

# Republican announces candidacy for Hipple's James City County board seat

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APR 26, 2025



Tracy Wainwright

Tracy Wainwright, an author and speaker who has lived in James City County 23 years, told Williamsburg Watch she will run for the Powhatan district board of supervisors seat being vacated by Michael J. Hipple.

The Cypress Point resident describes herself in her Instagram page as a “Jesus lover. Wife. Homeschooling mom. Author. Editor. Reader. Encourager”.

Wainwright, a Republican, will be competing against Democrat Ti’juana Gholson.

Hipple announced in late February that he would not run for re-election after serving for more than a decade. His decision was a surprise to local Republicans, who scrambled to find a suitable replacement.

Wainwright said her platform would focus on responsible taxing and spending and advocate smart growth that takes into account the very different aspects of the county, from rural to suburban to New Town's more urban feel.

Wainwright has self-published a dozen books, had one book traditionally published through Prism books, and is contracted for a nine-book series. She is also a motivational speaker.

Although she home schooled her children, she said she also believes public schools have an important role to play in educating children, because many parents have to work and don't have time to home school.

Wainwright received an associate's degree from the former Thomas Nelson Community College, now renamed Virginia Peninsula Community College. She transferred to the University of Virginia for a bachelor's degree in psychology, then master's in education and school counseling from William & Mary.

She said she was approached by the Republican party five weeks ago and agreed to run several weeks later, after extensive conversations with her family.

"My husband and children were all completely in favor and on board," she told us.

Wainwright said she has already begun having door to door conversations with voters and is getting her publicity photos taken today.

"As I talk to people and ask what are your main concerns.... I'm getting pretty different answers depending on who I talk to," she said.

She said she needs to spend more time getting into the nuts and bolts of the county budget and the budget of the Williamsburg-James City County schools, which account for nearly half of the county's spending.

"There's a lot of hard decisions coming up" about how the county should prioritize its spending, she said. "It's not our money that we are working with...it's the

citizens' money....sometimes you have to make hard decisions that aren't fun and aren't comfortable.”

Wainwright said she plans to do extensive door to door campaigning, as well as campaigning with other Republican candidates and speaking at events and gatherings.