

## 2019 CANDIDATE PROFILE GUIDE

### ROELAND PARK COUNCILMEMBER CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

**Candidate Name:** Galen Hansen

**Candidate for Ward #:** Roeland Park Ward 3

**Address:**

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**Campaign Treasurer:** Galen Hansen

**Candidate's Occupation:** Financial Controller

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

Since March 2014 I have been the Financial Controller at QM Power, which develops and deploys highly energy efficient electric motors, actuators, and generators.

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

I have not participated significantly in political/community service. My focus has been on working with companies undergoing rapid and transformative change, on behalf of stakeholders.

**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):

Nashville (Tennessee) Junior Chamber of Commerce “ 1993-1999 ” General member

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

Nashville (Tennessee) Junior Chamber of Commerce “ 1993-1999 ” General member

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

1. Improve the use of financial resources “ including lowering the property tax mill while simplifying financial discussions in order to improve public understanding .
2. Embrace ALL Roeland Park citizens as stakeholders in the future of Roeland Park and begin to operate the City following best practice business principles.
3. Improve the stewardship of use of public financial resource, including through a lower property tax mill and simplified public discussions about how funds are spent.

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

While the services provided seem reasonable, the value received from the use of tax dollars needs improvement. The City has accumulated what its MD&A states is 'substantial reserves'. This includes increasing the reserve rate to 25%, including a \$1.4 million property tax funded cash reserve 'in case a major retailer leaves'. The City also established a \$3.0 million sales-tax funded Community Investment District (CID), for use by the property owner but generally not the public. Accordingly, \$4.4 million of tax

money is not available for public use. CID's should be avoided and property taxes should not be 'banked'.

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

The City has been financing operations on the pay-as-you-go basis through what the City defines as 'creative use of several resources', including 'additional resources available in the general fund, and TIF'. These 'additional resources' are primarily the result of the 2013/2014 property tax increase. Taxes on property owners have been the main source of funds used to pay down debt, finance current operations, accumulate 'substantial reserves', and finance long-term development projects such as Roe2020. I believe the City should decrease accumulated cash reserves, lower the property tax mill rate, and finance long-term projects with debt " following a public vote.

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

Roeland Park should work in its own best interest in economic development and capital investment. As a part of this strategy, the City should limit or remove non-business friendly taxes or rules that make it less competitive with neighboring cities. The City should consider development through Tax Increment Financing and Transportation Districts, which it has successfully used in the past. However, I believe the City should avoid additional Community Investment Districts " such as the one at Bella Roe " which has essentially diverted \$3.0 million of sales tax money to a property owner with limited if any public use.

**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?**

Roeland Park's location and the ongoing trend toward living closer to downtown and the Plaza makes it a prime area for development and economic growth. The two best growth areas are along Johnson Drive between Roe and Ash and the Walmart/CVS area. Both of these areas were included in recent public discussions, and hopefully development plan and timetable will be forthcoming. I look forward to a nice restaurant, bar, and coffee shop. Roeland Park should also diversify its economy to include businesses such as technology or engineering, whose workforces would use our new businesses and increase sales tax revenue.

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

I believe Roeland Park should participate in metro-area issues, but that its central focus should be on our community and promoting business development opportunities. As a small community with limited resources, it is important that our council, city staff, and financial resources are all used optimally. In my opinion, the optimal use is focusing primarily on issues in our city and directly impacting our citizens and that participation in metro-area issues is secondary.

**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?**

The greatest challenge for Roeland Park continues to be for its leadership to remain focused on representing all of its citizens and promoting business development opportunities. The current council, as well as those before it, too often become distracted and involved in unnecessary side issues. The City should consider a comprehensive rather than selective non-discrimination policy toward its legal citizens" similar to a business " that forbids any sort of discrimination including but not limited to age, color, disability, gender, national origin, race, religion, ancestry, sexual orientation, veteran or marital status, etc. All citizens deserve equal council consideration & representation.

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

Roeland Park's City Council is comprised of representatives with diverse professional and social backgrounds. Ideally, this would result in robust discussions with views from several perspectives. I believe my 30 years of finance and accounting experience will provide a business and financial view that would otherwise be missing. In my professional capacity I have been responsible for raising capital, securing and protecting both private and federal financial resources, and reporting evenly and fairly with all investors and other "stakeholders". I hope to use my experience and point of view to argue for the optimal and fair use of financial resources.