

## 2019 CANDIDATE PROFILE GUIDE

### MERRIAM CITY COUNCILMEMBER CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

**Candidate Name:** Bob Pape

**Candidate for Ward #:** 4

**Address:**

6536 Burnham  
Merriam, KS 66202

**Campaign E-Mail:** bpape@kc.rr.com

**Campaign Website:** bobpapemerriam.com

**Phone:** 913-384-0746

**Campaign Treasurer:** Beverly Pape

**Candidate's Occupation:** Retired Fire Chief

**Work History – Last Five Years (25 word limit):**

I was the Merriam Fire Chief/Fire Marshal and retired in September 2014. I am President of Residential Investment Properties, LLC.

**Most Recent Political/Community Experience (25 word limit?):**

I am the current Merriam City Council member for Ward 4. I am a member of the Old Mission Kiwanis club.

**Are you, or have you been, affiliated with a local or state chamber of commerce? If yes, please list chamber(s) and any leadership positions you have held (25 word limit):**

I have been a member of the Northeast Chamber of Commerce through my association as a Merriam Council member.

**Are you, or have you been, affiliated with any other business organization(s)? If yes, please list organization(s) (25 word limit):**

I have been a member of the Northeast Chamber of Commerce through my association as a Merriam Council member.

**As a candidate, what are your top three policy issues (25 words per line):**

1. I believe that we need to maintain a safe community. I believe that Police and Firefighters/Paramedics keep us safe.
2. I believe that we need to attract business into Merriam. With our 4 to 1 pull factor, it helps us to keep our property taxes low.
3. I believe we need to provide recreational and health benefit opportunities for all ages.

**What are your views on the services and value citizens receive for their local tax dollars?**

Merriam provides many services and our residents receive excellent value for their tax dollars. They receive Police and Fire services, recreation programs and community/aquatic center, We have a great Public Works department that maintains our streets, mows our parks, removes snow, maintains sidewalks, streets lights and curbs and gutters. A home valued at \$185,000 will pay to Merriam \$49 per

month for all the services it receives. Our Mill levy has not increased for many years and it is my goal to keep it that way.

**What changes, if any, would you propose to the current City budget?**

I think we develop a good budget each year that reflects the desires of our community. It provides all of the essential services and makes Merriam the Community we all want to work, live and play. I would like to increase the level of our home improvement grant. Many in our community are on fixed incomes. I would like to see us help them, so they can maintain their home and continue to live there.

**What role, if any, do you believe the City should play in economic development to bring jobs and capital investment to our City?**

I am an advocate of tax increment financing (TIF) when it will help to attract business that will locate in Merriam.. Many of our Auto Dealerships, Merriam Town Center, IKEA, Merriam Village shops and hotels would not be located in Merriam if we had not allocated TIF funds to their development. We receive 53% of our revenue from sales tax. All of this helps us to maintain our personal property taxes at their current mill rate.

**What do you think the three greatest opportunities are for the City's economy in the next ten years and how would you capitalize on them?**

I think that the large ditch at 7100 W Frontage (along I-35) will be filled in and we will be getting a new Automobile dealership at that location. This will generate additional sales tax revenue and provide jobs. I think that the old K-Mart site will be developed within the next 10 years. There are a lot of possible uses for this site which will provide additional revenue and job opportunities. The Johnson County Library will be relocated onto the new Merriam Community Center site. This will allow for its existing site to be re-developed into a revenue producing property.

**What is your philosophy on the role the City should play in terms of metro-area issues?**

No community is an island. We need to work with our neighboring communities to develop strategies and solutions that benefit all jurisdictions. For example, transportation throughout the Metro is a problem for all our residents. We often work in one location and live in another. It takes all of us together to address this issue.

**What do you think are the greatest challenges and/or opportunities for the City in the next ten years and how would you address them?**

One of the biggest challenges we face is the potential loss of property tax revenue from the change in how commercial property tax is collected. I would encourage the Kansas Legislature to address this issue and allow us to continue collecting it in the manner that we have been. We are also dependent on sales tax generation. The revenue generated in sales tax has declined in 2019. Attraction of more business to Merriam will help to alleviate this problem. We need to attract a grocery store to Merriam. The loss of Hen House has been felt by everyone.

**What do you believe most distinguishes you from your opponent(s) in this race, making you best suited to serve?**

I have served the public for over 38 years in the Fire Department. I retired as the Merriam Fire Chief and was responsible for a 2.4 million dollar budget. I was heavily involved with the business community in my Fire Marshal capacity. I was involved with our schools as a fire safety educator. I received my Bachelor degree with a major in Personnel Administration and obtained my Masters degree in Public

Administration. This is the same degree as our City Administrator. I have served as the Ward 4 Council member for the last four years. I listen to our community.