

1 October 2009

Littleton Examiner Candidate Questions

1. Question: What are the major responsibilities of a member of Littleton City Council?

Answer: Littleton City Council members have three principal responsibilities. First, City Council members have a responsibility to seek out citizens' ideas and concerns, and to be accessible and available for communication with citizens. Open, transparent government requires that Council members seek to understand the community's thoughts, ideas and wishes, so as to be able to make informed, responsive decisions. When I was on Council in 2007, I felt one of the most important aspects of the position was to be available to citizens who had problems or issues. I believe that distrust of government is often the result of citizens being cut-off from direct personal interaction. My ability to reach out and connect with citizens as the personal face, phone number or e-mail address of government will be essential to breaking down barriers and helping citizens feel more connected with their City.

Second, City Council members have the responsibility to bring proactive leadership and vision to the City as a whole. Council has a duty to shape the City's strategic objectives and to bring together citizens, stakeholders, partners and others to ensure that Littleton remains a vibrant community. Council members must "do their homework" to understand the short-and long-term implications of proposed ordinances, should learn from other communities what works and doesn't work, and should seek partnerships with organizations such as LPS, South Suburban and neighboring communities to streamline government services. With respect to principles of leadership and team work, I think the following concepts from John Adair are illustrative:

Situational Leadership

There is no one correct style of leadership - it depends on the situation. When setting the agenda for the task and team such skills such as goal setting, planning, communicating and evaluating may be used: The correct leadership style will depend on the leader himself, the time available, the knowledge and experience of the team, the culture and the priorities. Consistency of character and flexibility of method / style are a strong mix.

Leadership or Management

There is a clear contrast between leadership and management. Leadership is about giving direction, developing teams and inspiring others by your words and deeds. Management is about administering efficient resources.

High Performing Teams

Every good leader has a product - A High Performing Team. This is characterized by: Clear realistic goals, shared sense of purpose, openness, progress reviews, building on the lessons of their experience and using resources efficiently. Build that teamwork by getting out there amongst your team, only accept the best (especially from yourself), delegate much and often and listen. Show humility, respect and trust for your team mates.

Third, Council members have specific responsibilities that are succinctly presented on the City's Web site: "As the City's governing body, the Council sets policy for the administration. The Council's major responsibilities are consideration of ordinances and resolutions; adopting the annual budget; and representing the City on various boards and agencies such as the Denver Regional Council of Governments, the E911 Authority, Metro Mayors Caucus, and the Transit Alliance." The Littleton City Code stipulates that City Council members must follow certain rules of conduct. For example, Council members may not vote or be involved on an issue that would benefit themselves or a family member, must disclose any conflict of interest, etc. Other legal requirements for Council members are governed by open meeting and campaign finance laws. It is my personal belief that City Council members must not only meet – but exceed – the official rules governing their behavior.

2. Question: What do you see as the most important issue facing Littleton City Council?

Answer: The most important issue facing Littleton is the need for leadership and vision to: (i) Positively impact the projected General Fund shortfall depicted in the Five Year Forecast section of the City's 2010 Proposed Budget book; and, (ii) develop and implement solutions that will retain the character and essence of Littleton as a special place we value.

We have seen upgrades in the areas of open communication, transparency and attention to detail per resolute citizen feedback and Council commitment. The budget communication process, for example, is dramatically improved over the approach I witnessed just two years ago, and Channel 8 makes Council and Commission deliberations readily accessible to more of the community.

Having materially addressed these concerns, the Council now needs to shift their priority to other pressing issues starting with declining revenues, how lower revenues will impact City services and how we can navigate our City through these tough economic times. As a strategic leader, I know how the planning process is fraught with uncertainty and I also know there are possibilities that revenues could begin growing again as the economy improves. I want to help Littleton plan and prepare for this recovery. But I also understand a complex organization like the City of Littleton is counted on by thousands of citizens for the services it provides and we must have realistic plans beyond just hopes and prayers. I am proposing a three prong solution.

First, City budgets need ongoing scrubbing to remove non-essential costs. Economically attractive partnering opportunities with other municipalities, districts and entities should be explored. The City needs to discover and adopt the best practices other cities and government entities are using. Metrics and benchmarking should be applied to improve quality of service. This step will allow the City to measure and report on performance. The goal is to make sure that essential services such as police, fire, EMT, senior services, roads, library and museum are as minimally impacted as possible while productivity is improved in the event budgets need to be trimmed. Safety and protective services for our most at risk citizens must always be carefully and dutifully protected.

Second, to increase revenue, we need to actively promote Littleton to business owners and families looking to relocate. With assets such as an educated population, varied housing options, easy access to mass transit, an abundance of open space, parks and recreation areas, excellent, top-ranked schools, Historic Main St., Bemis Library, the Smithsonian-

affiliated Littleton Museum and our proximity to the mountains, Littleton can be at the top of the list of desirable places to live, work and thrive. What's missing is a focused marketing campaign to tell our story to businesses that will maintain the character of our community. The existing Economic Gardening program must be sustained as a component of healthy economic development, but it should be supplemented by building broad statewide and nationwide awareness of the benefits of locating a business in Littleton.

Third, I'd advise allocating a specific budget for incremental Code Enforcement personnel. In a recession, code enforcement is one of the easiest and most impactful ways the City can support residential and commercial property values while we await economic recovery.

3. Question: How will the residents of Littleton be better served if you are elected?

Answer: Three years ago I left corporate America to become Chief Financial Officer of ARC Thrift Stores, a Colorado charity. With 19 stores along the Front Range, we exist to fund the ARC Chapters who advocate for people with developmental disabilities. Over that time, we've grown revenue to \$43 million and distributed \$10 million to the ARC Chapters mainly because the management team focused on leadership and the vision of what we could become. We've done all this by: (i) Partnering with our stakeholders; (ii) adopting best practices to grow the business; and by, (iii) promoting ARC Thrift Stores so customers know they'll get great value and they'll feel good by supporting a good cause.

I recently served on City Council and currently serve on the City's Historical Preservation Board. I am president of the Friends of the Littleton Library and Museum, have graduated the Littleton Police Department Citizens Academy and am a member of Littleton Rotary Club. I understand Littleton from many perspectives and my vast experience with Littleton City Government makes me uniquely qualified to serve again on Littleton City Council. A synopsis of my accomplishments is as follows:

District II Council Representative (2007)

- Initial funding for the Littleton Police Department's K-9 Unit.
- Sewer tap fee compromise supported by Council and sanitation districts.
- Outreach to business owners to identify redevelopment opportunities.
- Partner with Littleton Housing Authority on community housing issues.
- Five-year financial forecast.

Community

- Historical Preservation Board
- President, Friends of the Littleton Library and Museum
- Littleton Police Department Citizens Academy
- Littleton Rotary Club

Business and Education

- Chief Financial Officer of ARC Thrift Stores, a Colorado Charity supporting persons with developmental disabilities and their families.
- Master of Business Administration degree, Indiana University
- Bachelor's degree in Economics and Management, Albion College, Michigan
- Certified Public Accountant (registered)
- 28 years experience in international corporate finance.

I am 52 years old, married 24 years to Kelly, three children including Jay, a graduate of Littleton High School and presently a sophomore at Whitworth University in Spokane, Washington; and, Mark and Eric, twins with cerebral palsy at Littleton High School. My initial interest in public service stemmed from work with a grass-roots parent group advocating for the developmentally disabled before the State legislature. We've been Littleton residents for 15 years. I resonate with US Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor's quote: "I aspire to be more than the sum of my experiences while acknowledging my limitations."

4. Question: What question do you wish the Examiner had asked?

Answer: The other question I'd like to address is, how do we do a better job of bringing the community together? Groups like the Sunshine Boys and Citizens for Littleton's Future seem on occasion to be more preoccupied with each other than with the community at large. At the same time, other citizens feel isolated. While walking the Oakbrook neighborhood in SE Littleton recently, I knocked on a door, introduced myself, offered a flier and had a quick chat with the home owner. Upon closing the conversation, the gentleman said, "Hey, thanks for remembering we're part of Littleton." In short order, we need to become a more inclusive community, and refocus non-productive energy into making Littleton a better place to live. There's an opportunity to tap into the community's significant collective brain power and prioritize inviting all citizens to participate in the City's progress. A couple good examples of programs in this vein are the Greater Littleton Youth Initiative and the Littleton Immigrant Integration Initiative. Another might be setting a goal to be the greenest City in Colorado by 2015. Audacious goals tend to yield unexpected results. So the challenge isn't who's right or wrong, included or excluded. Rather, it's how do we compete vs. communities locally and nationally to our collective advantage using all, not just some, of our resources. There's no reason Littleton can't be the standard for other cities, both in terms of our amenities and how our citizens pull on the oars together. It just might be a lot of fun.