

August 2024

Dear Neighbor:

As I sat in the back of the room at the recent Candidate's Forum, I had a series of mixed emotions.

First, I was **grateful** to Ron and Connie Hall who set up the forum and had it very well advertised and organized. Ron's questions to the candidates were spot on....and the Candidate responses were revealing.

Second, I was **surprised** at some of the responses from the Candidates. The answers revealed how little some of the Candidates have been involved in the various meetings.... especially the ones outside of traditional working hours.

We can all agree that we have very busy lives and that getting to a meeting, or a workshop is not easy or in some cases even impossible. How will that play out in the future? Thus, one of the problems: When we have workshops that need or require Independent Companies or Government agencies, like in the case of the Water Study, having meetings outside of normal business hours isn't going to happen. The solution could be a meeting by Zoom or Google Meets and to record the meetings and make them available to those who are interested or want to be involved so they can get up to speed, can give feedback and be "in the know". Sometimes, the Leaders need to be in the room, like when they testify at a SLIB Board meetings, at a Legislative Session or WAM Meetings (Wyoming Association of Municipalities).

Next, I was **frustrated** that folks were not aware of how the various Council Members have been delegated responsibilities and the public did not see their contributions. Some of those responsibilities are for a full term and some are on an as needed basis.

As an example, Eric Marlatt took on the Position of Mayor Pro-Tem and stood in as Mayor when I was not available. That responsibility was shifted to Steve Kelley when Eric became ill. Now Steve has the duty of running meetings and fulfilling the duties of the mayor in my absence. Also, Eric has served as Parks and Recreation Chair and based on his personal business experience, he trained previous employees in tree management, park management and helped the School with the Arbor Day Activities.

Steve is the Committee Chair for the Planning and Zoning Committee. Check in with Steve and see what that Committee does and how you can help. Also, Steve has spent a lot of time working with the Town Maintenance Department based on his previous position as Supervisor of that Department. He has a vast knowledge of the Various Systems, Equipment and was involved with a number of Street/Sidewalk Construction Projects.

Josh Hopkins is the Committee Chair for the Budget Committee and spent a large amount of time reviewing numbers, asking questions and gaining a perspective on Government accounting and funding vs private companies. He participates in the Workshops and at Town meetings.

Also, I am **worried** that some of the Candidates have not been to very many (or any) of our monthly Meetings or Workshops. Do they know what the real issues are and how we are currently addressing them? Will they be able to pick up where some of us leave off with the major concerns

and projects and see them to completion? Are they prepared to take the necessary training for Certification with the State of Wyoming Auditors Office? (Currently all the Council and Staff are trained and certified).

Finally, I am **hopeful** that Candidates will participate now in various ways in the Town Governmental Process. Each Candidate has a reason for running and a goal in mind of how they can help improve our Community for the next Four Years. I am happy to meet with any Candidate to discuss their concerns and goals. My personal goal is to spend as much time in the next **Five Months** helping to clear the way for change, identifying the issues from the *inside* out (rather than the outside in) and then stepping aside and leaving it to the next administrators to move Our Town forward. The New Council will be sworn in on January 6th, 2025 @ 7:00 pm. Plan to join us to encourage and thank them for stepping up.

Your Current Mayor

Carol Ash