

Manassas Park City Council

Manassas Park City Council 2018

Description:

The City of Manassas Park operates under the Council-Manager form of government. Legislative powers are vested in the mayor and six city council members who are elected at-large for four-year terms. They establish City policy, pass resolutions and ordinances (laws), approve the City budget, set tax rates, approve land use plans, and make appointments such as selecting the city manager, city clerk, city attorney and members of various boards and commissions.

Vote for 3 candidates. Vote for no more than 3 candidates.

Candidates (choose 3):

Preston M Banks



Party: Independent

Biographical Info:

Website: <http://www.voteforbanks.com>

Email: preston1611@gmail.com

education/Degrees: B.A. University of Virginia M.A. George Mason School of Public Policy

Questions:

Q#1 : *What economic issue is of most importance to the future of the City of Manassas Park?*

A: The city's faces challenges due to the high debt of \$128 Million total debt incurred in previous decades. While I am not the cause of the high debt, I am responsible for fixing it and setting the city on a better path forward. The next four years the city will pay the highest debt payments – in this year's budget we had to make cuts and not fund all of the city's needs just to balance the budget. Budgeting during this time period of high debt payments will be challenging. I have the knowledge and experience to guide the city through these challenges. Here are the steps I support:

- Improve the city's financial management practices
- Improve the collection of delinquent and uncollected tax revenue
- Fiscal conservative budgeting
- Economic development to bring businesses in to increase and diversify our revenue
- Create a debt reserve fund.

To financially survive we have to do these things. If executed well, we can improve the city and turn this challenge into an opportunity.

Q#2: *What transportation issue(s) needs to be solved and what will you propose for solutions?*

A: The two major transportation issues are Rt. 28 and the parking garage for the Manassas Park VRE station. The good news is that the plans to improve Rt. 28 have been developed and funding obtained. I worked on the committee which developed the plan and to get the \$108.5 Million in funding from the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTVA). The plan is being reviewed in a federally required Environment Impact Study. I supported the funding for additional lanes on Rt. 28 in Fairfax County to the Prince William County line. Next I will make sure the plans get implemented and make any decisions, if needed. Also, Conner Drive is planned to be extended to Rt. 28 to ease congestion on Manassas Drive. The funding is being provided by VDOT matching grants and NVTVA. I supported and advocated to get state funding for the parking garage at the Manassas Park VRE station which we received. Next I will work on the agreements to ensure they are in the best interests of the city.

Q#3: *What changes, if any, are needed to better compensate Manassas Park City school teachers and staff?*

A: The School Board created a compensation committee which explored options and offered solutions to better compensate Manassas Park City school teachers and staff. The School Board passed the compensation solution in their April meeting this year. I attended the meeting and listened to the teachers and staff give their opinions about the compensation solution. From listening it reinforced to me that the teachers and staff really care about the students in Manassas Park and the community. We have something special and it's my job to do my part to keep it special. I think what is needed is to make sure school funding is not reduced and that the Governing Body and School Board work together.

Q#4: *What proposals will you make to overcome the challenge of un-rented and unoccupied city-owned or city-built properties?*

A: First, in order to create proposals to solve anything you have to understand the facts of the problem or else you'll get improbable solutions. The property at City Center is privately owned. This limits the city in what it can do. I created and supported a tax credit program for businesses. The city needs to continue to create an environment and streamlined processes that are business friendly and create openness. The city has to continue to be active in the Prince William Chamber of Commerce. For instance, the city along with the Prince William Chamber of Commerce had an event in City Center to increase interest in the available space. Also, I will work with the new owners of City Center and new businesses that open there. For example, when the violin shop opened I visited and thanked the owner at the first opening weekend.

Q#5: *What is the impact of the opioid overdose epidemic on Manassas Park City? What solutions would you recommend?*

A: According to the CDC (Centers for Disease Control) more people died from drug overdoses – the majority from opioid overdoses – in 2016 than the number of American lives lost in the entirety of the Vietnam War, which totaled 58,200. I believe Manassas Park must be active and vigilant to keep our community safe. The city's Fire and Rescue Department has Narcan in the case of an overdose. It is important as well that the city's Police Department is taking action against the selling, distribution and use of opioids and any illegal drugs and narcotics. Those strategies have been created and implemented. I will not discuss them because they are sensitive Police Department matters. In addition, the Police Department in conjunction with the DEA (Drug Enforcement Administration) does have a prescription drug disposal program. My solution is to continue to support the city's Fire and Rescue Department and Police Department and to make sure they are prepared.

Michael Carrera



Party: Independent

Biographical Info:

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Questions:

Q#1: *What economic issue is of most importance to the future of the City of Manassas Park?*

A: The most important economic issue to the future of Manassas Park is bringing more commercial and retail opportunities to the City Center district. As a candidate in 2014 and a council member I advocated for a downtown parking garage. The 560-space parking garage will assist with VRE parking overflow, attract business opportunities such as restaurants and other retail options.

Q#2: *What transportation issue(s) needs to be solved and what will you propose for solutions?*

A: The most important Manassas Park transportation issues that needs solved are the Route 28 congestion and the limited parking at the VRE station. - Route 28 bypass needs to be completed and the existing Route 28 corridor needs widening from 4 to 6 lanes from Manassas Park to the Fairfax County line. - VRE commuter lot

needs additional parking. A 560-space parking garage approved in 2017 behind City Hall will be coming soon.

Q#3: *What changes, if any, are needed to better compensate Manassas Park City school teachers and staff?*

A: Changes that i believe are needed to better compensate Manassas Park City teachers. - Compress the teacher salary scale from a 30 year to a 15 year pay plan. - Increase the teacher student loan forgiveness program cap.

Q#4: *What proposals will you make to overcome the challenge of un-rented and unoccupied city-owned or city-built properties?*

A: Manassas Park is fortunate to have a high usage, occupancy at city-owned and city-built properties.

Q#5: *What is the impact of the opioid overdose epidemic on Manassas Park City? What solutions would you recommend?*

A: The impact of the opioid epidemic on Manassas Park has been an increasing challenge. Manassas Park police was the first department in Northern Virginia to train, certify and administer Naloxone which has saved many lives. - State should provide more resources to treat users struggling with all opioid and substance addiction. - State should increase penalties and punishment on those who illegally distribute opioid substances. - State law should require medical staff to prescribe a limited 3-7-day usage and create a prescription monitoring program.

Haseeb Javed



Party: Democrat

Biographical Info:

Website: <http://Haseebforcitycouncil.com>

Email: haseebforcitycouncil@gmail.com

family: Wife and 2 kids

experience: Hospitality Management Human resources Entrepreneur Commercial Real Estate Residential Real Estate

Questions:

Q#1: *What economic issue is of most importance to the future of the City of Manassas Park?*

A: The city is in debt and is effecting our citizens in the city. I will work closely with the governing body and the commissioner of revenue to make sure that the city has systems and procedures in place in collecting delinquent tax payments, have responsible spending, introduce an infrastructure preventative maintenance plan, and establish a "rainy day funds" account for emergencies-so that we are not pulling from other budgets during the fiscal year. I will take an initiative in increasing business and commercial revenue and help use that income to fund other budgets in the city. Economic Development is important for the city's growth. We need to make it easy for small businesses owner to set up and grow here in the city. Not only would that bring the city to life but in return would support our citizens by employing

and serving them. My main focus would be to have an smart economic development strategy for the city.

Q#2: *What transportation issue(s) needs to be solved and what will you propose for solutions?*

A: The biggest transportation issue is traffic on Route 28 going in and out of the city. I will work with other neighboring counties to come up with a solution to help alleviate the congestion on 28. There are already plans in place for widening route 28 hoping to have a smooth flow of traffic. I will assist in finding ways to have alternate routes in and out of the city to the workplace. There are plans for extending Godwin Drive connecting Prince William County, City of Manassas, and Fairfax county. Ensuring the plans come to light is important for the city and will be an advocate in assisting the change if elected. We can also extend Euclid Avenue, which runs side by side route 28, to connect to route 28. Adding more times to the VRE schedule can help commuters get to metro and giving them more options to ride public transportation. Having commuter buses that leave from the city to the metro stations would also be helpful and I will help achieve this goal.

Q#3: *What changes, if any, are needed to better compensate Manassas Park City school teachers and staff?*

A: The City needs to pull out of debt and increase revenue in order for the teachers to be better compensated. Adding new after school and summer curriculum can give teachers a chance to earn extra income. A plan to reach out to state and federal legislators and arrange a collective agreement including the teacher unions to increase funding for teacher pay would also benefit the teachers here in the city. I would, if not already in place, have performance based bonuses through out the school year. Teachers are also burdened by debt and expenses. I will come up with a plan to help reduce the expenses that teachers may be facing. Either through a joint effort of city or state assistance in housing or assist teachers in finding federal programs in reducing there student loans. Either way the governing body would need to take an active role in assuring that we hire and retain highly qualified educators in the city, and that is what I plan on achieving if elected.

Q#4: *What proposals will you make to overcome the challenge of un-rented and unoccupied city-owned or city-built properties?*

A: The city needs to develop an aggressive marketing strategy to overcome the vacant commercial spaces down town to attract new businesses and If elected that is what I plan to do. As a commercial broker I have made relationships with the business community, I know what there needs are and how to negotiate a deal where everyone wins. I will introduce the vacant spaces in City Center to businesses around the Northern Virginia working side by side with the leasing company, the city, the developers, and the business owners. I will work on increasing parking spaces and find a way for businesses to have maximum exposure and curb appeal on the street as residents pass by. Working with the owners in reducing the price per sq ft to market value or below in order for businesses to be attracted in signing a lease.

With City Center 100% occupied would increase the commercial revenue coming into the city where then we can allocate the income to other much needed budgets through out the city.

Q#5: *What is the impact of the opioid overdose epidemic on Manassas Park City? What solutions would you recommend?*

A: The opioid epidemic has become a national issue and the number of deaths that have occurred is concerning a lot of cities including Manassas Park. We need to have policies and practices in place in order to help reduce the overdose usage. I would work closely with other jurisdictions to implement new strategies and enforce ones already in place to prevent overdose usage. The first step is to educate the public providing data to the community on the effects of the drug and how to look out for someone that may be abusing it. I will introduce an awareness program starting with the school addressing the signs and symptoms of an addiction. And also enforce training to our health care providers on how to educate there patients on property usage of the prescribed drug.

Alanna M. Mensing

Party: Democrat

Biographical Info:

Website: <http://www.alannamensing.com>

Questions:

Q: *What economic issue is of most importance to the future of the City of Manassas Park?*

A: - no response -

Q: *What transportation issue(s) needs to be solved and what will you propose for solutions?*

A: - no response -

Q: *What changes, if any, are needed to better compensate Manassas Park City school teachers and staff?*

A: - no response -

Q: *What proposals will you make to overcome the challenge of un-rented and unoccupied city-owned or city-built properties?*

A: - no response -

Q: *What is the impact of the opioid overdose epidemic on Manassas Park City? What solutions would you recommend?*

A: - no response -