

Watchmen Voter Guide for City of Bonners Ferry- 2 Council Members

** Click on each candidate's name to see their completed questionnaire **

	Ron Smith	Brion Poston	Robert Lavala
1. What is your name, what office are you running for and why are you running for this position?	Declined to Respond	Declined to Respond	Robert Lavala City Council Bonners Ferry, ID With the influx of a more liberal voter base moving into our area, unless conservatives step up and run for our local government offices, we stand the chance of losing our local “Hometown” feel in our communities. We also risk allowing a more “Liberal” mindset to get entrenched in our local governments and thereby more radical agendas.
2. How could our city be improved? Please provide your top 2-3 ideas.	Declined to Respond	Declined to Respond	A) We could look more closely at our budget and trim any unnecessary spending; B) We could look at appointed positions to see where there are people simply sapping city resources without producing the proper results; C) We could ensure that no unconstitutional mandates or edits are allowed.
3. What are your views on the rapid growth of North Idaho? How should the city council manage growth?	Declined to Respond	Declined to Respond	Growth is inevitable, especially with the state of our country right now. What I mean by that is this. Despots and power-mad governors in states that do not abide by the Constitution of the United States, nor their own constitution for that matter, are driving good people from their areas. Whether these folks are coming to flee these draconian states and their unlawful edicts, or they simply want a better, more simple life, growth is the result. The city council could and should have a policy to evaluate each new business that desires to open in the city of Bonners Ferry and make sure that the businesses moving in can sustain themselves. I do not believe that any taxpayer money should go towards helping private business get established or be sustained.
4. In your opinion what best serves the public, elected officials, or appointed officials?	Declined to Respond	Declined to Respond	Elected officials. I feel that appointed officials do not have the right to enforce public policy decisions unless handed down from those whom the public has elected.
5. What role should the city council have in the design and authorization of new developments?	Declined to Respond	Declined to Respond	I believe that the role of the council in this matter should be limited to making sure the developments are properly funded, that they are self-sustaining, and that the overall impact on the community is positive. Obviously, there are many types of developments and as such many different studies and guidelines that would need to be looked at. The first part of the question is about design. I do not believe this is the purview of the city council at all. New developments should be drafted, designed and presented for review and approval by the entities involved in the actual development.

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6. In your opinion, should any services currently provided by the city be cut, eliminated, or privatized?	Declined to Respond	Declined to Respond	At this moment I have not researched this topic but will be investigating over the next several weeks.
7. Do you believe access to city managed water and sewer should be increased to rural communities and why?	Declined to Respond	Declined to Respond	No. The city managed water and sewer are already at the limit of manageability. Rural (county) water and sewer should remain separate. Most rural sewer is handled by septic system on the property of either the homeowner or the business owner. This is a self-contained and easily managed system and free from burdening the taxpayer.
8. How do you plan on keeping a healthy reserve fund but not raising taxes?	Declined to Respond	Declined to Respond	By looking at the yearly budget and cutting unnecessary spending. I would also oppose any new spending that did not have direct and tangible benefits for the residents of Bonners Ferry.
9. What is your opinion of the increased push for affordable housing?	Declined to Respond	Declined to Respond	The problem here is the increased need for a balance between gouging and proper price point. In a free market society, those who own property have every right to charge whatever they want. The those who can afford to pay will be able to live in someone else's property. I am old school when it comes to working for a living and paying your dues. If someone cannot afford to live in a certain place, they just might need to move somewhere where they can afford to live. I do not believe any government entity has the right to dictate to a property owner how much they charge for housing. We need less government intrusion in this area.
10. How should the public's input be taken into consideration and implemented in the decision-making process?	Declined to Respond	Declined to Respond	I believe that the public input should be given more than just lip service. I have been to many city council meetings where it seems like the public will speak, but then the group will just do what they planned all along. I believe that this is wrong. As a public servant, I believe that we are obligated to listen and then take into consideration what the public we serve are saying. Not doing this hinders our ability to serve the voters who elected us.

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11. Is there anything in your personal or business life that would be a conflict of interest in your ability to serve the people of this city?	Declined to Respond	Declined to Respond	No
12. Should the concept of “equitable outcome” be implemented as a part of the city council’s decision-making process? Why or why not?	Declined to Respond	Declined to Respond	This concept is not something I would endorse at all. In the Declaration of Independence it says, “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal , that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.” We are equal in that each person, regardless of race, creed or anything else has the same opportunities as the next person. Adopting equity would deny the very founding principles of the United States of America and that cannot be allowed. This, in my opinion, is the basis for socialism and should be rejected completely.
13. What role should the health board play in the city council’s decision-making process?	Declined to Respond	Declined to Respond	None. The main reason: They are appointed and not elected. Special interests from the county commissioners could play a negative part in any appointment and thereby any decision made by a city council listening to such.
14. What is your background and why do you feel it qualifies you for this position?	Declined to Respond	Declined to Respond	I have been in public service as a senior leader of two different churches over the past 20 years. In that time, I have travelled to many countries bringing aid and comfort to those that live in desperate situations. Before that, I travelled as a motorcycle evangelist preaching the gospel and helping people as best as I could. My wife and I have now been together for 39 years and have always worked to help those in need by providing direction and training so that the individual could become a productive member of society. I have also worked in many aspects of construction over the past 35 years and currently serve my community and surrounding areas as a certified home inspector. I believe what qualifies me is that I’m willing to take on this position and not be a “yes” man. I will research and do my due diligence for all topics that concern our community.