

Possibility he may stay, remains in race for city commission

BY EARL WATT • Leader & Times Liberal Mayor Tim Long finished third in the recent city commission primary, and while he may finish in the top four in the general election April 2, Long may not be able to complete his next term.



“We are prepared to announce the possibility of bringing in a new majority partner for our family-owned business, Panhandle Oilfield Services, which could result in a relocation for us in the Oklahoma City area,” Long said in a statement earlier today. Long said the rest of his staff would remain in Liberal, and that the new acquisition would potentially allow the company to grow, adding more local employees.

Long’s name will still be on the ballot April 2, but he said he would ask the new commission to appoint the fifth place finisher if he cannot complete his term.

“While that arrangement is not finalized, I felt it was important to let you, the voters know of this possibility prior to the April 2 election,” Long’s statement read.

Rumors had been swirling since Long’s home has been on the market, but Long said the business opportunity only recently presented itself.

“I have always been committed to doing the public’s business in the open,” Long said. “Whether or not I am elected is not as important as the voters having all the necessary information prior to this election.”

If Long is re-elected, and later steps down, the Commission will have the discretion to appoint a replacement, much like they did a year ago when Commissioner Bob Carlile died while in office, and Dave Harrison was appointed to replace him.

The Commission can set up any replacement process they choose, but Long said since he may only be able to serve a short time that the wishes of the voters should be considered, and that the fifth place finisher should get the nod.

“My wife, Terri, and I sincerely care about Liberal, and as long as we are here, we will do whatever we can to help make this the best community it can be,” he said.

Long will participate in the candidate’s forum Tuesday.

Long's complete statement

To The Community: My wife, Terri Long, and I have always been transparent people. We love Liberal and desire to make this the best community it can be. With much prayer and thoughts put in to this statement, we are prepared to announce the possibility of bringing in a new majority partner for our family-owned business, Panhandle Oilfield Services, which could result in a relocation for us in the Oklahoma City area. While that arrangement is not finalized, I felt it was important to let you, the voters know of the possibility, prior to the April 2 election. Even though there is a chance that we may remain in Liberal, I do not feel it is in the best interest of the community to not have this information prior to the upcoming election.

It has been an absolute honor and privilege to serve as a Liberal City Commissioner and as your Mayor. This is a community where my heart will always be, regardless of the possibility of change.

If elected, I would ask the new commission to appoint the fifth-place finisher if I cannot fulfill my entire term, so that the voters' wishes in this election will still be honored. I realize this may have an effect on the outcome of the election, and that is why I wanted to inform the public prior to this election, so that there is no appearance of deception. I have always been committed to doing the public's business in the open, and whether or not I am elected is not as important as the voters having all the necessary information prior to this election to make their vote.

My wife, Terri, and I sincerely care about Liberal, and as long as we are here, we will do whatever we can to help make this the best community it can be.

Sincerely yours;

Mayor Tim Long