



#### Officers

Hans B. Jonassen  
Chairman

Sterling Scott Willis  
Vice Chairman

Robert W. Brown  
Secretary

J. Kelly Duncan  
Treasurer

#### Past Chairman

Lynes R. Sloss

#### President & CEO

Janet R. Howard

#### Board Members

Herschel L. Abbott, Jr.

James B. Barkate

Virginia Besthoff

Christian T. Brown

J. Storey Charbonnet

Edgar L. Chase III

Joan Coulter

Ludovico Feoli

Vaughan Fitzpatrick

Hardy B. Fowler

Aimee Adatto Freeman

Julie Livaudais George

Samuel A. Giberga

John C. Hope, III

Shelby P. LaSalle, Jr.

Mary Matalin

Mark A. Mayer

N. J. "Woody" Oge'

Nolan V. Rollins

Tiffany J. (T.J.) Thom

Ann Thorpe Thompson

Madeline D. West

Andrew B. Wisdom

Brent Wood

Alan J. Yacoubian

#### Honorary Board

Harry J. Blumenthal, Jr.

Louis M. Freeman

Richard W. Freeman, Jr.

Ronald J. French

David Guidry

Paul M. Haygood

Diana M. Lewis

Anne M. Milling

R. King Milling

George H. Porter III

Edward F. Stauss, Jr.

#### BUREAU OF GOVERNMENTAL RESEARCH

938 Lafayette St., Suite 200

New Orleans, LA 70113

Phone 504-525-4152

Fax 504-525-4153

www.bgr.org

## **BGR MEDIA RELEASE**

*For Immediate Release – January 19, 2009*

**Contact:** Janet R. Howard, *President & CEO*  
(504) 525-4152 x107

### **BGR Begins Four-Part Q&A Series with 2010 Mayoral Candidates**

Today BGR releases the first installment in a four-part Q&A series with mayoral candidates, *Questions for a New Mayor*. With the primary on the way, BGR submitted questions to all mayoral candidates on topics in four areas: the city's budget, city services, infrastructure and blight. Four candidates – Rob Couhig, John Georges, Mitch Landrieu and James Perry – responded. BGR is presenting the Q&A to the public in a web-only, four-part series.

BGR asked candidates the following questions:

#### **On the City's Budget**

- The recent city budget crisis is a sign of things to come for the next administration. As state and federal recovery funds run dry, the burden will fall increasingly on local government to maintain itself financially. What measures would you take to increase revenues? What measures would you take to protect and expand the tax base? Be specific about your strategy, including your approach to tax increases, exemptions and economic growth.
- What measures would you take as mayor to decrease expenditures while ensuring an appropriate level of city services? Name at least three specific measures.

#### **On City Services**

- City Hall is widely perceived as deeply dysfunctional. What is your plan for reversing the dysfunction and maximizing the performance and productivity of City Hall? Please describe your approach to service delivery and personnel management. Be sure to address structural and managerial issues and reforms.
- What specific reforms would you make, if any, to increase competition, transparency and objective outcomes in professional services contracting? What role would you as the mayor have in the process, if any? What role would the Inspector General play, if any?

## **On Infrastructure**

- Between the city's sewer, water, drainage and street infrastructure, New Orleans faces billions of dollars in needed repairs. These systems are interconnected, with the failure of subsurface infrastructure contributing to the deterioration of streets, for instance. What is your plan for dealing with the city's profound infrastructure woes? Where would the money come from?
- The mayor plays a major role on the Sewerage & Water Board, as a member and through appointments to the board. What will you do to address the immense financial challenges that agency faces? Be specific.
- What would be your administration's top five priorities for capital investment and why?
- What is your position on privatizing the airport? How would you use the proceeds from any sale or long-term lease?

## **On Blight**

- Please identify the major impediments to blight remediation in New Orleans. What specific changes would you make in local government to address those problems? What changes would you seek at the state level, if any? Be sure to discuss the role of the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority.
- Now, assuming a scenario in which population growth halts, how would you seek to address the overwhelming number of abandoned properties in the city? What funding sources would you seek to implement your strategy?

Today's installment, *Questions for a New Mayor: A Budget in Crisis*, is the first of four. We will issue the next three parts over the course of this week and next. The next three installments will follow on Thursday, Jan. 21; Tuesday, Jan. 26; and Thursday, Jan. 28. BGR will make the *Questions for a New Mayor* series available on its web site, [www.bgr.org](http://www.bgr.org).

"This in-depth Q&A offers voters an opportunity to hear from candidates on bread-and-butter issues that will determine the future of our community," said BGR Chairman Hans B. Jonassen. "We hope it will be useful both for citizens who want to learn more about the candidates and for the candidates who want to communicate their views on these vital matters."

---

*BGR is a private, nonprofit, independent research organization. Since its founding in 1932, it has been dedicated to informed public policy-making and the effective use of public resources in the Greater New Orleans area. For more information call (504)525-4152 or visit BGR's web site, [www.bgr.org](http://www.bgr.org).*