

## CANDIDATE ANSWERS

### DAWN RATTAN

CANDIDATE FOR CITY COUNCIL – WARD 3 (4 YEAR TERM)

#### BASIC QUESTIONS

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

City government is responsible for serving the needs of its residents. This includes

- local legislative authority and policy making;
- maintaining facilities and infrastructure;
- zoning;
- community health and safety;
- economic development;
- timely and accurate communication of its laws and plans

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

- Promotion of community participation and the social and cultural improvement of residents.
- Support of small businesses.

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

- Partisan politics
- Anything that puts us in conflict with state government.
- Anything that prevents us from delivering on our core functions.
- Emergency management, highway patrol, motor vehicles.

#### 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.**

Yes, I endorsed it based on the fact that I support increased recreation and healthy activities for our community. Many people asked me if I had a problem with the community center because I own a gym. I believe that the city is big enough to support a community center and private gyms because of different preferences by residents. A few questions that I had were whether we could have used the current civic center or existing building, and whether we could have completed the center in phases over a few years to lessen the burden.

I do think that the communication and execution of the plan was not done properly. As a city, we know from history that residents are sensitive to tax increases. We have to have longer lead times on major projects like this and make sure there is truly community buy-in before moving forward.

**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?**

Citizens must have confidence that the tax increase is needed and that high priority issues are being addressed.

We must have a true, accurate, 2 way communication stream that is not NextDoor or a blog. The numbers need to be laid out and explained in detail so that each person knows the personal impact.

There needs to be early, frequent, accurate communication of the details from city leaders.

Finally, I hope that the city masterplanning will give us insight on future potential tax increases.

## 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?**

- Evaluate and prioritize the areas with greater risk then create a plan to repair the pipes with high potential for failure.
- Use the general fund for immediate and imminent failures.
- Businesses pay a higher assessment for the repairs than the flat fee that residents pay, so additional commercial development may help avoid using tax increases as a means to pay for the repairs.

### **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.**

There's a long list of incentives that our city uses. Many incentives are for blighted areas or areas that would not thrive without the incentives. "But For" is a phrase used to test whether the area would develop at the same rate without the incentive. Can we justify the incentive because the project is meeting an unmet need or they are doing a significant investment in our community? The process for selection should be clear and objective. The risks and benefits to the city and residents must be known. The project should be mutually beneficial and have historical data to prove that it will deliver jobs or growth. The development needs to be held accountable and clearly prove how many jobs are added or money is brought into the city. Also, the project needs to be delivered on time and on budget within a small variance or receive penalties. Finally, we should continue to be transparent on showing who has received incentives and the status of their project deliverables.

Community Improvement Districts are designed to help improve the community by bettering conditions for existing businesses, and attracting new growth. There are several examples in KCMo that resulted in growth & improvement of the area when the incentive was applied.

## 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?**

All of these options should be available in Shawnee. The city's masterplan must address and detail how we will integrate multifamily housing into our community. Somehow, in the 'burbs, we have convinced ourselves that apartment dwellers are bad people. As I have talked with people on both sides of the issue, I have learned that residents want their kids to come back and live closer after college, or their aging parents don't want the burden of home maintenance....so the demographics are shifting and we should take advantage of it. If apartments are built, the city leaders must work with them to put in long term standards for appearance and maintenance. In 10 or 20 years, the units must still look good. Also, have the developer do something that benefits the larger community, like improved landscaping in the surrounding area.

Finally, many people have said they'd like more dining options in Shawnee. Increased population density is a measure that may attract certain businesses to our area.

**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?**

Part of my platform is to improve the communication within our city. While facebook is a tool, there's nothing more valuable than getting face to face with folks to discuss issues and concerns. I would personally make myself available in-person, by phone, by email and by social media to listen, respond, and act. I would also like to work on a systemic means of frequent, accurate and 2-way communication for the city and it's residents.

**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?**

Yes.

The city and Desoto schools could potentially lose over \$2MM and \$1.5MM in revenue respectively if the Dark Story valuation process is used. Shawnee Mission schools would lose significantly more revenue too.

The city should explain the issue to residents and explain the impact to the city, their taxes and what, if any influence they have over the outcome. It will affect our masterplans and our budget in a significant way!

**Q12 Any Other Comments?Please provide any other comments you think are relevant. In particular, we would like to know why you chose not to fill out the survey in the primary.**

I can be reached at rattan4shawnee@gmail.com

My website is dawnrattan4shawnee.com if you would like more information on my platform or my bio.

I did not know if I would advance in the primary and now that I am a candidate in the general election, I am happy to complete the survey. I look forward to your evaluation and endorsement for my city council campaign.