

Why I'm running for treasurer

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**caleb
stidham**

• the Republican candidate squaring off against incumbent county treasurer Pam Ferrel, a Democrat, in November's general election.

Erie County voters have an opportunity in November to support a new way of doing business in our county government.

As someone who was born and raised in Erie County, I'm passionate about our community. I haven't spent my entire life in government but have diverse experience in both the public and private sectors. Further, I have new ideas that can keep Erie County moving forward.

That's why I'm running to serve you as county treasurer.

In addition to collecting taxes, the treasurer's primary duties include investing the county's money and playing a key role with the county land bank.

In both of these responsibilities, the current treasurer — Pam Ferrell — has made mistakes that have negatively impacted Erie County residents.

First, Ferrell missed the mark in a major way this year by making poor investments that have cost the county a great deal of money. If we

had invested in longer-term notes, we would have reaped a much greater return on our investments. This is an irreversible mistake that shows poor judgment. I will ensure that Erie County gets an optimal return on our investments.

Second, the current treasurer has made significant errors when it comes to the land bank, an important tool that allows the county to protect property values and prevent crime in abandoned homes. Ferrell has allowed the land bank fund to deteriorate significantly since becoming treasurer in 2014. This is partially because she has vetoed attempts to add, sustainability, to the land bank fund, such as using delinquency fees collected by the treasurer's office.

In addition, as the Register has reported multiple times, my opponent has used the land bank board as a political tool. At one point, Ferrell attempted to stack the board with her relatives, a blatant attempt at a power grab. She

also tried to block efforts to create a women's sober living facility in Erie County, despite support from both Democrats and Republicans. These actions were not just irresponsible but inexcusable.

Beyond these statutory responsibilities, I believe the treasurer has a duty to advocate for sound fiscal management and low taxes. Every officeholder and department head in county government seeks funding from the commissioners. It ought to be the responsibility of the individual who collects the county's revenue, the treasurer, to advocate on behalf of the taxpayers' interests.

But that hasn't occurred in a long time. This is perhaps why the county racked up more than \$100 million of debt in the not-so-distant past under the leadership of my opponent's husband, Tom Ferrell.

We need someone in government to consistently represent the interests of the taxpayers. I will be that person as Erie County treasurer.