

## CANDIDATE ANSWERS

### TAMMY THOMAS

CANDIDATE FOR CITY COUNCIL – WARD 1

#### BASIC QUESTIONS

##### ***Q2 What should be the core functions of city government?***

Ensure public safety and provide adequate and appropriate infrastructure. Without these key elements, you do not have a city.

##### ***Q3 What are the secondary functions that you support?***

City has a role to provide appropriate parks and trails for our communities. Shawnee has done an exceptional job in this area and we must maintain this investment for continued enjoyment. Be a good business partner. When businesses are looking to build and expand, be available, be workable, offer value, but remember the only funds we have are tax dollars. Stewardship is HUGE! Government seems to forget where the money comes from. In many cases, what seems to be just a little additional tax to some is the make or brake difference for others.

##### ***Q4 Are there areas you feel the city government should not be involved with?***

DO NOT COMPETE WITH SMALL BUSINESS. Be Shawnee. Of course, learn from their successes and failures of our neighboring cities. City government needs to be careful involving themselves in partisan ideological causes that can divide our city.

#### COMMUNITY CENTER

##### **Q5 Did you endorse the proposed property tax increase to fund a Community Center? If you're on the council, did you champion it? Please be specific and cite examples of either your support or opposition to the project.**

My family and I did NOT support the Community Center. It was entirely too expensive to move forward besides growing government. Again, we are about Fire/Police/Infrastructure. This proposition is in the realm of private business. This project was a bottomless pool of tax money.

##### **Q6 What can be done in the future to more accurately gauge the appetite of voters when it comes to the potential of a tax increase?**

Be transparent at the start. Do not craft questionnaires in a deceptive format. I'm so thankful the community had the opportunity to vote on this. Had this only gone to the City Council, it would have passed and citizens would have been handed the bill for years and years to come. The vote NO group did what our City Council SHOULD have done.....be honest and transparent about what the proposal is.

#### INFRASTRUCTURE | TAX INCENTIVES & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

##### **Q7 Regarding the failing pipes that need to be addressed within the next several years, how would you tackle that and pay for it?**

Infrastructure is a core function behind public safety. Triage the pipes. When aspects of our infrastructure are failing, they move to the front. Structure the budget to ensure these costs are nonnegotiable obligations. Review each department and their budget. This is an area I would look strongly at.

**Q8 What is the proper use of these incentives? When is it improper? Is there a form of incentive you favor over another? Is there any type you find more troublesome? Be as specific as you can.**

The use of incentives deserves stricter scrutiny than is currently being provided. I'd like to see us get as close to a level playing field as possible, where the free market is the driver of whether a development occurs or doesn't occur. Government involvement can tip the scales in a way government should not. If Government cannot articulate a compelling interest, then Government should not be involved. Example compelling interest..real blight, lifting up areas where crime is prevalent, dealing with difficult terrain in order for development to occur, preserving history of a community just to name a few examples. All too often the cities are utilizing incentives in questionable circumstances, utilizing them over a long period of time and/or renewals of these incentives. Incentives need a fresh look and not an automatic stamp of approval.

### Miscellaneous Questions

**Q9 Much has been made about new apartments and the proper balance between multi-family housing and single-family homes. What is your position?**

We need to be very careful about where we put multi-family especially in and around our highway frontage. These are PRIME sites for commercial development. This is where a solid strategic plan is so critical, but most importantly the tactical execution of the plan is most essential. I believe we need to have a careful and thoughtful review of all multi-family proposed locations. We may be able to be more effective with the land use and achieve our commercial tax need as well as meeting the needs for additional housing. Again, it takes a solid tactical execution. I completely support a solid review. Let's have citizens be involved.

**Q10 If elected, how would you keep yourself informed and up to date of the issues and concerns residents of Shawnee and/or your ward believe are important and should be addressed?**

I will continue to utilize technology to keep citizens informed as well as use it as a tool for citizens to contact me with their concerns or ideas/thoughts. I would like to have a quarterly or semi-annual meeting with folks in Ward 1.

**Q11 "Dark Store Theory" - Have you been aware of the current Walmart lawsuit here in Johnson County over the tax structure for businesses (Yes or No)? How do you see this affecting the City of Shawnee and what should the City communicate to the residents?**

I have been made aware and we need to be preparing. We need to prepare for the worst and hope for the best. If the worst were to result in the case, we need to start NOW to have a good/better/best response. We cannot stick our head in the sand and hope it doesn't impact us approach. That is simply irresponsible. Our citizens need to be made aware now, and there has been open talk about it at CC meetings but on a very limited basis. There has be NO discussion/question of it while campaigning.

**Q12 Any Other Comments? Please provide any other comments you think are relevant.**

I want to be a model of civility, respect, and trust to our City Council. It is an honor to serve our city, and our citizens deserve our respect whether they agree with us or not. There is currently an over arching tone within the council of disrespect and lack of trust. City Council members need to be honest and share a true opinion. This requires us to be vulnerable....here lies the tipping point of strong leadership. We need to be deliberate and intentional about common objectives and NOT individual agendas. Integrity is everything.