

Watchmen Voter Guide for City of Post Falls City Council Seat #1
*** Click on each candidate's name to see their completed questionnaire ***

	James Steffensen	Samantha Steigleder	Bobby Wilhelm
1. What is your name, what office are you running for and why are you running for this position?	My name is James Steffensen and I am running for Post Falls City Council Seat 1. I am currently the chair of the Planning and Zoning Commission and have been doing that for 6 years. I have both business and financial experience along with a passion and dedication to serve the citizens of Post Falls.	No Response Received	No Response Received
2. How could our city be improved? Please provide your top 2-3 ideas.	First, we need to do a full review of all our long-term plans, make sure they are updated and with the current information that will set us up for the future. Second, we need to continue to explore many different housing options, so everyone has an opportunity to rent or buy in the city. This includes exploring the missing middle housing of cottage housing or other like type housing options. Finally, we need to continue to push for new business and job opportunities in the city. Business not only for entrepreneurs but higher paying jobs that will support our many families in the city.	No Response Received	No Response Received
3. What are your views on the rapid growth of North Idaho?	I believe the rapid growth of the city is not because of poor planning but because of word of mouth about how great this area is and changes to our political climate and the aftermath of COVID. With that being said the city needs to continue to control growth as it can to a sustainable level. New business growth will bring in much needed tax revenue to continue to grow and improve our infrastructure as the city gets bigger over time. I have talked to many people that have moved to the area over the past couple of years and that is great but now the city must continue to take the steps the can to manage that growth.	No Response Received	No Response Received
4. In your opinion what best serves the public, elected officials, or appointed officials?	The current way things are set up for Post Falls is working well. The Mayor and Council are elected positions but there are many appointed officials. Appointed officials are good because a lot of times they are people with education and experience and might not otherwise get involved if having to be elected. These are volunteer positions, so this tells you a little bit about the person character.	No Response Received	No Response Received
5. What improvements should be made to the city councils' role in the design and authorization of new developments?	The council's role in design and authorization is just the final sign off on a project to make sure all the letters of the law and policies have been met. Before a new development gets to the City Council it has to go through many meetings, city staff, public hearings and Planning and Zoning. The council then makes the decision on the facts and the plans it's related to.	No Response Received	No Response Received
6. In your opinion, should any services currently provided by the city be cut, eliminated, or privatized?	From what I can tell you about our budget I don't see anything that should be cut, eliminated or privatized at this point. Not to say we don't need to review this annually but currently I don't see the need to change anything now.	No Response Received	No Response Received
7. Do you believe access to city managed water and sewer should be increased to rural communities and why?	City managed water and sewer is better for the long-term growth and environmental impact of the city, it would also be very costly to the city to provide it to our rural communities that surround us. If and when areas are annexed into the city that conversation can begin but not until then.	No Response Received	No Response Received

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8. How do you plan on keeping a healthy reserve fund without increase taxes?	The city has done a good job of this for over 10 years and I would just continue to do what they are doing. Reviewing all budgeted items to make sure they are prudent and responsible for the city now and in the future. The new growth we have had helps keep overall taxes down as impact fee pays for new growth and that new growth will have to pay taxes.	No Response Received	No Response Received
9. What is your opinion of the increased push for affordable housing?	We need affordable housing but first we must define what that is. I think developers and other groups talk about it but what does that mean? What is affordable for one group might not be for someone else. There are outside study groups looking at affordable housing. The city is also looking at new zoning for cottage homes, tiny homes and other missing middle starter homes that might allow a young family to get into a house sooner than later. There is a balance that has to be done to provide enough housing to prices to skyrocket but we also have to control that, simple put this is supply and demand that we have to review all the time.	No Response Received	No Response Received
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?	In my experience with the Planning and Zoning Commission public input is always welcome and is a part of the public hearing process. While sometimes the public doesn't think the commission or city council listen, they really do. Many time it brings to light something new and more review has to be done. There is a criteria that the commission and council have to follow by Idaho and City policies but comments are always welcome and do help make decision on current and future decisions for the city.	No Response Received	No Response Received
11. What is your opinion of "Smart Cities" and how they apply to North Idaho?	Smart Cities is a the concept that refers to using technology and data to make decisions to enhance efficiency, sustainability and quality of life. In North Idaho some seem to think it's a misuse of this data and spying on people. I don't believe this is the case as we are all being tracked in one way other the other by our phones, apps or Alexa products. If the data from these smart products are used correctly, we might be able to see a better quality of life but we need to understand this more before we do anything with it.	No Response Received	No Response Received
12. Should the concept of "equitable outcome" be implemented as a part of the city council's decision-making process? Why or why not?	An equitable outcome in defined as when all people have fair access, opportunities resources and power to thrive with consideration for and elimination of historical and system barriers and privilege. To the best it can city council should take this into consideration. For example, for long-term sustainability, legal and ethical question, and community well-being. If it's related to schools or libraries, they have their own boards that can choose if they want to use this concept. All that being said all residents are not in the same situation, but the city can help but that doesn't mean each resident will respond or be in the same situation at the end of the day.	No Response Received	No Response Received

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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?	No. I have been on the Planning and Zoning Commission for 6 years and if anything, that does come up that might be an issue I talk with the city's attorneys about it. If something came up I would recuse myself immediately.	No Response Received	No Response Received
14. What is your background and why do you feel it qualifies you for this position?	My background uniquely positions me for this role. With a Master's degree in business management and a rich banking career spanning over 16 years, I've honed my skills in managing both people and high-impact projects, often with long-term financial implications. I regard this extensive experience as a continual learning journey, each lesson preparing me for the next challenge. Over the past six years, I've served on the Planning and Zoning Commission, providing me with invaluable insights into the intricacies of government operations. This firsthand experience has deepened my understanding of government operations. This firsthand experience has deepened my understanding on how local government functions and equips me to seamlessly transition into the responsibilities of this position. My academic and professional background, combined with my dedication to public service, have afforded me a unique perspective on the complexities of decision-making and resource management. I am committed to leveraging this knowledge to drive positive change, foster community engagement, and ensure a prosperous future for our city. Thank you for considering my candidacy. Thank you for your willingness to do public service and help inform and educate voters.	No Response Received	No Response Received