Hance files as an at large GOP commissioner candidate

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Prince Frederick, MD - Former Maryland Agriculture secretary Earl “Buddy” Hance has formally filed to run for Calvert County commissioner in 2018. According to online information, Hance, who served as state ag secretary during the O’Malley Administration, is now affiliated with the Republican Party. He will be running for one of the two at large seats on the board. Currently, Tom Hejl and Steve Weems occupy those seats. As of Dec. 18, there is one Democrat running at-large in Calvert, Matt Bennett, who is only 19. Other candidates who have formally filed are two Democrats—Tricia Powell in the First Election District and Holly Heintz Budd in the Third Election District.

Meanwhile, incumbent Commissioner Evan K. Slaughenhoup Jr. announced Tuesday, Dec. 19 that he would not be seeking a third term. The Republican represents Calvert's Third Election District. Slaughenhoup was chosen board president for the final year of the current board's tenure. "I've enjoyed every minute," he stated, adding that unless some other opportunity arises, "I will remain on my path to retirement."

Hance stated in an early-November press release, "I am looking to bring heightened transparency to the Board of County Commissioners." One of Hance's campaign issues with is advocacy of "smart growth with better infrastructure."

Bennett cited on his campaign web site three top issues—money, traffic and transparency.

Powell has indicated the soon-to-be activated Dominion Energy Cove Point Liquefied Natural Gas Plant Liquefaction Unit needs to be given greater scrutiny by the county commissioners. "I am skeptical about the Dominion contract especially because it appears to benefit the Dominion people and county staff more than the residents of Calvert County," Powell (pictured below right) stated. "Also, are our residents really safe? The current board of commissioners should be watchdogging Dominion."

Budd (pictured above, left), the president of Williams and Heintz Map Corporation, is currently a member of the Calvert County Environmental Commission, a panel that advises the county commissioners. Budd has voiced support for conducting a Quantitative Risk Assessment at Dominion Cove Point to ensure safety at the plant. "It's irresponsible not to know the risks that community and everyone here in Calvert County are accepting," Budd stated on her web site.

Tuesday, Feb. 27 is the deadline for candidate filings all across the State of Maryland. Early voting for the Primary Election will be conducted from June 14 - 21. Primary Election Day is June 26.

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