



Board of Selectmen candidates faced voters at the Orleans Citizens Forum 2010 Candidates Night at the Orleans Senior Center April 29: (from left) Carl Freeman, Ben Buck, Mark Carron, Sue Christie, Jon Fuller, John Hodgson, and moderator Sue Kadar from the League of Women Voters. (Photo by Rick Knight)

ORLEANS CITIZEN FORUM MAKES STRONG ELECTION YEAR CONTRIBUTION

ORLEANS—The results are in by now, of course. Incumbent selectman Jon Fuller and Board of Health member Susan Christie won the Board of Selectmen election May 18, prevailing in a crowded field of six candidates. A highlight of the town’s pre-election campaigning, the April 29 Candidates Night presented by the Orleans Citizens Forum gave the 200 or so attending voters an up-front comparison of the half-dozen hopefuls.

While the election winners campaigned saying the town needs to find new sources of revenue such as fees, the meals tax and even overrides to Proposition 2½ to close future town and school deficits, incumbent selectman Mark Carron and finance committee member John Hodgson polled third and fourth, respectively, championing a budget-cutting approach to making town ends meet.

OCF sponsors Candidates Nights for all contested selectman races in town. This year’s event was held at the Orleans Senior Center, in front of a standing room only crowd. Susan Kadar, a former town moderator in Truro, was moderator. Also running were Ben Buck and Carl Fuller.

Each candidate delivered opening and closing statements then answered written questions from the audience. Questions ranged across nearly all budget and policy issues facing Orleans this year. A notable exception was the absence of heated comment or more than passing references to state-mandated beach closures to protect piping plovers and other shorebirds.

According to coverage by *The Cape Codder*, “Christie, a former business owner and 33-year-resident of town, cited her charter commission experience and said she was certain she could “foster a new respect for government and its employees.” She said her business

experience (she was also a real estate agent) would enable her to understand budgets and finances and she would be a consensus builder.

“Incumbent Fuller, a locksmith, in his third term as selectman, is also an Orleans native, but he said the election shouldn’t be about where you come from. ‘The budget needs to be long range instead of one year,’ he said. He supports user fees rather than raising property taxes.”

In contrast, “Carron, in his sixth year on the board, highlighted the town’s ‘spiraling’ debt; said he was in favor of a new police station but opposed a new fire station; supported renovation of highways and parks and wants to get an independent review of the wastewater process. ‘We need to find ways to cut the budget further,’” the newspaper quoted him.

Hodgson, a banker with Sovereign Bank said, “This election is about ideas, business as usual. We need to bring back civility to the board,” *The Cape Codder* reported. “The town, he said, needed to mirror the private sector in its approach to the budget, create an action plan to deal with beach closures and other issues and build a stronger relationship with the business community.” #