

**Election 2013
Candidate Questions
Elmwood Mayor**

First I want to thank everyone who has been a part of the government of the City of Elmwood for his or her contributions to our community. The people who contribute to making local government function are so important to people's lives, but rarely garner much interest and involvement by voters. Citizens certainly do not offer much support and positive involvement on a day-to-day basis. The current city government has had to navigate some rough waters and everyone should be grateful for their efforts

What do you bring to this position?

I bring the personality, academic background, technical talents, and dedication to work every day for advancing and promoting Elmwood. I can create an open dialog among our citizens to increase the effectiveness of city government. I can build contacts with the leaders of other localities to share experience and possibly costs to make our government more efficient and more prominent. I can coordinate a social media outreach to potential new residents and new businesses. I can work with our existing businesses to make sure their services and products are effectively promoted. I will help turn elmwoodil.org into a tourism and business service index for Elmwood. I especially want to feature our local contractors, skilled individuals, and local growers to increase their visibility. I am especially good at old-fashioned hard work; I was a farmer after all. I would appreciate the voters giving me the chance to use the talents and tools I have to bring to the office of mayor and see what four years of hard work can accomplish.

What are the most important issues facing Elmwood in the next four years?

The most important issue is growth. Elmwood can pursue stable growth so that revenues increase allowing more services for less cost per citizen, or we can tip in the other direction of slow or no growth. If economic growth doesn't occur revenues will decrease, services will be cut, and the cost per citizen will go up. We have recovered establishing a good base to build on, but now is the time to coordinate our outreach. Growth makes all future decisions for the City of Elmwood much easier.

As mayor I would be in continual and open dialog with all our citizens, we can draw on the collective wisdom of the community to arrive at the most practical decision. Everyone will not agree with a decision, but if everyone is fully informed and their opinion respected, even tough issues will find pragmatic solutions.

Is there something the city can do to deal with vacant houses?

On each vacant property the City of Elmwood should start a case file. We should fully document each complaint instance: the cause of the complaint, the date, and time. The city should document the response to the complaint, date, time, and the cost to the City of Elmwood in responding to the complaint. The mayor should attempt to contact the owners of these properties. Each attempt should also be

documented. Any response from an owner should be dated and notes of communication recorded. If owners are unresponsive and a nuisance situation continues then an assessment of the fair market value of the property should be conducted. At this point the City of Elmwood should consider pursuing its right of Eminent Domain. These properties could be made available to young couples wanting to use sweat equity in improving the property, raising the fair market value, and buying out the city's interest under clearly defined contracts. I could help prepare reports and do prep work for legal cases decreasing, the amount of hours the City of Elmwood would have to pay in legal fees.

Any other comments?

Elmwood has great resources if we pull together and unify our efforts. The use of the Internet and other modern tools of communication are essential. Everyone has a role to play in Elmwood's future. Everyone's experience has value, their knowledge must be part of the process. I often worked on Saturdays for Farmers State Bank a decade ago. I tried to keep computers up to date and not interfere with productive hours. I had the privilege of listening to Mr. Lott, Mr. McFall, and occasionally Mr. McKinty on many of those Saturdays. I learned much about Elmwood and their vision and efforts to make it a great town. I want to honor their vision for Elmwood in using the office of mayor to be a full time ambassador for Elmwood for the next four years. I would very much appreciate your support.