

# Mayor and/or City Council 2021

Response ID:54 Data

## 1. Candidate Information

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### 1. Candidate Name

David Laughter

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

At Large

### 3. Address

Street Address/Apt/Suite : 14515 S Inverness Street

City/State/Zip : Olathe, KS 66061

### 4. Phone Number

913-940-0016

### 5. Email Address

david.f.laughter@gmail.com

### 6. Campaign Website

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## 2. Candidate Background

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

Retired from Emerson Electric 18-months ago. My career with Emerson covered ~24 years in several locations. My last position was Director of Engineering and Projects

### 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.

NA

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

This is my first run for an elected office. I have been an active participant and office holder in various Homes Associations where we lived.

## 3. Issues and Policy

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

If elected to the city council I hope to collaborate with the County and School Board on a comprehensive tax strategy to insure a competitive landscape with surrounding communities and counties while providing the needed services for the city.

Work closely with the business community in Olathe to develop strategies and programs that will provide the needed manpower for current, new and growing companies. Further, to see this initiative succeed long-term more affordable housing options must be identified and developed.

Insure equal investment is planned for all areas of the city to realize sufficient improvements plus new development.

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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)**

Olathe is a "Full Service" community with a wide array of services and support. The City has done a good job to date striving to address the needs where they are.

Olathe has realized significant growth over the past several years requiring substantial investments in infrastructure and new programs to address the growing and diverse population.

Olathe is rapidly reaching a point where we will not be competitive versus the surrounding communities and counties.

This is one of the three areas of focus I hope to drive if elected.

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

I need to spend much more time learning the specifics of the current budget as I am not close enough to the details to address what changes I might recommend.

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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 has a significant role in the economic development strategies. One of the areas of focus needs to be on preparing inexperienced workers to be ready to fill vacancies as our businesses expand and grow.

The city should be collaborating with the business community to clearly understand the current and future needs so strategies can be developed and implemented in a timely manner so the necessary improvements and/or economic environment is in place at the proper time.

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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)**

The city should continue to expect and encourage growth. The investments needed to facilitate growth must be a collaborative effort between the city and private businesses. Both have a significant role to play and both must understand the potential and limitations of the other.

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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)**

Olathe is part of the metro-area and as such must be an integral part of overall planning and strategies to address current issues and expectations in the future.

The better we understand the issues and plans for the larger metro-area the better Olathe can determine methods and strategies to leverage resources where applicable as well as prepare for changes related to the surrounding areas.

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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)**

The entire city faced issues and challenges never before experienced. At times it was difficult to get real data and non-biased information in a timely manner.

The city along with most of the country fell into strategies that were alike regardless if they applied or not.

In too many situations decisions were made for the citizens based on assumptions that they would not be capable of deciding on their own. In a free society risk is a normal element each citizen assesses and determines the path forward that best suits their circumstances.

We could do this better next time.

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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)**

Competitiveness and preparing for growth are the biggest challenges coming our way.

Collaborating with the county and school board to develop comprehensive tax strategies that will maintain our competitiveness in the metro-area is a key issue for the council.

Working with the business community to clearly understand their issues and challenges then developing and implementing strategies to address them allowing current businesses to prosper and grow as well attract new businesses to the city

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

First is my desire to serve the community.

As someone who worked in the private sector my entire career both as a business owner and the corporate environment, I can provide a perspective others with a different background may not.

As someone who is running for office for the first time I will bring a new and fresh perspective as well as an enthusiasm those that have been doing this for many years might not.

Finally I desire to see the city continue to grow and develop for many years and I hope to play a part in the process.

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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)**

My background in Project Engineering and Execution may be unique to my opponents.

As stated above I bring a fresh perspective as this is a completely new endeavor for me. Sometimes a new/fresh perspective is needed to realize new ideas and strategies to deal with existing as well as new challenges.

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