

Parowan City Council Candidates Interview

In August of this year, the Parowan Chamber of Commerce hosted a “Meet the Candidates” night in which all the City Council primary candidates were presented with two questions and asked to respond within a prescribed time period. It was quite an informative event and voters made their selections for the primary election.

We now have five candidates to fill three City Council spots in the General Election. Since the primary, the candidates have been relatively quiet and there is not another “Meet the Candidates” night scheduled. In seeking an alternative, I queried the internet for typical questions to ask City Council candidates and whittled it down to this list. Each current candidate was asked the same set of questions; their answers have not been edited in any way except for formatting purposes. It is hoped that Parowan voters will appreciate the time and energy the candidates have put into expressing their views. Here are the results – ENJOY!

Question	David Burton	John Dean	Dave Harris	Jim Shurtleff	Jessica Smith
<i>If elected /reelected, what will be your top three priorities?</i>	The citizens of Parowan are my top priority; they are my first concern. As such, my first priority encompasses many things involving safety and services which provide the quality of life and economic stability our citizens deserve. My second priority is water and all infrastructure and service needs. Third is the need to be vigilant about growth as responsible growth contributes to our citizenry and more specifically impacts our water and infrastructure and ability to provide valuable services.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) My top priority is to work closely with the members of the City Council, Mayor Halterman and City Manager Dan Jessen to accomplish current city projects and goals. I want to bring a spirit of cooperation and unity to the Council. 2) My second priority is to work closely with city departments to maintain and prolong the use of City assets. 3) My third priority is ensuring Parowan stays on budget by encouraging fiscal responsibility and working with others in the City government to secure grants. 	<p>Better understand all the inner workings of the city including budget and department responsibilities. The Police and Fire departments are vital to our community and we need to make sure they have the necessary staff and materials to operate safely and effectively.</p> <p>Find a way to get peace with the city officials and the citizens with the best communication possible.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Being fiscally responsible. 2. Maintaining and improving infrastructure. 3. Providing the Parowan citizens and the employees of Parowan City Corporation with the best possible service. 	If I were elected, the top three priorities would be: 1) Improvement of communication between the city and our constituents. 2) Recreational programs, with a main focus on our youth. 3) Responsible growth, with a focus on water conservation.

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<p><i>What would you do to improve communication between city officials and the public?</i></p>	<p>I propose that an additional newsletter should be added to our work in conjunction with the city's current newsletter, with a summary describing the things that are going on throughout the city on a more frequent basis. This could include things that directly impact our citizens such as work projects for streets, water, electric issues, etc. I also encourage all citizens to be active and attend as many meetings as they can so they can hear and be a part of discussions and decisions that are taking place. I believe in open communication and I am happy to answer anyone's questions anytime and have made my cell number available for everyone. The citizens should feel like they can call their council members at any time and have their comments and concerns validated.</p>	<p>My goal is to implement a monthly newsletter from the City Council and post it to Parowan's website and social media. I also want citizens to be able to contact me through email, phone, social media etc... when they have a concern.</p>	<p>The information is always provided for the public, but many citizens are not sure how to get it. Multiple avenues including social media and regular mail should be regularly updated to make sure citizens of all ages and abilities can find the information.</p>	<p>Be open and willing to discuss matters of Parowan City business with the citizenry, and provide my email address and phone number to those interested. Also, continue to encourage residents to attend city meetings in order to educate themselves and better understand the workings of the city.</p>	<p>The first thing I would do to improve communication between city officials and the public would be to oversee the improvements with our web page. We need to add and update information. There are employees who aren't on the page, our calendar needs to be updated, minutes for committees aren't posted, forms are hard to find.... it just needs a revamp. We also need to get our social media pages up and running. The library does a great job with posting things, but I believe some things need to come from the City. If that means we need to hire a web developer or even use a student for an internship, then so be it. There are a lot of avenues we could explore.</p>

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<p><i>How do you plan to involve residents in the decision making process in our town?</i></p>	<p>I support a citizens council which would represent a variety of groups from our town population. This community council would collect concerns and ideas of the citizens and present them to the City Council. I believe this would help residents have more of a say and stake in the community's business.</p>	<p>When possible, I want citizens to get involved in the decision making process by attending Council meetings and by joining committees. If citizens can't get involved physically, I want to encourage open communication with me. When I know concerns and opinions, I can make better decisions as their representative on the Council.</p>	<p>I will be available in many different forms including email, text, or in person. Residents should feel welcome to visit with me. I also feel it is important for them to come out to city council and other meetings.</p>	<p>It is absolutely essential to listen to the various opinions of the citizens of Parowan concerning matters of the city. However, in a Representative Democracy the elected official must also use their own judgement to evaluate and decide what course of action to take. In the final analysis, it is as Edmund Burke said to the electors of Bristol in November of 1774, "...your representative owes you not his industry only, but his judgement; and he betrays, instead of serving you, if he sacrifices it to your opinion."</p>	<p>Let me start by stating that this is a two way relationship. Do I think that the city offers opportunities for the residents to be a part of the decision making process? Yes. But I don't think they have exhausted all of the ways they could include residents. But then I also have to ask, when these opportunities are available, are residents showing up? The city provides open sessions, public comment time during council meetings, and tries to put together committees. Now, this can go back to how well these opportunities are communicated. The city did try to poll the community on the pool, but failed because they didn't follow up with the findings. I do believe polling is one of the best ways to get the residents involved. Is it the perfect tool? No. Can the data be skewed if you don't put</p>

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					<p>questions into place that would determine valid responses? Yes, it can. But with everyone's busy schedules, how else do you get residents' feedback if they aren't able to show up in person to these sessions? Emails are another way, but I would suggest that every council person, the Mayor, the City Attorney and the City Manager are copied in on those.</p>
<p><i>If someone came to you with a proposal to build a new piece of public infrastructure in our city (road, bridge, facility, etc.), how would you evaluate whether or not that project was worth implementing?</i></p>	<p>First of all the cost of the project would have to be considered. As this is stated as a proposal, I am assuming Parowan City would have to bear the cost. In this case it would have to be determined if the city could afford it, or how funds could be obtained to pay for it. Prior to that point, the council would have to determine if there was a need for such public infrastructure as well as</p>	<p>I would use all of my resources to thoroughly research the proposal and evaluate its pros and cons. If I didn't know the answer, I would seek out people who could help counsel me.</p>	<p>First budget needs to be considered along with talking with city manager, mayor, and city employees to get their input on the idea and make sure its benefits are a positive to the community. I also would welcome and listen to community input.</p>	<p>First and foremost, it must be fiscally possible for Parowan City. We must always remember that we are spending tax dollars – the people's money. We must remember also, that it is always "the greatest good for the greatest number".</p>	<p>I would be the first to tell you that I would need more guidance on this, and I am sure there is more to consider. But right now, I would evaluate the following: 1) If this is needed/wanted to resolve an issue we are dealing with, 2) How much usage this piece of infrastructure will be used, and 3) the cost to upkeep it in the future. If all three things are positive, then</p>

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	<p>a return on investment to the city, or the benefit to the citizens in the form of improved services. It would also need to be determined if there is a possibility to increase tax revenue which would help the citizens' tax base.</p>				<p>I would feel comfortable moving forward. However if one of these doesn't "pass" then we need to really consider the "why" behind it.</p>
<p><i>If you received a \$1 million grant (without matching funds required) to use for the city any way you wanted, what would you do with it and why?</i></p>	<p>One million dollars seems like a lot of money, which it is, but when it comes to municipal projects, unfortunately it's not. It takes an extraordinary amount of money to plan and engineer new projects. For this reason, I would like to take the \$1 million dollars, stretch it, and complete as many unfinished projects that we could, such as: lighting and finishing the baseball and soccer fields, finishing the Dry Canyon Storage Pond for the secondary water system, finishing the swimming pool venue project, finishing the Meeks' Pond head gate and spillway structure and completing the project to provide water</p>	<p>I would first pay off any current debt the City has. I would then put the rest of the money away to use on maintenance and upkeep of current City assets.</p>	<p>Pay off city debt.</p>	<p>I would fund the High-Water Diversion Project, transferring the high water from the breakwater to the county gravel pit to recharge the aquifer; capturing that water rather than letting it go to the Little Salt Lake to be lost to evaporation.</p>	<p>If there was a grant out there like that, I would be looking for the catch. Ha ha. Unfortunately, I don't think a million dollars would cover what I would want to use it for. So I guess I would want the city to invest it and double or triple our funds. Ha! Seriously, there is so much that could be spent on those good causes. Lights at the baseball field, an indoor rec center, fixing up the buildings and infrastructure that are in bad shape, increasing our budget for events in this town that could bring in tourism, money that could be used for other grants that do</p>

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	<p>year round to the pond, and utilizing and protecting the city's water rights to the pond. There is also a pump park bike track and pickleball courts that will need to be finished. These are just a few of the projects where the \$1 million dollars, if used wisely, could benefit the city.</p>				<p>require match money....the list goes on and on.</p>
<p>When making decisions, how do you determine what is in the best interest of the City?</p>	<p>As stated previously, I find out what the citizens want and need, then separate the two. We do have to prioritize our wants and needs because we have limited resources, but we can try to balance both. If we don't have the funds to do something, then instead of abandoning the project, we can investigate what other resources there are and try to pursue these opportunities. I also evaluate the impact on the city and the citizens, whether negative or positive, and base my decisions on this input, taking into</p>	<p>Information is key. I want to encourage open communication with Parowan citizens. I want their opinions and concerns to be heard. I will also confer with other city officials.</p>	<p>The city is a business and I've been in business for 25 plus years so I know I can make the right decisions for the city and the citizens. Budget and needs, have to be considered and need to be balanced.</p>	<p>Once again, it is what is the greatest good for the greatest number and at what cost.</p>	<p>When making decisions I think it is important to have the biggest picture possible. That means not only seeing how this decision will impact us now, but trying to look into the future and seeing what it may look like. Because I don't have a crystal ball, that information will come from the experts. If someone is coming to the council or a committee to go over an item, they should be providing the committees /city with as much accurate information as possible. And the committees</p>

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	<p>consideration both the short term and long range impacts.</p>				<p>/city should be requesting this prior to the decision making process and taking the time to review it and fact check it. Once the facts are gathered, you weigh out the pros and cons, present it to the public, put your own personal agenda aside and move forward. If the information is based on facts rather than opinions, it will be hard to argue with. Sure you can always argue the source, but that should be part of the review period. I know that sounds easier than said and done, but really, you do a disservice to the constituents when you give them incomplete information presented as the facts. Then you discount their viewpoint when, after presenting them with incomplete information, you move forward in the direction that is opposite to what the</p>

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<p><i>What do you think is the most important role that city council members play?</i></p>	<p>The most important thing we can do is to represent the citizens of Parowan and to bring unity to both the citizens and the city. The citizens of Parowan are my first priority. Parowan City is a business which belongs to the citizens of Parowan. The citizens are the town's greatest asset. As a council member, I have and will continue to keep this important role as my focus.</p>	<p>City council members represent the interests of the citizens of Parowan. Council members work cooperatively with the Mayor, and with each other, to make decisions to benefit the people that elect them. Council members should be involved in and know what is going on in the community.</p>	<p>Making sure the city is protected and the citizens are treated fairly.</p>	<p>To ensure that all citizens of Parowan receive the best possible services and that their tax dollars are responsibly spent.</p>	<p>majority of the constituents want.</p> <p>The most important role that a city council member plays is an advocate. You are representing the people of Parowan. You support or recommend causes and policies that represent them. Not just you, not just your small group of friends, not just your own personal organizations you are involved in, but Parowan as a whole. By doing so, it is easy to be transparent, because you have put your personal agenda's aside. Again, that begins by developing and growing that two way relationship between the City and the Constituents. Each of these bodies have responsibilities in order to work together. If one is not pulling their weight then it becomes an us against them and how can you advocate for people who won't let</p>

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					you know their frustrations or concerns... I guess you can always go to a certain Facebook page (wink wink).
<p>What makes you the best candidate for this position?</p>	<p>I have a deep love and respect for this city. I have experience, knowledge, work-ethic, ability, and drive. I listen to the citizens. Though we have to make many tough decisions on the City Council, I am not afraid of the task and enjoy difficult jobs and digging for solutions. I have proven leadership. I know and understand the town of Parowan and the people of Parowan. I am also conservative; this was proven as I voted against last year's budget which included a 32% increase for police wages, a 9% increase for employee's wages, and triggered truth and taxation which I could not support. I make objective decisions and represent the citizens of Parowan. I have no relationship or</p>	<p>I am fully retired and have both the time and the energy to research and discuss issues with city officials, committees, and citizens. I am also positive and service-minded. If there is a service project, you can usually find me there. I was a business owner for 14 years. I hope to bring all that I learned there to the Council.</p>	<p>My experience in running my businesses and the success all of them have had has taught me to work with budgets and find solutions to solve problems not just bandaid issues, but for the long term.</p>	<p>1. I have the experience, being a city councilman over the last 6 years. 2. I have the education that helps me see different sides of an issue. I hold a Master's Degree in education and a Bachelor's Degree in history, with a minor in political science. I taught history and political science at Parowan High School throughout my 28-year teaching career, and I am an avid life-long learner of both studies. 3. I have the time and willingness to continue serving my community.</p>	<p>What makes me the best candidate for this position is that I offer viewpoints of a different age group than what is currently serving or will serve on council. I am 35 years old. My kids are in the gradeschool to teen age range. I am raising said kids in Parowan right now, while dealing with the current economic challenges of being priced out. I work a full-time job. I'm not doing this because I have "the time". I'm not doing this because I want to make a career out of it. If anything I don't have the time and as mentioned, I already have a job. I am doing this because I believe that I can make a difference in these next 4 years. I am willing to</p>

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	<p>ties to anyone in the city organization and aim to make Parowan a better place for future generations. I understand that what the council does now will impact all of us in the long run, so I take each decision very seriously with the future in mind. I am the "get it done" candidate.</p>				<p>show up and sacrifice my time, so you can use your time to be with your family. But I am going to ask, if I send out a poll, just answer it!</p>
<p>What Parowan City projects have you accomplished /driven/ participated in and how?</p>	<p>Motioned to open town swimming pool by July 4th and worked with others to make it happen! Protected Parowan's interest in the Iron County Fairgrounds Transfer Agreement. Helped obtain 60 acres from UDOT for Parowan. Fought to preserve a Parowan School Board Member. Promoted ordinances to protect the town cemetery. Obtained a grant to dredge Meek's Pond. Initiated Dry Canyon Pond for the secondary water system.</p>	<p>I have participated as a volunteer in many city projects. Because of my involvement as coordinator of the Iron County Fair concession stand, the Parowan Pool Committee asked me to evaluate the best use of the snack bar at the pool. I have also donated many items for the pool.</p>	<p>I was a strong advocate with our Mayor in getting the swimming pool reopened. I have donated time and money over the years to strengthen our schools and community. My cabinet shop provided all new office cabinets and bathroom stalls and donated material for soffit and fascia on buildings.</p>	<p>I have accomplished, working as a part of valuable teams and committees, the following Parowan City projects (with some still in progress): 1. Water Board: Revamping the water rates and conservation measures, the new water fill station, helping the city navigate the restoration of the pressurized irrigation system after the Brian Head Fire, beginning the process to work toward the Dry Canyon Holding Pond project, altering the watering scheduling parameters of the pressurized irrigation</p>	<p>I haven't participated in City projects. I have participated in organizations within the community that sometimes overlap with city projects. I have participated as a member of the Parowan Prevention Coalition at the Concert in the park series. I was the PTO President at the elementary school for the past two years and worked with city officials in renting out the Aladdin theatre. I have volunteered to serve baked goods at Old rock church days. I did not take part in the pool project as much as</p>

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	<p>Advocate for development of Six Mile Spring.</p> <p>Proposed reinstatement of business impact fees to help pay for infrastructure.</p> <p>Advocate for water recharge plan.</p> <p>Supported Schools in: soccer fields, P-Hill lighting, and Honor Code ..</p> <p>Safeguarding Parowan's water rights.</p> <p>Helped to improve Parowan's sewer system capacity including pivot application.</p> <p>Collaborates with essential government entities.</p> <p>Assigned to the Old Rock Church Committee and supports renovation.</p> <p>Represented the City Council on the Planning and Zoning Commission.</p> <p>Served on the Shade Tree Commission.</p> <p>Oversaw the Town Parks and Recreation.</p> <p>Acted as the City Council member for the</p>			<p>system for greater city-wide pressure regulation, and altering the diversion at the Forebay to better track the volume of water being delivered to the city and the farmers in the valley; therefore providing more accurate conservation data to the state. 2. Airport Board: New fueling agreement and equipment, on-going prairie dog mitigation, new FBO contract, and airport runway rehab project. 3. Historic Preservation Committee: Historic District boundary revision. 4. Veteran monument upgrade and maintenance. 5. The Old Rock Church preservation and stabilization. 6. Helped ensure that Parowan City and its citizens were not saddled with an \$11 million expenditure for an aquatic center.</p>	<p>I would have liked to, but I did show up and use it as much as possible during its open season. I have served as a member of the library board, and have tried to put activities together for youth (I taught a Youth finance class and started a YA book club that I help oversee).</p>

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	Heritage Foundation Committee. Supported Community Service Organizations.				
What is your view on growth in Parowan?	I believe in controlled, responsible, managed growth. I know it will come whether we like it or not due to the current growth trends locally and around the state, but the citizens of Parowan should not subsidize it to accommodate growth. Growth should be handled responsibly with the current residents' needs and desires in mind. Infrastructure needs to be taken into consideration but water will be the major limiting factor of growth, and both require foresight and planning. I believe if we don't control growth it will control our destiny, so we must be extremely intentional about how, when, and where it occurs.	Growth in this beautiful town is inevitable. Managing that growth will be incredibly important. I want to preserve the traditions and everything that makes Parowan great, while making sure we manage our natural resources and infrastructure correctly.	Growth is coming whether you like it or not. It does need to be carefully done and the people coming need to pay for it, not the city or the residents.	Growth in Parowan needs to be managed in a way that the city is not paying development costs. Growth cannot be allowed to overwhelm our infrastructure and water availability. Growth in Parowan should help enhance, not destroy, our unique history, traditions and strong community feeling	Since viewing the presentation that the City Manager, Dan Jenssen presented at a previous council meeting. My view has increased. From what I was hearing around town, it was this fear of the big influx of people that was going to be happening. And yet, we have been on a very slow growth rate historically. The presentation did confirm my concerns that water is going to be the determining factor of growth. We can't do what Washington County is doing. We need to be smart and not outgrow and disrespect the resources we have been blessed with and disrespect those who have been here previously. If we can find a way to do that, then I don't think

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					<p>growth is bad because I do think there needs to be an emphasis on more affordable housing for individuals. I think we need to put some licensing requirements on how many vacation rentals we allow vs long term rentals. We are heading towards a retirement community, and we also live at the bottom of a ski resort. I grew up at the bottom of a ski resort and what once used to be an area that was affordable and had a lot of families, is now no longer a place I can return to because homes are multi million dollars and families can't live there anymore. To some that may seem amazing, but for those who want to keep the family business alive or afford the next generation a similar experience to raise their family in a place like this, then we need to be thinking outside the box.</p>

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