**Leo Longworth**: Hi, my name is Leo Longworth and I'm from Bartow, Florida. I've been involved with politics as a city commissioner for 25 years. Yeah, so I have really enjoyed the experiences of being a local elected official. And it's very important. Sometime ago I learned that the government closest to the people is the government that works best, and it really does.

(00:27) I mean, you don't see your congressperson or your state legislators in Publix or in the hardware store or in the convenience store, but they see us and they see us every day, all the time. And that's not bad. That's a good thing because yet I've been able to garner input from people and it helps me to make better decisions. So I can say that since I have been a local elected official, that the issues that we have faced really affect our citizenry more than anything else.

(01:10) The state laws, the federal laws, the local laws are the laws that affect people are more closer to the people and affect them, impact them the most. So it's been valuable, it's been interesting, and I have been honored and humble to have served a local community.

(01:29) So I became motivated in becoming an elected official by just kind of being involved with being on city boards and city commission and city committee, excuse me. And I've got to know the nuts and bolts and the workings of the city. And, of course, I was approached by the incumbent in the seat that I'm in at that time. And he indicated that he didn't want to run anymore and he thought that I would be good to run because I had been there. Plus I had a grandmother who passed away in the late '90s who attended every city commission meeting almost.

(02:13) And she was a retired educator and well read. And she would talk to me about the issues and the things, even though I wasn't there, she would come home and when she and I would have conversations, that's a lot of the conversations would be about the city issues.

(02:31) And I tell you something else too, something that impacted my life back in college. I went to school in college and university, not university, South Carolina State and University in Orangeburg, South Carolina. And in 1968 we had what is now called the Orangeburg Massacre. The Orangeburg Massacre was when we as students were trying to integrate a bowling alley in.

(03:02) And we were trying to just have a better quality of life for the people in the city. And I wasn't directly involved all the time, but I was there and three students were killed. And it just came to me like, it kind of crystallized in my mind that we need to make sure that we have a voice wherever we are in our community. And so the best way to me to have a voice in your local community is being a local, elected official, or being a true activist. So that's really what motivated me, and I enjoy it.