

Candidates flock to courthouse to file for 2018 election

By BRAD STACY The Morehead News Nov 10, 2017



Wednesday was filled with excitement and anticipation all across Rowan County as it was the first day those running in the 2018 primary election could file for candidacy.

Nearly every major role in local politics is up for grabs and a host of incumbents have already filed and made their intentions public, along with two political newcomers vying for the city and county's highest seats.

Local county officers such as judge-executive, county attorney, magistrates, county clerk, jailer, coroner, surveyor, PVA, constable, and sheriff are all on the May 22 ballot.

A host of judges and both U.S. and state representative seats will also be sought.

Both Morehead and Lakeview Heights will see races for Mayor and their respective city councils.

John Northcutt, county coroner, was the first to file when the county clerk's office opened. He has sat in that position for nearly 25 years.

Another incumbent without current opposition filing within the first few hours was Sheriff Matt Sparks. He will be completing his first four-year term after winning in 2014.

Incumbent Ray White, Magistrate of District 1, was second to file but was shortly followed by challenger Nicholas Pecco.

Magistrate of District 3, Charlie Winkelman, began the filing process on Thursday. All four magistrate seats will be on the ballot in their respective districts.

Morehead Mayor Jim Tom Trent announced about a month ago he would seek re-election for his second term, however, that won't go without opposition. Laura White Brown filed for the non-partisan mayoral race shortly after her father, Ray, filed for magistrate.

Wednesday afternoon, Carmen Eldridge Swim registered with hopes of continuing to serve as Rowan County's Property Valuation Administrator.

Elwood Caudill, part of Swim's PVA staff, perhaps made the biggest splash of the early filings when he announced around noon on Thursday his intentions of running for Rowan County Clerk.

Caudill ran in the clerk's Democratic primary in 2014, losing to current clerk Kim Davis by just 23 votes.

Mat Staver, Davis' attorney with the Liberty Counsel that has represented her in previous lawsuits, announced earlier this week that Davis will seek reelection, this time as a Republican.

Former state senator and now current Rowan County Judge-Executive Walter Blevins has said he will not seek re-election for a second term.

His deputy judge-executive, Lincoln Caudill, is currently the only candidate that has made his intentions public to run for the judge's seat. Caudill said he expects to file the proper paperwork next Monday when he returns from a statewide county government conference taking place this week.

Current county attorney Cecil Watkins has also confirmed he will again seek reelection. He has led that county office since December 2009.

Rowan County District Judges William Roberts, who has begun filing the proper paperwork to run again, and Don Blair will also have their seats up for grabs.

Congressman of the 5th District, Hal Rogers, will see his two-year term end along with Rep. Rocky Adkins. Both are expected to file to continue serving in their current capacities.

Jim Barker is currently acting as Rowan County Circuit Clerk and his six-year term will come to an end next year.

Rowan County school board members Scott Davison and Danny Mabry's four-year staggered terms also end. Both seats will be up for a vote.

Commonwealth's Attorney of District 21 Ronnie Goldy has also already filed for reelection. His current district covers Rowan, Bath, Menfee, and Montgomery counties.

Those wishing to run for office in most races have until Jan. 30, 2018, to file.

Prospective candidates can declare their candidacy through the Rowan County Clerk's Office or the Kentucky Office of the Secretary of State.

For more information, visit <https://www.sos.ky.gov>.

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