**Jessica McClellan, Democratic Candidate for Monroe County Treasurer**
**Responses to questions from the Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce**
**For the Nov. 3, 2020 General Election**

**What are the top three challenges facing the Monroe County treasurer's office? How do you plan to address those challenges during your next term?**

Cybersecurity, technological advances in billing technology and customer service, closely followed by climate change are the major challenges facing the Treasurer's Office.

Cybersecurity, meaning fraud protection, fraud detection and malware or virus protection are areas where we must continually stay up to date and vigilant. Banks are increasingly becoming technology companies first that also hold our money. Treasurers must be trained on all banking features that offer greater protections against fraudulent activity. I continually monitor security scams and our risk levels to keep our action plans up to date and robust. Up to date security credentials from third party vendors that process our credit card and online e-check payments are required. I also require up to date security credentials from our third party ebilling platform, to protect usernames and passwords. Finally, our staff is regularly trained in phishing and email scams and are required to practice good password maintenance, changing passwords often and not using the same password for multiple platforms.

The Treasurer's Office balances the county's spending to our bank accounts daily, and reviews all transactions on a daily basis. This internal control is one of the strongest detectors of fraud, whether it be internal such as an employee or external such as unauthorized access to an account.

Keeping abreast of changes in technology for mass billing and payment collection is a challenge. New billing technology is available to scan bills and payments quickly and accurately. Billing technology for mortgages is available to reduce the preparation time for mortgage company bill files. There are lots of new ways to support the staff who process bills to make their jobs more efficient, so they can spend less time in rote processing, and more time on bills that require research and problem solving. There are many tools available to us to improve notifications to taxpayers about bills. Ebilling is a powerful tool that we use to send notices to taxpayers through email. It is underutilized but hopefully will gain in popularity with time.

Customer service is not just a catch-all phrase for election time. In this office, it is a human right to own property, feel secure in your ownership and understand all the rights and responsibilities that go along with property ownership. If a customer has owned property for one year or 60 years, a mobile home or a farmhouse, we strive to meet that customer's needs on an individual level. When we say we provide good customer service, we mean that we explain payment options, due dates, and rules and laws controlling those options in the most

helpful way we can to every customer. I address challenges to customer service with more training to the staff, more options on the website and available forms in the office, and better communication to taxpayers on the bill, through ebilling and through the media.

Lastly, racial equality in hiring and climate change are systemic problems that I must address in the upcoming term. We currently post job openings for our 5 person office on the county website and Indeed (an independent online job posting site). Others have suggested to me that I find different avenues to advertise job openings to make these opportunities available to people who do not go to the county website or Indeed. I am very interested in pursuing this. Climate change- I fully support efforts by the county to reduce emissions, reduce waste, and improve energy efficiency at all levels. I am always open to ideas and policy changes at the county that will reduce our carbon footprint.