

# Holmes/Ferguson Submit Their Platform For Lewis and Clark College Board of Trustees Race

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*Note: Submitted by Jack Holmes and Jeff Ferguson, both Lewis and Clark Community College Board of Trustees candidates, with a similar platform in their own words.*



GODFREY - Jack Holmes and Jeff Ferguson entered the Lewis and Clark Community College Board of Trustees race in what they describe: “an effort to keep the beautiful LCCC campuses open and financially solvent for decades to come.”

“Under previous boards and the past president, LCCC had amassed over \$130 million in bonded debt and entered into a number of questionable and failed real estate transactions,” the two said in a statement. “The previous LCCC president and his wife were pulling down nearly \$1 million a year in salaries, benefits, and perks, including a \$2,100 monthly vehicle allowance, while the student enrollment declined by 30 percent. The former rubber stamp board members that led to these problems have mostly been replaced but the taxpayers have an opportunity to get two more conservative minded board members, Jack Holmes and Jeff Ferguson elected on April 6th.”

The two continued: “During a recent candidate forum when asked what the relationship should be between the board of trustees and the administration, current board member Dwight Werts stated we should invest in them (the administrators) as they’re the professionals. Mr. Werts has been on the board for 12 years and boy did he invest in former president Dale Chapman. While enrollment declined, Mr. Werts continued to rubber stamp every perk Mr. Chapman demanded. The board of trustees is intended to perform an oversight function, establishing policies and programs for the good of the school and community. The focus must be on the student and ensuring the district is meeting the needs of the community by providing robust programs that will prepare the students for gainful employment or continuing education at the university level.”

“Dwight Werts and his running partner, Larry Trent have been spreading that Mr. Holmes and Mr. Ferguson have an agenda to close the N. O. Nelson campus in Edwardsville. Nothing could be further from the truth. That campus is a critical part of the LCCC footprint as its location is ideal for meeting the needs of a large population center in Edwardsville and surrounding communities. Given Mr. Werts past performance on the board and Mr. Trent’s decision to run with him, one should certainly question their agenda. Perhaps they are interested in reversing the great strides made by current board members David Heyen (Chairman), Kevin Rust, Julie Johnson, and Chuck Hanfelder, who have attacked the crushing \$130 million debt head-on. Jack Holmes and Jeff Ferguson want to join those efforts to ensure their progress is not erased.”

With a 50-year career in education ranging from teacher to administrator, coach to referee to athletic director, Jack Holmes has had a front row seat to the entire K-12 education system. His illustrious career and his passion for educational success at every level makes him an ideal candidate for the LCCC Board of Trustees. Jack is committed to continuing his legacy by sharing his wealth of knowledge and experience with the board of trustees in a partnership with the administration.

Jeff Ferguson is a product of LCCC and has had a successful career in Information Technology, mostly supporting military and government customers as a contractor. He

also previously served on the Jersey County Board and on the Jersey County 911 Board. His experience in local politics as well as his current managerial position at Scott Air Force Base will serve him well as a member of the LCCC Board of Trustees.

Jack Holmes and Jeff Ferguson said they are committed to reducing the remaining \$120 million debt and the resulting tax rate. The two said LCCC currently spends nearly twice as much for bond and interest payments as they do for education. They also said they will work to lower administration costs while ensuring LCCC remains a viable school choice for the entire community served by LCCC.

"A vote for Jack Holmes and Jeff Ferguson on April 6th is a vote for the successful future of Lewis and Clark Community College," the two said.