

Dear Pine Ridge Residents,

My name is Dr. Holli Herndon, and I am running for Citrus County Commission, District 4, because I believe the people who already live here deserve to come first in the decisions being made for Citrus County. I have lived here for 35 years. I went through our local schools, 1st graduate from the Academy of Environmental Science, raised my family here, worked here, and served here. This county is home.

For more than 15 years, I worked in the educational space. That work taught me how to look at problems from the inside, find where systems are breaking down, and build practical solutions with the people affected by them. I have also worked closely with families, students, staff, businesses, and community partners, so I understand that good decisions are not made from behind a desk alone.

My husband and I are also a small business family. We understand payroll, rising costs, permitting frustrations, insurance, customer service, and the pressure working families face every day. When county government is slow, unclear, or poorly planned, real people pay the price. My husband and I designed Peer Leaders in Engineering, a local nonprofit that gives young people hands-on opportunities in problem solving, trades, engineering, entrepreneurship, and career skills. I believe Citrus County should be a place where our senior citizens can retire safely, working families can afford to stay, and our young people can see a future here.

Pine Ridge is a perfect example of why this election matters. This community is not just another subdivision. Pine Ridge has its own character, its own concerns, and its own history. Roads, traffic, equestrian safety, natural resources, water, and land-use decisions are not political talking points when they affect your daily life, your property, and your peace at home.

My campaign message is simple: Protect. Plan. Prosper.

Protect taxpayers, neighborhoods, water, public safety, and the natural character of Citrus County. Plan for roads, infrastructure, emergency services, drainage, and traffic before more growth is approved. Prosper by supporting small businesses, better jobs, better systems, and a county where families and retirees can both thrive.

I will not pretend that one commissioner can fix everything alone. The board has five members, and it takes three votes to move policy forward. But I can promise that I will show up prepared, ask the questions residents expect me to ask, and remember that I work for the people, not developers, not political insiders, and not government itself.

I am running because Citrus County needs leadership that is honest, practical, and strong enough to slow down when something does not make sense.

Respectfully,

Dr. Holli Herndon

Candidate for Citrus County Commission, District 4

Candidate Questionnaire Answers

1. Campaign Contributions

Campaign contributions should never buy access, influence, or a vote. When a development issue comes before the board, my questions will be public: What is the impact on roads, water, drainage, emergency services, nearby property owners, and taxpayers? I am not taking any contributions from developers or representatives of developers.

2. Seniors and Younger Residents

Citrus County has to protect seniors and still give younger families a reason to stay. I would push for budget decisions that protect EMS, fire, roads, and fixed-income taxpayers, while also improving permitting, supporting small business growth, and building stronger trade and career pathways for younger residents. A county with only retirees and no working families will not stay healthy. Personally, my husband and I started a local nonprofit building a pipeline called Peer Leaders in Engineering.

3. Protecting Current Taxpayers

The people already living here should not be forced to pay for poor planning. I would support updated impact fees, proportionate-share agreements, and developer-funded improvements when new growth creates new costs. If a project adds traffic, drainage problems, or public safety demand, those costs should be identified before approval, not handed to existing residents later.

4. Growth Management and Oversight

I would support a required “growth impact checklist” before major approvals. That checklist should include traffic capacity, road condition, stormwater, water/sewer capacity, fire and EMS response, law enforcement impact, school impact, and consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. I do not support changing the Land Development Code or master plans in ways that weaken protections.

5. Traffic and Public Safety

Pine Ridge needs a specific traffic and safety review, especially with growth around CR 486 and the Suncoast Parkway connection. I would ask for speed studies, crash data, turn-lane needs, signage review, emergency access review, and Sheriff’s Office input. The county should also work directly with state partners, so Pine Ridge is not left dealing with the traffic after decisions are already made.

6. Equestrian Safety

Pine Ridge is an equestrian community, and road planning should reflect that. I would support mapping the most used horse crossings, reviewing shoulders and sight lines,

adding proper equestrian warning signs, and coordinating enforcement in problem areas. Trail safety should be part of transportation planning, not treated like a side issue.

7. Road Paving Improvement

Citrus County does have a pavement management plan and a metric system in place, and that is a good start. The concern I hear from residents is that the final decisions still do not always feel clear or consistent. I would push for the county to publish not just the road list, but the actual reason each road is ranked, why one road moves ahead of another, and what exceptions are being made. Pine Ridge residents should be able to see where their roads stand, what condition score they received, what safety or drainage concerns were considered, and what it will take to move a road up the list. A system only works if the public can understand it and trust it.

8. Preserving Pine Ridge Natural Resources

I would support identifying Pine Ridge's natural assets before they are threatened: trees, wildlife areas, drainage areas, bird sanctuary areas, wetlands, open space, and equestrian corridors. Once those areas are clearly mapped, they should be considered in land-use decisions. The county should not wait until after development pressure arrives to decide what should have been protected.

9. Water Resources and Growth

Water protection has to be tied to development approval. I would push for stronger review of stormwater, drainage, septic/sewer impacts, aquifer protection, and runoff before projects are approved. If growth creates water impacts, the developer should help pay for the fix. Protecting water is not optional in Citrus County. If we use or ruin our resources, we do not get another chance to fix it. We live in a place, others vacation in.

10. Funding Essential Services

Police, fire, EMS, roads, and other core services need honest funding. Impact fees and developer agreements should be used for growth-related capital needs as well as expanding our state partnerships for grant money. Recurring services need recurring funding, not one-time fixes. I would not support using sales taxes, MSBUs, or assessments without a clear project list, public explanation, accountability, and proof that the county has reviewed priorities first.

Bonus Question

I see myself as an extension of the people, bound by the Constitution, the law, and my oath of office. I would be one vote out of five, not a ruler and not a rubber stamp. My job is to listen, ask hard questions, protect due process, and remember that government works for the people, not the other way around. I am running this race to amplify the peoples voice.

