizen's concerns (no matter how large or small) were heard and addressed," Ueckert concluded. "If elected as mayor, I promise to continue in those footsteps, and I promise to give each one of you the respect you deserve. If elected, with the help of you, the citizens, I promise to continue in my resolve to lead this city into a better tomorrow."

Edmondson also listed his reasons for running for mayor.

"I'm running for mayor because it is my belief that the office of the mayor should be less about the genius of the mayor and more about the mayor's ability to inspire and motivate the people that live and work in Lewisville," Edmondson said. "That's what will allow the collective genius of this great community to propel us to new heights. We can do so much more to show the citizens here that their ideas and concerns are important.

"I can typically count the number of concerned citizens that attend city council meetings on one hand," Edmondson continued. "We can, and must do better than that. Those that are upset about controversial issues, such as our illegal immigration problem, must know that we will not ignore them for the sake of avoiding controversy. That is not leadership.

"The people that came to Lewisville from all across the metroplex to drop their ideas in the World's Largest Suggestion Box demonstrated that individuals really do want to be involved," Edmondson said. "They become engaged when the right encouragement is provided. It takes a certain type of leader to provide that encouragement."

Gorena has been active in politics for a few years. He attends almost every council meeting and workshop session except those that take place out of town, such as the recent budget retreat at Fort Worth's Worthington Hotel.

"I got involved because I did not like some of the decisions that were being made," Gorena said. "I agree with a lot of things that they do, but some issues I just completely disagree with. Some tax abatements seem to be a bad choice, this group decided to build a day labor center and decided not to vote on a proclamation that Lewisville's official language to do business should be in English."

"They later dropped plans for a day labor center because I brought attention to it and then the land was not donated because of the controversy," Gorena continued. "The fact is that they made such a bad decision in the first place. If the land was donated, there would be an

official one there. It's bad enough Lewisville has an unofficial day labor site now."

While Gorena has expressed concerns about too many illegal aliens being in the city, he emphasizes that he is not a one-issue candidate.

"I would like to limit political signs, cut costs and work with the county to appraise property values more fairly and accurately," he said. "Most people do not have the time to go and complain about it."

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