

Watchmen Voter Guide for Post Falls City Council Seat #3

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

	Rita Anderson	Joe Malloy
1. What is your name, what office are you running for and why are you running for this position?		Joe Malloy, Post Falls City Council Seat 3. I am wrapping up my third term in this position. People I respect asked me to run for a fourth term, so here I am. I have lived in North Idaho my entire life (in Kootenai County since 1984; Bonner County prior to that). My wife and I are raising our children in Post Falls, and hope they choose to raise their children here. My motivation to continue in this role is to assure that Post Falls remains a safe, friendly, affordable, and viable community that offers families the opportunities to thrive.
2. How could our city be improved? Please provide your top 2-3 ideas.		My primary goals, in order, are to protect personal and property rights, maintain high levels of public safety and health, and assure the provision of high-value services (low cost, high effectiveness). Overall, I believe Post Falls scores well in all three respects; and as a conservative, I believe all three principles are worth conserving and protecting.
3. What are your views on the rapid growth of North Idaho?		As someone who has lived in North Idaho my entire life, I'd be lying if I said I don't often long for the days when there was no traffic, ample open space between towns, and I never bothered to lock my door. However, the right to travel among, purchase property within, and relocate to any state in the Union is older than the Bill of Rights, so any attempt to prevent people from moving here would be patently unconstitutional. My focus as a City Councilman has been to find ways to accommodate growth such that it has as little negative impact on current residents as possible, while respecting the rights of those who wish to develop their private property within and adjacent to the city.
4. In your opinion what best serves the public, elected officials, or appointed officials?		This is a more complex question than it may seem. Where the role of the official has significant power... particularly power of the purse, and the power to enact law... elected officials clearly best serve the public, who are funding the activities of the government and subject to the laws thereof. That said, the ability to maintain continuity of day-to-day activities is far more efficient than having public elections for every position of any authority. For example, the public elects the City Council and the Mayor. The Mayor and Council appoint all of the department heads, including the City Administrator, Deputy City Administrator, Chief of Police, City Treasurer, Director of Legal Services, Director of Public Works, Director of Community Development, and so on. Theoretically, all of these positions could be elected (even all the way down to the custodial staff). These are all specialist roles, which require high levels of knowledge and experience to manage the day-to-day activities effectively and in accordance with applicable law... as such, continuity within such positions through election cycles is often of great benefit to the community. However, none of these positions has any authority to set budgets, levy taxes, or enact law; they are largely subject to the positions that do (Mayor and Council), therefore I do not believe it is essential for any of them to be elected (there are pros and cons either way). Any position that DOES possess such authority MUST be elected, in my opinion.
5. What improvements should be made to the city councils' role in the design and authorization of new developments?		The city's authority with respect to the authorization (or denial) of new developments is almost completely dictated by state statute. State statute on this topic is generally designed to protect property rights and prevent corruption at the local level, and to that end I believe it is quite effective. Any changes to the boundaries of the Council's authority would have to be made at the state level. As for the design of new developments, the City Council can (and has) enact basic design standards to improve the visual and functional impact of the development. If anyone has ideas for new design standards, I would be more than happy to hear them.

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6. In your opinion, should any services currently provided by the city be cut, eliminated, or privatized?		The city currently makes intelligent use of private contractors where it makes sense. In general, major facilities or infrastructure projects are best suited to be completed by private contractors (who can mobilize and demobilize according to the project scope and schedule), whereas ongoing maintenance and operations are best suited to be carried out by full time city staff (who are fully committed to serving the needs of Post Falls). As for service levels, the city conducts regular surveys and public workshops to gain a better understanding of the levels of service (for police, parks & recreation, streets, multi-modal paths, public transportation, etc.) the citizens as a whole generally want (I represent the citizens, not just myself). Then I must work with city staff and my fellow Councilors to chart a plan to provide those services effectively and efficiently, with my personal goal being to do so without raising taxes.
7. Do you believe access to city managed water and sewer should be increased to rural communities and why?		No. The costs of city water and wastewater facilities are paid by city taxpayers; extending city infrastructure to properties that do not pay city taxes is placing an unfair burden on those who do. Also, since rural properties are generally more spread out, the cost per customer of extending such facilities becomes prohibitively high. There are other water providers in the county (Ross Point Water District, Greenacres Water District) that do an excellent job of providing quality water to their rural customers. Due to density restrictions within the county's jurisdiction (no more than 1 unit per 5 acres), septic systems pose little risk to the aquifer or public health. Where a landowner or developer wishes to construct a higher density project, they must first annex that property into a city to do so (per state statute), where it makes sense (both from a cost and public health standpoint) to extend city services.
8. How do you plan on keeping a healthy reserve fund without increase taxes?		The City of Post Falls has long done a very admirable job of forecasting facilities and staffing needs well into the future, and budgeting to meet those needs in the present. There are long-term master plans for water, wastewater, streets, parks, multi-modal transportation, administrative facilities, and so on that forecast 25+ years into the future, and are updated (with public input) roughly every five years. The city also budgets for a reserve fund to cover about 3 months' worth of operations should revenues somehow cease entirely (worst-case scenario). As this has been the status quo for Post Falls for many decades, it is possible to stay the course without increasing taxes.
9. What is your opinion of the increased push for affordable housing?		I believe in the power of free markets. If there is strong demand for lower-cost housing, developers and non-profits will work hard to meet that demand, and government shouldn't unnecessarily intervene. That said, I also believe in private property rights. If a proposed development within the city will quantifiably damage the property values of others, I must work to assure that doesn't happen. Finally, I do not believe the city government should subsidize housing in any way. The rapidly rising cost of housing is certainly one of the primary issues affecting Post Falls. Building has not kept up with demand, pushing prices ever higher. Local wages have not kept up with the increasing cost of living. This combination has forced many long-time residents to leave the area, and prevented people who would do a lot of the lower-wage service jobs from staying/moving here, making it difficult for local businesses to staff their operations. We must strive to find the right combination of accommodating additional housing that minimally affects current residents; welcoming the efforts of businesses, non-profits, and co-ops to find private solutions for lower-cost housing; and attracting employers who offer high-paying jobs to the area.

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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?		This is a bit of a loaded question, as it assumes the interests of builders and developers currently have priority over the interests of the public. This is certainly not true for me, and my voting record demonstrates this. The key issue at hand is that of private property rights. Developers have a right to develop their private property, and the surrounding residents have a right not to be materially damaged by that development. Zoning codes are intended to lay out the specific rights and obligations in advance so residents can know with some certainty what shall be permitted on their own property and surrounding properties, and the Comprehensive Plan is designed to offer some predictability of the potential development of unincorporated lands. Over the past few years, I have championed efforts to simplify the zoning codes to make them more predictable and less intrusive (as examples, apartment buildings are no longer allowed in the R2 zone, and parking requirements have been increased in all SC zones). These changes were made largely due to input from the public. New zoning codes have been created to accommodate lower-cost housing options that provide expanded opportunities for asset equity (in the financial sense) while being less intrusive than 3-story walk-up apartments (cottage homes, twin homes, tiny homes). Unfortunately, there are also times when the city is bound by state statute to act in a particular way, no matter what I or the public thinks about it. In these cases, clear communication is vital to clarify what the city can and cannot do, and why.
11. What is your opinion of "Smart Cities" and how they apply to North Idaho?		This is one of those cases where, in the words of Thomas Sowell, "There are no solutions, only trade-offs." Technology provides tremendous value in that it offers significant increases in efficiency, resulting in lower costs and/or better services. For example, cameras in strategic locations can allow one person to observe a far wider area that would otherwise require multiple fully equipped police officers and cruisers to monitor. The trade-off, of course, is the risk that nefarious actors will use that technology to unjustly intrude into our everyday lives and infringe upon our privacy and freedoms. People generally want safe streets, faster emergency response times, improved traffic flows, and so on. People also mostly don't want to pay more in taxes. Technology can help accomplish both goals simultaneously. However, people generally don't want to be constantly monitored, either (I am definitely one of these people). I believe technology has its place, but it must be locally controlled such that the local residents have a strong influence over how such technology is implemented. I am extremely leery of state and federal programs that promote and fund "Smart Cities" technology, as local residents have little to no influence at those levels.
12. Should the concept of "equitable outcome" be implemented as a part of the city council's decision-making process? Why or why not?		No, absolutely not. Liberty describes the interaction among people; as in, no person or group of people may coerce another person into doing (or not doing) something, so long as the activity does not infringe upon the same right of others. Liberty has nothing to do with interactions between a person and his/her particular circumstances, or a person and his/her own choices. As soon as governments attempt to control the latter form of "liberty" to influence outcomes, the former (and true) form of liberty ceases to exist. As such, the role of government is to assure that everyone has an equal opportunity to play the hand they're dealt; it is not to control which cards every person receives.
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.

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14. What is your background and why do you feel it qualifies you for this position?		I served almost 10 years on the Kootenai County Republican Central Committee (2005-2014). During that time, I served two years as the Youth Committeeman, and two years as the District 5 (now District 3) Chairman. I served on the Board of Directors for the United Way of North Idaho from 2015-2021, two of those years as the Vice President. I have served on the Post Falls City Council since 2012. I have an extensive voting record, so anyone can see how I have actually voted on the issues, rather than having to simply rely on what I say I'm going to do. Municipal government is a complex web of city, county, state, and federal laws and regulations, which takes some time, effort, and experience to learn to navigate effectively. My participation on the Post Falls City Council and other local boards and committees has prepared me to continue being an effective representative for the people of Post Falls going forward.

Watchmen Ministry North Idaho