

LA GRANDE

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES?

Ashley O'Toole:

A commonly observed strength of mine is my ability to bring people together to achieve common success. My time in the Navy, along with several years in the real estate industry, have taught me how to effectively work with and manage people in a variety of contexts. I take a practical approach to problems and find solutions based on facts and common ground. This will translate well in the context of city council.

I am constantly working on my communication skills. Sometimes, I can be too direct with people or jump too quickly into problem-solving mode. I am striving to be more empathetic and to actively listen. I understand how important collecting background information and gathering all opinions is to finding a long-lasting solution.

Justin Rock:

While serving on the city council, I have gained first-hand experience and knowledge. I have over 13 years of extensive experience in the areas of governance, policies and procedures. During this time, I have served more than nine years on the City of La Grande Planning Commission, five years on the City of La Grande Budget Committee and nine years as an appointed member of the Mt. Emily Recreation Area Advisory Committee. I enjoy working with my constituents for the overall good of our community. While I am experienced, I believe an area that could be improved on is making sure my voice is always heard.

AS A CITY COUNCILOR, WHAT WOULD BE YOUR FISCAL POLICY?

Ashley O'Toole:

My time spent on the La Grande Budget Committee and the Chamber's Board of Directors has taught me that every line of the budget is important. We need to be frugal and good stewards of taxpayer money — not every idea is worth chasing. I think it's important we continue to spend money on maintaining or improving our city's infrastructure, but also focus our dollars on items that drive and enable La Grande's growth and economic development. The future and direction of the city should be planted firmly in the budget and fiscal realities.

Justin Rock:

Since serving on the city council for the past four years, I have always strived to make conservative decisions when it comes to the budget and any fiscal decisions. I make decision based on the laws, rules, and procedures set forth by statute, the city charter, bylaws, ordinances, and resolutions and not based on my personal feelings or preconceived bias. I take all different perspectives into consideration before making decisions. I really try to listen to the overall voice of the people.

WHY SHOULD LA GRANDE VOTE FOR YOU?

Ashley O'Toole:

I consider myself a regular citizen, not a politician. My history of community involvement and organization has helped me understand what works (and what doesn't) in La Grande. I know there are ways in which the city government can be more involved in some things and less involved in others. By getting involved with local politics, I can take my passion and love for our city to the next level and better understand our community's needs.

When I'm elected to city council, I'll be engaged in learning even more about our city government. I want to understand the government's function and processes, and look forward to sitting on some of the advisory committees. I look forward to sitting with my fellow councilors and hearing input from La Grande's residents, city staff, and others to make informed decisions that keep the city moving forward.

My ultimate goal is to create a thriving and sustainable La Grande that will welcome growth both in population and economic development. La Grande and the Grande Ronde Valley are a great place to live, work and play. We should be proud of where we live and welcome anyone who wants to join us. I hope the citizens of La Grande will see that I deserve their vote in November. I hope they will allow me the opportunity to show them what my vision for La Grande is, and how I plan to work with my fellow councilors to get us there.

Justin Rock:

The amazing citizens of La Grande should re-elect me because as your current City Councilor, I always try to listen to the community as a whole and from that, figure out the best course of action. I take all different perspectives into consideration before making a decision. I make decisions on laws, rules, and procedures versus personal feelings or preconceived bias. I always strive to make conservative decisions when it comes to the budget and any fiscal decisions. If re-elected I would continue to listen to the voice of the citizens and strive to continue to make La Grande thrive and encourage positive growth.

UNION

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES?

Hugh Johnson:

My strengths: I have a strong heart for the community and its people. I am very well versed in administration, program development, policies and procedures, politics, legal requirements, contracts and public relations. I also have very good communication skills. I understand the core needs of Union and how to meet those needs in a manner that increases the quality of life throughout our community.

My "weakness" is that I think outside the box. I believe in creative solutions that are quality, long-term and cost effective. I do not believe in "run of the mill" politics, the consequences of which have ultimately resulted in the condition our community is in with drugs, businesses closing down and empty buildings up and down Main Street. I believe everything rises and falls on leadership. I believe the way a city is governed has a direct impact on the financial welfare and quality of life of its people. I strongly believe cities exist to serve the best interests of citizens, not the other way around. I believe people are best served by a small, efficient and charitable government whose perspective and administration of city ordinances is foremost from the viewpoint of the citizens' needs and circumstances, but that also includes the overall perspective of the quality, appearance and welfare of the town. I believe the citizens of Union are best served by a government that is hard working and motivated to make individuals, local businesses, schools, churches, neighborhoods, community events and families prosperous.

Brian McDowell:

My strengths are learning quickly; connecting with and developing people; faith in my own skills and abilities; constantly striving for excellence; and inquisitiveness. My weaknesses are sometimes being overly optimistic and less patient that I can be with bureaucratic processes, in some instances.

Leslie McMillan:

My strengths include determination and motivation. Building a business in a small community was a risk and an example of determination and motivation in action. I work to balance those traits with a practical sense. I researched and made the practical decision to invest my dollars toward a business prior to purchase. I know that motivation, determination and practicality as your City Council Representative will translate to collaboration and partnerships locally and countywide.

SHOULD UNION RESTORE THE CONTRACT WITH UNION COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE FOR ENHANCED LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES?

Hugh Johnson:

I believe a good relationship with local law enforcement is very necessary. I also believe the county taxes citizens pay already entitle them to full coverage of law enforcement services. Pay-for-hire of police services is a dangerous road to go down. It also leads to higher taxes to cover contract fees.

That said, I would support some sort of specific enhanced contract that addresses the growing drug trafficking problem in Union, a thorough investigation of home burglaries, vehicle break-ins, and thefts, an exemption to in-home searches by law enforcement when there is a death in the family from stroke, cancer or some other medical condition and automatic enforcement assistance of family law court orders for Union citizens.

Brian McDowell:

Possibly. From my perspective there are a number of steps to take in order to answer this question fully. First, I think we need to confirm the community's actual law enforcement coverage needs versus wants, and rank or prioritize items on both lists. Second, we want to estimate any future law enforcement needs that may come about in the next 5-10 years. Third, we need to affirm available law enforcement coverage options (including the former contract) and associated costs. There may be additional options available, such as negotiating the addition of Reserve Officer positions that could be filled with Union residents and could be dedicated for service primarily in Union. It will be critical to obtain input and advice from potential law enforcement providers to assess mutually beneficial, efficient and effective coverage options given identified needs. Fourth, we decide and execute a coverage option (or no option) under a shorter-term contract so we can fine tune and assess prior to committing long-term.

Leslie McMillan:

Law enforcement is vital to a safe community. An ideal law enforcement strategy would be a sustainable local police force with collaborative Union County Sheriff's Office support. That is not realistic for the City of Union in the near future. At this moment in the city's history, I do support funding a contract with the Union County Sheriff's Office.

DOES WORK NEED TO BE DONE TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF UNION'S STREETS?

Hugh Johnson:

Regarding the city streets of Union, the short answer is yes, work needs to be done on street improvement. However, Union is a unique community still characterized by a classical, small town atmosphere. It is important that any work done to the streets be cost effective and retain the historic, small town feel. Repairing streets and any related programs should not result in extra costs to home owners or small businesses.

Brian McDowell:

Yes, in selected areas. From my exposure driving around town, talking with neighbors and other residents and getting their input confirms there are areas that should be targeted for improvement. The range of improvement is likely broad and varied depending on the location. Some places may benefit from things such as stop signs, street signs, or speed bumps, where others may benefit more from resurfacing or reinforcing. Additionally, improvements in sidewalks, painted markings, and railings could be beneficial, particularly for pedestrians. It would be vital to obtain community input in developing any comprehensive traffic or road improvement plan to assist in determining what improvements should be made, where they should be made and the criteria for determining priority. Additionally, it would seem wise to fund the study and have it executable in phases so that not all work would need to be done at once. This would allow us to pay as we go and either not borrow at all or borrow minimally for a short period of time, likely resulting in the lowest and most advantageous cost structure.

Leslie McMillan:

Nationwide, small communities are working and struggling to fund street projects. The City of Union is no exception. It would be nice to see more of our roads get a face lift. This is an ongoing effort related to budget and I look forward as your City Council Representative to guiding priority projects and improving city streets.

CIRCUIT COURT JUDGES

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES?

Mona K. Williams:

My strengths include my experiences as a circuit court judge, both a criminal prosecutor and a defense attorney, a civil attorney (family law, juvenile law, mental commitments), my experience analyzing criminal cases by considering the rights of victims, the rights of defendants and the safety of the public, and my ability to bring people together to address community needs and make tough decisions.

Regarding weaknesses: Throughout my career, I have done all my own research and document preparation. As a judge for both Union and Wallowa counties, I'm learning I can rely on court staff and trust they are thorough and professional in their work. With only two judges, there is no way to keep up with the workload without relying on court staff.

Rep. Greg Barreto for House District 58
Principled Common Sense

Thank you for the honor of representing you for the past 4 years.
My vision for our district and state has not changed:

Jobs

Unleash private enterprise and make Oregon a business friendly state.

Limited Government

Allow people to be independent and responsible. Government should only do what is necessary.

Education

Local control and school choice so our children can achieve their greatest academic potential.

Natural Resources

Restore balance. Let's use our natural resources instead of letting them burn up every summer.

Values

Protect the unborn, the disabled, and the elderly. Defend our 2nd Amendment Rights. Take care of our veterans who sacrificed for us.

**Please vote for me on
November 6th!**



Paid for by committee to elect Greg Barreto