

Watchmen Voter Guide for Coeur d’Alene City Council Seat #5
*** Click on each candidate’s name to see their completed questionnaire ***

	<u>Dan English</u>	<u>Roger Garlock</u>	<u>Rob Knutson</u>
1. What is your name, what office are you running for and why are you running for this position?	Dan English, Coeur d’Alene City Council, seat 5. I am running to represent the whole of our community as I have in the past to have their issues heard and addressed as best as possible and to be treated with respect.	My name is Roger Garlock I am running for Coeur d’Alene City Council seat #5. I am running for this office because this is the next step in my service to Coeur d’Alene. I have been actively engaged in the betterment of our city for 2 decades.	My name is Rob Knutson and I am running for Coeur d’Alene City Council Seat #5. After consistent attendance at city council meetings for the past year, I see areas that could use a fresh perspective. Specifically, the public would benefit from an increased degree of scrutiny of city affairs in the more controversial matters.
2. How could our city be improved? Please provide your top 2-3 ideas.	1) Work to turndown the discord and tension among many of our members and 2) promote more citizen engagement in the process all the time, not just when “hot issues” are on the agenda.	An overhaul of its boards and commissions to not include the same status quo of individuals. We need some diversity of thought on these boards as they have a big impact and influence on our community. The high-density of thought on these boards as they have a big impact and influence on our community. The high-density zone changes need to stop. They are creating inconsistency in our neighborhoods. A great example of this would be the corner of foster and 2 nd street. We also need to curtail spending and thoroughly audit the budget.	Coeur d’Alene could be improved with more public involvement by a greater number of citizens, greater transparency of city workings, and greater scrutiny of the budget—almost every aspect of city operation is budget-driven or plays into planned spending. The city could also improve by maintaining or improving conditions for current citizens, rather than basing development decisions solely on the idea of future, hypothetical occupants of a high-rise who are valued mainly for their contribution to the tax base.
3. What are your views on the rapid growth of North Idaho?	We are not unique to many places across the county, but we are in the extreme range right now.	Once again growth is a topic with our local election cycle. As it was the previous few. Yet our infrastructure continues to fall behind and the council wants to rezone and pack in more high-density development. This is pushing the middle class out of our community. Rent and Homes have become to much for our working-class individuals. High density is not the solutions and shows the inconsistency of the city councils growth plans. We need to grow for homeownership and single-family development to promote a generational population.	Slow, steady growth is more manageable than the rapid growth North Idaho has seen since 2020. Rapid growth and demand for expensive infrastructure upgrades and the drive for new staffing arrangements has contributed to impacts to the budget that have been larger than normal this past year. For example, roadways cannot be developed or expanded to keep up with the current pace of high-density development and traffic impacts are usually the first sign of a problem. Any community must grow in some way to remain viable— those that don’t will lose population and economic viability. Simply focusing on housing demand, our city could be at risk of a reduced quality of life, becoming a victim of its own “success”. The City needs to figure out a way to attract additional industry to the region. Once developable land is depleted, what industry will remain, outside of tourism and healthcare?

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4. In your opinion what best serves the public, elected officials, or appointed officials?	It depends on the position. Some that require specific expertise gain my having job qualifications and minimum requirements to fill them. This is much more efficient than having well-meaning but unqualified elected make decisions that can end up costing the taxpayers huge amounts of money. On the other hand, I believe we should keep the elected positions we have. There is no comparison to the amount of accountability they have vs. someone who is hired.	Elected, the bureaucracy doesn't serve the public or are held accountable to the public. I believe in our republic which answers to, represents and services the individual voters.	Officials of any kind are of the best service to the public if they are upstanding, thoughtful, and have the best interest of the public in mind as they make decisions. That said, Elected Officials can be more easily (or regularly) replaced because the public has the opportunity to vote for new elected officials if they believe that their desires are not being met. Appointed officials tend to serve the one who appoints them, rather than the public.
5. What improvements should be made to the city councils' role in the design and authorization of new developments?	I believe we have a good system in place that provides oversight for the community, protects the rights of private property owners, and gives opportunities to appeal those decisions at various points in the process.	As of now the comprehensive plan which cost the taxpayers \$600,000 is so complex and convoluted that its isn't typically followed. Impact on the community and long-term sustainability should be the key focus of the city council. CoerTerra development which was changed at by the developers to become a burden on the surrounding area and the taxing districts is an example of the council having say in the development of neighborhoods.	Idaho code prescribes the responsibilities and duties of every city council in Idaho; any changes would need to be addressed by the state legislature. The sword of government cuts both ways, so any increase in power and authority of government—even for a reasonable cause—should be carefully evaluated. I encourage citizens with any concerns about growth-related issues to first take advantage of the existing structures in place to voice your concerns. Voting is only one way to be involved and it takes 4 years between votes.
6. In your opinion, should any services currently provided by the city be cut, eliminated, or privatized?	Not that I'm aware of, but our department heads continually look for opportunities to save funds and preserve or enhance services and bring those ideas to council.	There are some fluff agencies and wasted money to nonprofits and "advisory boards" that could be eliminated.	At present, I have no opinion on this.

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7. Do you believe access to city managed water and sewer should be increased to rural communities and why?	Not unless they choose to be annexed into an adjacent city. Otherwise, it is not fair or prudent for the systems in place.	Water is going to be the most burden infrastructure we have as Post Falls and Rathdrum gobble up the prairie the aquifer which isn't due to be study regarding is sustainability until next year may not keep up with demand. With in the city of Coeur d'Alene as the plan to double its population in the next decade will burden the 12 current wells. Any drought years could lead to rationing. There may come a time that partnerships will have to be considered. However, extended water access from the city system changes rural density to urban density. Water drilling permits should be more accessible to landowners.	The operative word is 'should'. In the past, such services have been increased by force of annexation. Using the pretense of providing sewer service, my neighborhood was annexed into the city in 1982 against the wishes of residents at the time. People who do not live within city limits should have the freedom to live independent of city services if they choose.
8. How do you plan on keeping a healthy reserve fund without increase taxes?	That is something we must be mindful of every year and be willing to make appropriate cuts to budgets if called for but also making sure we honor our commitments to our workforce and taxpayers.	We have to control are spending. Spending has nearly doubled in the last decade compared to our growth rate which is around 12-15%. 2 years ago, our police department was understaffed now they are at full staff and our budget has grown to be practically unsustainable. This doesn't mean we cut our police department we need to look for our avenues of waste or for income. Such has impact fees on new developments which haven't been updated in 19 years, we need to cut fluff from the budget like the Human Rights Institute, a nonprofit that squats on taxpayer land, we could also defund CDA 2030 and any URD boards. Line by Line there are subscriptions and funds that would be better allocated to the essentials.	While a certain degree of trust is necessary between the city council and city staff, it may be necessary for both parties to go through the annual budget in substantially greater detail than is typically practiced to ensure that expenses are reasonable and necessary. This step should occur before any tax increase is considered. Also, while many local businesses thrive on tourism and events, the City has, in the past, helped foot the bill for special events and should consider means of bringing in additional funds to cover the cost of such events, etc., Changes to state legislation might also allow the city to receive a portion of tourism or lodging taxes to help maintain the infrastructure that tourism utilizes but for which residents must pay.

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<p>9. What is your opinion of the increased push for affordable housing?</p>	<p>This is something we need but it will require a variety of solutions and will likely never be fully met.</p>	<p>Affordable housing has many definitions. I think we should zone and develop properties that can still allow for ownerships of individuals. Subsidized housing does not lower overall rental rates and long term creates other burdens on our taxing districts. I have seen the benefits of those individuals in situations that they need support with housing. However large scale government “affordable” housing is not a solution.</p>	<p>Use of this phrase demonstrates concern for those who cannot afford to purchase or rent housing in the community in which they work or want to reside. While many politicians wield this terminology, the ability of local government to substantially influence wages or the cost of land, materials, or labor is seldom discussed. Ultimately, the demand for affordable housing appeals to a poor understanding of supply and demand, driving ongoing approval of high-density housing in an altruistic attempt to ‘help’ the community. This is a national phenomenon that, in my opinion, cannot be so easily controlled. To state the problem in another way, how many units must be constructed to satiate the demand for housing by wealthy out-of-state (or even in-state) investors before an appreciable number of locals could get into the market at reduced prices. The resulting density would be quite high and would cost our city dearly. It reminds me of a Yogi Berra quote, “Nobody goes to that restaurant anymore because it's too crowded.” Growth done poorly could turn people away from our city. External forces and free-market economy are not easily manipulated at a local level.</p>
<p>10. All too often local residents feel that their public comment is not taken into consideration when decisions are made that directly affect their daily lives and their property value. What would you suggest so that the public’s best interests become a priority over builders and developers?</p>	<p>I believe everyone is heard fairly and have not seen a situation where builders and developers are in a priority position over residents, but we do have to respect private property rights of all and follow existing codes and ordinances. If something is truly out of balance, then it’s time to amend codes, but not ignore them for a particular situation.</p>	<p>This is true, I spend everyday talking with working men and woman, and none of them are asking for overburdened roads, crowded schools, downtown high rises, annexations and inconsistent zoning. Yet the council continues to do it. My opponent even went as far as to tell citizens that if they didn’t like they could vote him out. We need a change to have a representative that understands and lives the daily perspective of all the residents who aren’t being heard.</p>	<p>In my experience, developers win out over local residents because the status quo doesn’t generate the property tax revenue that the city needs or wants. I have heard city officials comment that the lowest density developments are the “least efficient” for generation of property tax revenue. The easiest way to generate revenue is for city planners to promote higher density development. Few city council members are sensitive to the desire of residents to maintain the quality and character of their neighborhoods. Many politicians are focused</p>

			<p>on the misplaced idea that the addition of a few more housing units can measurably decrease the overall cost of housing and make it 'affordable'. Housing is always affordable to someone and it doesn't matter who will pay the taxes. Depending on what gets built and where, property values may or may not be affected. Regardless, residents should continue to take their concerns to the planning commission and city council. A consistent and persistent message is one of the most effective means of influence, but few seem willing to engage. I've been on the losing side as an advocate for the quality of life in my own neighborhood. There may yet be hope for your neighborhood. Please get involved and stay involved.</p>
<p>11. What is your opinion of "Smart Cities" and how they apply to North Idaho?</p>	<p>We need to growth that is smart, well-planned, and looks to balance existing residents and in-coming neighbors, what ever you want to call that.</p>	<p>Smart Cities and something that doesn't get as much attention 15-minute cities are a future that takes away the freedom of its citizens. Smart cities are plagued by solutionism and come with a huge price tag. Therefore, you will see public private partnerships, which will give municipalities the ability to sell its citizens as data harvesting products. 15-minute cities can be accomplished by zoning. High density and mixed use which we are seeing in CDA more and more.</p>	<p>The concept of Smart Cities is based on extensive data collection and centralized decision-making to effectively control the means of consumption and production in a local area—all in the name of efficiency and, supposedly, an improved quality of life. This is antithetical to the spirit of independence that resonates throughout North Idaho. I find that people are generally opposed to the idea of Smart Cities. However, many (myself included) are tempted to succumb to convenience and a desire for "connectivity" via the very technology on which Smart Cities are to be based—wireless connectivity, cameras, electronic banking, and high-speed internet. If Smart Cities are a real concern for locals, then some personal decisions must be made concerning the extent to which people trade convenience for independence and privacy. Perhaps our quality of life can improve to the extent that we can move away from the very tools that we perceive may be used against us in the future?</p>

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<p>12. Should the concept of “equitable outcome” be implemented as a part of the city council’s decision-making process? Why or why not?</p>	<p>I’m not sure what that term is meant to mean in this context, but I believe we should be fair to all and treat people with respect even if we can’t give them everything they want.</p>	<p>No, there is no such thing without tyranny to maintain. Our country is based on equal opportunity it is up to the individual to determine the outcome.</p>	<p>No. This sounds like one of the “10 Planks” of the Communist Manifesto, which is intended to destroy freedom and is antithetical to the U.S. Constitution and Idaho State Constitution. I think that people should be treated fairly; however, the government should not be in a position to guarantee anyone an existence of reward without risk or effort. Help someone when they are down? Please do. We need more generosity that stems from a spirit of voluntary willingness; compulsory giving is taxation and plunder, not charity.</p>
<p>13. Is there anything in your personal, business, or career life that would be a conflict of interest in your ability to serve the people of this city?</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No quite the contrary my personal life and career have been in service to Coeur d’Alene. I have worked and volunteered based on my principles. I have been involved with protecting life, property rights and helping individuals achieve a</p>	<p>No.</p>
<p>14. What is your background and why do you feel it qualifies you for this position?</p>	<p>My time in community service in the non-profit communities and prior elected experience as a Coeur d’Alene School District Trustee and Kootenai County Clerk and my training, experience and that I am a true people person.</p>	<p>I have a BA in Criminal Justice and am a Master’s Certified Mediator. However, it is my dedication and involvement in this town that qualifies me. I am a representative that live the struggle so many of our residents’ face. I punch a clock 50 hours a week in the HVAC industry, I am a parent of school age kids, and I am in a home that is extremely overvalued. I have served this community by working hands on with many vulnerable populations, I have coached youth sports where I hear the concerns of young families, I have mentored young adults who are doing everything they can to make ends meet and have something for themselves. It is these dedications and passion for our residents that make me the best representative for CDA.</p>	<p>Government was established as “for the people, by the people” and not intended to be out-of-reach of the common citizen. So, I appeal to that premise as a citizen of the United States, the State of Idaho, and as a resident of Coeur d’Alene. On those grounds, I am realistically no more qualified for office than my fellow citizen. That said, I have 25 years of experience working as a scientist and regulatory specialist in private industry, interpreting data, developing policies, and analyzing laws pertaining to regulated natural resources. One of my primary roles has been to work as an intermediary between project proponents and state and/or federal agencies. Locally, I have been involved with city council and planning commission meetings, both as an observer of the proceedings and as an individual pleading my case to these governing bodies.</p>