

Mayor and/or City Council 2021

Response ID:81 Data

1. Candidate Information

1. Candidate Name

Lisa Larson-Bunnell

2. Candidate for Ward # (if applicable)

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3. Address

Street Address/Apt/Suite : 7816 Shady Bend Ct.

City/State/Zip : Shawnee, KS 66227

4. Phone Number

913-738-9320

5. Email Address

Llb4shawnee@gmail.com

6. Campaign Website

Www.LLB4Shawnee.com

2. Candidate Background

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

I am a healthcare regulatory attorney at a local non-profit hospital.

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.

None

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

Shawnee City Council member, Ward 3

Johnson County Christmas Bureau-Board Member, 2019 Holiday of Hope Benefit Chairperson

Monticello Historical Society-Member

League of Women Voters- Member

2021 Housing For All Task Force

Visit Shawnee Committee

Shawnee Public Art Task Force

3. Issues and Policy

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

Public Safety and Infrastructure-- I want to make sure our police and fire departments are appropriately structured and funded compared to other cities our size. I also want to continue to repair the areas of our stormwater system that are failing due to corrugated metal pipes. Finally, I want our city to be more walkable/bikeable.

Revenue— Too much of our annual revenue comes from residential property taxes. We must diversify our revenue so as to protect our budget from the impact of a future housing crisis or recession.

Our Community--Keep Shawnee a welcoming, accessible, and inclusive community.

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

Our residents deserve high quality services and amenities. The city is able to provide an incredible amount of infrastructure and services for the tax dollars we pay. We have always done more with less. Unfortunately, it does not always feel like residents are getting a "good deal" because we are a large city with a small commercial tax base compared to our neighboring cities. We must work to diversify our revenue sources so we can maintain and enhance our community without as much of a tax burden on our homeowners.

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

None. I think the 2022 budget is a good mix of investment in vital services as well as amenities. Assuming the minor modifications discussed by the City Council are adopted, I fully support the proposed budget.

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)

Our local government is in an excellent position to attract and retain businesses to Shawnee. I think the partnership that Shawnee has with the Shawnee Chamber and the Economic Development Council ("EDC") is a perfect way to say that we are "open for business." Every project must be evaluated on its merits. The key is to ensure the governing body and the EDC work together on these efforts.

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)

Shawnee is a great place to live. Our residents love our small town feel. That is the direct result of our high quality services and amenities, community events, and cohesive neighborhoods. As we move forward, it will be important to protect the character of those neighborhoods while adding commercial and residential developments. We must also use these developments to enhance connectivity to park spaces, trails, schools, and recreation. We must plan for green space and protect trees as much as possible. Finally, we should try to attract developments that will help diversify our revenue sources.

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

Shawnee is the 7th largest city in Kansas and we cannot afford to isolate ourselves from surrounding communities. A perfect example of the ill-effects of such isolation is our history of approaching stormwater management at the municipality level instead of the county or metro level. As a result, we have a fragmented system that does not do enough to protect our cities. We have gained much from recent cooperation with neighboring cities.

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

It is very important to have strong reserves and to be nimble enough to make quick changes as a novel situation evolves. This cannot be done without excellent professional staff. It is also important to ensure our revenue sources are not all coming from the same place (e.g. property taxes or sales taxes). While our over-reliance on residential property taxes helped in this particular crisis, it has been detrimental in the past. We must encourage development that will bring a more optimal balance to our revenue sources.

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)

First, we must work to attract and retain residents. This includes individuals at all life stages. To do this, we must diversify our housing stock to ensure there are options for individuals who do not want a detached single family home. We should continue our focus on added retail and restaurant options throughout the city as well as other amenities. Finally, we must plan for enhanced connectivity to permit our residents easier access to schools, parks, and trails.

Second, we must work to diversify revenue sources, as we are too dependent on residential property taxes.

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

I feel strongly that our elected leaders should be role models in our community. For too long, Shawnee politics has been acrimonious and divisive. That's not who we are in Shawnee. I want to work with residents, council members, and community leaders across the spectrum to solve problems and improve our lives and our neighborhoods. After three years on the council, I have shown my ability to work with others to move important matters forward.

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)

I listen, learn, and work tirelessly to improve our city. I bring no rigid political ideology to my position. I am beholden to no interest group or party. I've heard stories of past councils filled with acrimony and petty personal battles. That has not been my experience on the council, nor will it be. I treat everyone with respect and dignity at all times. Whenever I leave the council, I know I will have set a positive example for my son and our community.
