

# Mayor and/or City Council 2021

Response ID:34 Data

## 1. Candidate Information

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### 1. Candidate Name

Christine Evans Hands

### 2. Candidate for Ward # (if applicable)

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### 3. Address

Street Address/Apt/Suite : 10206 Edelweiss Cir.

City/State/Zip : Merriam, KS 66203-4611

### 4. Phone Number

9135303971

### 5. Email Address

chris.evans.hands@gmail.com

### 6. Campaign Website

<https://www.facebook.com/Hands4Merriam>

## 2. Candidate Background

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### 7. Occupation/Work History (last 5 years - 25 words or less)

Retired in 1998 as Computer Tech Support Manager, Hallmark Cards.

### 8. If you are or have been affiliated with a chamber of commerce or other business organization, please list which organization(s) and any leadership positions you have held.

I'm pleased to attend NEJC Chamber events, meeting so many folks from our business community. I'm also pleased to support the City of Merriam's active membership in the Chamber.

### 9. Other recent political/community experience (50 words or less)

Councilmember since 2005 (Council President, 2040 Comprehensive Plan Committee, 5701 Committee, Public Places/Art Committee)

Flags 4 Freedom Planning Committee

Metro KC Climate Action Coalition

Asbury UMC - (Board of Trustees, Nominating Committee, Council President)

Jo Co Solid Waste Management Committee

## 3. Issues and Policy

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### 10. As a candidate, what are your top three policy issues? (100 words or less)

1. Maintain Merriam's exceptionally high standards of safety and livability.

2. Support economic development with fiscally responsible choices of public funds, always weighing cost impacts and benefits to current residents and businesses. These efforts are currently focused on the Kmart Area's redevelopment, Historic

Downtown's Planning for Sustainable Places Grant, and the long-discussed US Corps of Engineers' Turkey Creek Flood Mitigation Plan.

3. Post-Covid resumption of building Merriam's sense of community and self-image. Encourage participation in grants and events that build relationships with individual residents and businesses and extend through neighborhoods to city-wide and even to metro area engagement.

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**11. What are your views on the services and value the City's citizens receive for their local tax dollars? (100 words or less)**

Based on private conversations and the results of periodic resident and business surveys, I feel Merriam's citizens are pleased with the services they receive for their hard-earned tax dollars.

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**12. What changes, if any, would you like to see to the City budget? (100 words or less)**

Our current budget building process works well. The process has continued to improve in its clarity and over the years; I support that we're always looking for ways to make it better for Staff, Council and the Public.

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**13. What role, if any, do you believe the City should play in economic development to bring jobs and capital investment to the community? (100 words or less)**

The City needs to support economic development, but always with strong, readily explainable analysis of its costs and its expected benefits. Establishment and nurturing of public/private partnerships will keep our City fiscally sound and vibrant.

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**14. As the City considers future development and redevelopment projects, describe your views on how the City should best manage and balance growth? (100 words or less)**

Because we are land-locked, all of our projects will be redevelopment. Redevelopment is often more expensive and complex than new development. As previously stated, the City will likely need public/private partnerships to move ahead with any redevelopment project.

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**15. What is your philosophy on the role the City should play in terms of metro-area issues? (100 words or less)**

I try to stay informed about metro-area issues and expect City Staff to do the same. We can learn so much from other cities AND we can do so much more when we all work together. I am quite appreciative of MARC -- its resources and efforts to build relationships between so many entities are invaluable.

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**16. What do you believe the takeaways for the City should be, if any, from the COVID-19 pandemic experience? (100 words or less)**

We are all more effective when we truly work together. The leadership of Johnson County throughout the pandemic was so helpful. I am fully supportive of Merriam's choice to follow the Jo Co guidelines throughout the crisis.

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**17. What do you believe are the greatest challenges the City faces over the next ten years and how would you address them? (100 words or less)**

Maintaining the affordability of our city's housing - continue to work with other entities on the issue. Adapting infrastructure to differences in transportation - i.e., being sure there are adequate numbers of charging stations. Recognizing and taking action on what we can do to mitigate the effects of climate change.

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**18. Why are you seeking this public office? (100 words or less)**

The time I've spent has been purposeful and rewarding. Looking back is great, but looking forward discloses new opportunities - whether it's a redevelopment project, building a new relationship, or engaging our community in a new event. Looking forward ... I want to be part of "what's next!"

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**19. What do you believe makes you uniquely qualified to serve in this position and most distinguishes you from your opponent(s) in this race? (100 words or less)**

Why am I qualified to continue to serve?

I always try to do my best; I have experience; I'm willing to embrace a well-negotiated outcome, recognizing that it's better than

what was first proposed; I want to build a team and be a working part of that team. and I can and will focus on tasks that need to be completed.