

Incumbents no-show for Holland is Ready candidate event

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The Holland Sentinel

Posted Sep 29, 2013 @ 02:00 PM

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Holland — Gay rights groups have organized a Holland City Council candidate forum.

The three incumbent council members facing challengers this November won't be there.

Holland is Ready partnered with Lakeshore Ethnic Diversity Alliance, the Alliance for Cultural and Ethnic Harmony, Latin Americans United for Progress, Parents and Friends of Gays and Lesbians, Holland Pride and Hope is Ready to sponsor the forum at 7 p.m. Tuesday at Herrick District Library, 300 S. River Ave.

Three city council members are opposed in the Nov. 5 election. Incumbent At-Large Councilwoman Nancy DeBoer is running for her third term. Brian Burch (Ward 3) and Todd Whiteman (Ward 5) both are running for a second term.

DeBoer said she usually attends the League of Women Voters forum.

"I prefer that organization as an objective voice in the community with an established way of doing debates," she said.

The Holland Area League of Women Voters city council candidate forum will be 7 p.m. Oct. 21 at Holland City Hall council chambers, 270 S. River Ave.

Burch, who manages public relations for ArtPrize, is unavailable because of a work conflict Tuesday evening, he said.

Whiteman did not give a particular reason why he would not be at Tuesday's forum.

At-large challenger Don Martin, Ward 3 challenger Richard J. Burlingame and Ward 5 challenger Darlene DeWitt confirmed they will attend.

All candidates were invited, a prepared statement from the coalition said.

"These nonprofit groups have teamed together as co-sponsors to represent a broad range of concerns that are on the hearts and minds of Holland's citizens," it said.

The sponsoring organizations will submit questions to the candidates in advance. Audience member may also submit questions in writing at the event.

Rick Westra will be the event's moderator.

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Richard J. Burlingame Rank 83

One of the main things I believe any representative of our community should be is accountable for their decisions, right or wrong. If elected, I guarantee that if I make a decision that causes many segments of our community to come together and host a forum that I will be there. If Mr. Burch feels that he made the right