

Mayor and/or City Council 2021

Response ID:71 Data

1. Candidate Information

1. Candidate Name

Steve Owen

2. Candidate for Ward # (if applicable)

3. Address

Street Address/Apt/Suite : 19401 W 200 St.

City/State/Zip : Spring Hill, KS. 66083

4. Phone Number

9134334254

5. Email Address

owen4springhill@icloud.com

6. Campaign Website

2. Candidate Background

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

After 30 years as a First Responder, I retired from the El Cajon Fire Department in October of 2009 at the rank of Chief Officer.

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.

After being elected to the City Council in 2019, I was able to join the Spring Hill Chamber of Commerce as an Elected Official. My membership is current and up to date.

I joined the Spring Hill Rotary Club in March of 2020 and was just recently sworn in as Vice President.

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

My community involvement began at the local government level. I started attending City Council meetings in 2018.

This experience led to my decision to go one step further and run for City Council. I was elected in 2019, sworn into office in January 2020 and am currently the Council President.

3. Issues and Policy

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

1.) Reducing and controlling taxes.

2.) Infrastructure - Address the immediate unmet needs of our Citizens and business partners (Street Maintenance) while identifying and supporting tax dollar funded future infrastructure projects that provide significant benefit to all of Spring Hill.

3.) Continuing to promote Citizen awareness and engagement and providing the opportunity for Citizen input.

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

Given that the Spring Hill mill levy is the highest in any city in Johnson County and ranked 3rd highest on the Miami County side, the Citizens of Spring Hill are paying more local tax dollars for services such as Police Department, water and wastewater departments, streets and quality of life amenities such as parks, swimming pool etc. With serious review and careful spending the City should be able to reevaluate the mill levy and provide the same quality services at a better dollar value to the Citizens.

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

The City of Spring Hill has the highest mill levy in Johnson County and the 3rd highest in Miami County. We need to eliminate the "blank check mentality" that has taken hold of the City budget process and create a budget that benefits the Citizens.

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 maintain a front line role in the economic development process to insure that growth is not dictated by developers, but remains under the direction and guidance of the City Economic Development/Planning Department and elected officials.

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)

You cannot manage future development and redevelopment projects without a plan. The City has no clear direction or path to balanced growth. My view ... we are starting at square one to address this issue. Growth is coming and I want to make sure the City prospers.

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

It is crucial to maintain open communication with fellow Johnson County Mayors and Councils to protect the interests of our county.

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

I believe our City should have learned that we are required to be responsive to our citizens first, while trying to maintain unity with our county health officials.

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)

Positioning the City for growth, the greatest challenge we will face over the next ten years, has not been properly thought out or managed. We will be starting at ground level to develop a plan that will address the needs of our Citizens and current and future business partners.

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

Since being sworn in as a City Council member in January of 2020, it has become very clear to me, that the City needs a strong, engaged leader to move it forward. I believe somewhere along the line, that some members of the Governing Body and City Administrative Staff have forgotten that our role is to serve the Citizens of Spring Hill. The money we spend is not the City's money, but the Citizen's money. It is our job to provide for and protect the greatest City asset ... the Citizens of Spring Hill.

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)

Ability to lead.