

1. What makes you stand out from the other candidates?

I stand out from the other candidates in a few ways. I am a master's level social worker and I also have a second master's degree in public administration. This means that I have a different perspective into the opportunities and limitations of government. I understand the government functions best when set up to help people become independent rather than to provide long term assistance. It costs less to help someone be successful than to have to support them long term through either public safety nets or the criminal justice system. I have also worked for the county for the past sixteen years and have ten years of management experience. I am a trained listener and mediator which is very important in representative government. Elected officials need to listen to understand rather than listening to respond.

2. What is the one issue you plan to address?

I have had the opportunity to speak with many people over the last few months both at events and while canvassing the city and there is a common theme of people not feeling heard by the city government. People feel left in the dark on important issues until it is too late to change the plans. I believe that we need to slow down and give people the opportunity to participate and offer feedback regarding changes and planning how we go forward as a city.

3. What do you hope to accomplish as a city council member?

I want to ensure that Muskegon is a city where both restaurant owners and the dishwashers they employ are both able to thrive. While it is important to bring in and support job creators, it is equally important to make sure that Muskegon is a place that people at all wage levels and live and grow. Currently many businesses are struggling with finding and maintaining staffing levels. There are a lot of reasons for that, but one significant issue is the lack of housing for lower income earners. Much of the available housing in Muskegon is out of reach for even two people

earning minimum wage. We need dishwashers, gas station clerks and hotel house keepers and people need to be able to live where they work, particularly for lower earning jobs. People cannot commute for minimum wage.

4. How have you already been volunteering or serving in the community?

I have been a regular volunteer for Family Promise since the program came to Muskegon. I also serve as secretary on the board of directors for MOCAP. I have been on the board of trustees at my church for the last decade. I also have served at a Muskegon high school band parent for six years. I still help even though both of my boys graduated several years ago. I serve at Supper House and have done so for fifteen years. I also volunteer regularly as opportunities arise throughout the city such as Taste of Muskegon and United Way Day of Caring.

5. If you are not elected what will you do to try to help work on the ideas or issues that are important to you? And if you are elected how will you solicit input from community members?

If I am not elected, I will continue to be an involved member of my community as I have been for the past twenty years I have lived here. Muskegon is my home and I want to see it thrive no matter who is on the commission.

If I am blessed enough to be elected, I will seek out community input in as many ways as I can, including holding regular "office hours", attending neighborhood association meetings and generally being available when community members have a concern or an idea they want to share.

6. When you hear about something that concerns you in the city, what steps would you take to see that this concern is resolved?

I suppose it would depend on the particular concern but generally I am a straight shooter and will attempt a direct conversation to get more perspective. I have come to understand that while we may not all agree on the means or the methods used, most people want Muskegon to thrive and be successful. This means having hard conversations

and finding the places where we can come together to move things forward.