

## CANDIDATE ANSWERS

### KURT KNAPPEN

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

#### BASIC QUESTIONS

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

Basic infrastructure, police and fire services, parks and recreation.

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

Economic development and community events that bring our city together.

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

Partisan issues that should be left for the state and federal governments.

#### 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.**

As a candidate running for the Ward 3 position, I was in support of the Community Center proposal. However, while both of my competitors were 100% in favor, I publically stated that I was concerned about the fact that it was projected to run in the red 5+ years out and stated that we needed to find a more fiscally responsive way to approach the CC. I proposed that if the CC passed and I were elected, I would move to reduce the number of full-time employees in order to ensure the center broke even within the first 3 years. My proposal was a to "start low and go slow" so that we could ensure that we were doing this in a fiscally responsible manner.

**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?**

We can more accurately gauge the appetite of voters willingness to agree to any future tax increased by:

1. Ensuring that as a City Councilman I provide opportunities to hear from my constituents regularly at Town Hall forums, etc.
2. Promising to send any future tax increases to the voters for approval instead of passing tax increases without voter approval.

#### 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?**

The problem with our storm water pipes is a real and important one. Basic infrastructure is the most important and basic function of local government. This has to be addressed with a long-term plan. However, we can address the worst problem pipes systematically one pipe at a time based on need. KCMO has pipes that are 100 years old and still functioning... most of ours are 40+ years old. I would propose that we immediately designate \$5 million per year for the next 20 years from the annual budget, and take money from the general fund for any significant failures in the meantime (a major failure would cost to approximately \$1.5 million to repair). We have the funds available in the general fund to cover immediate needs, and we can plan and repair the most needed upgrades in a systematic way over the next 20 years without significantly cutting the current overall budget.

**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 are many ways that we can and should incentivize businesses to come to Shawnee. We should use each appropriately. Specifically, we should pursue workplace readiness programs and leverage the Shawnee Chamber of Commerce to help entrepreneurs walk through necessary steps to grow and thrive. Additionally, the Council should work to reduce regulatory burdens for businesses. I am opposed to excise taxes, which is a business friendly approach. Regarding TIFs, we should not "give away the farm" but if a developer is willing to make a significant investment in our community, they deserve to reap the rewards of lessened property taxes for the amount that they have increased the value of the area being developed. I am NOT a fan of Tax Increment Finance Districts, where shoppers pay an extra tax on sales that go back to the developer - without the local shoppers knowing that the extra tax is being levied.

#### 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?**

My position is well known... I have called for the long-term plan in Western Shawnee to be re-visited and potentially reduce the number of areas currently zoned for multi-family development in favor of middle-class homes that maintain the neighborhood feel. I am NOT against multi-family development, but believe that any future MFD should be well planned, not overly "dense" and complement our existing neighborhoods.

**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 stay informed in a variety of ways. The Shawnee Post is a great resource, I stay in constant contact with a variety of residents and elected officials and I would plan to hold quarterly "Town Hall Meetings" for Ward 3 at the Monticello Library in order to stay in touch with Ward 3 voters. Most importantly, I will encourage voters to call me directly on my cell phone and be continually accessible to residents!

## CANDIDATE ANSWERS

### **KURT KNAPPEN**

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

### ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

**Q2 "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 am well aware of this lawsuit and the potential consequences to property taxes in Johnson County and Shawnee specifically. Our city needs to have a strong plan to deal with the budget implications if Walmart and others win this legal battle. Until we find out the result and possible ramifications, the city should take a fiscally conservative approach to the 2020 budget

***Q3 Any Other Comments? Please let us know about any additional points you think are relevant for our consideration. Thank you!***

No comments.