



Edwardsville | Glen Carbon
Chamber of Commerce

POLICY COUNCIL & BUSINESS BUILDS PAC

CITY OF EDWARDSVILLE: ALDERMAN CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Candidate: Jack Burns

Position Sought: Edwardsville Alderman Ward 2

1. Please provide us with some basic information. Tell us briefly about:

a. Your family

My wife, Lori, taught in the Edwardsville School District, is retired but continues to substitute teach. We have two married sons, both graduates of SIUE: Alex, a senior cybersecurity consultant with a government contractor in Colorado, and Paul, a civil/structural engineer in Missouri. We have four grandchildren.

b. How long you've lived in Edwardsville:

I grew up in Collinsville, IL. I lived in Glen Carbon for 10 years and have been a resident of Edwardsville for 28 years.

c. Your education:

I attended SIUE graduating with a degree in Business Administration with a concentration in marketing and finance.

d. Your employment:

I have spent my entire career in the financial field: National Division/Commercial lending with a large St. Louis bank, President/Owner of a Mortgage Company and regional manager of a large wholesale mortgage company. I'm currently a semi-retired, but still serve in business development for a large Michigan based mortgage banker.

2. Why are you seeking this office?

I want to continue the work of growing and maintaining the assets of our community and continue serving the residents. Also, I have learned that it is best to do things right as opposed to twice. Our City staff are the pros, I am impressed daily by the quality of our people. I am a good listener and no matter what the situation is I attempt to make the best long-term decision.

3. What education, skills and experiences have prepared you to deal with the complex financial, technical and legal issues that regularly come before city council?

I have owned my own companies and have been employed by large fortune 500 companies, all finance related, and have served as my own compliance/legal officer in a highly regulated and complex banking field. I chaired the Public Service Committee for the past two years. I've been on the finance committee for two years and was heavily involved and instrumental in working with the Finance Director and council in obtaining very favorable bond rates.

4. What, if anything, should the city of Edwardsville do to retain, expand and attract 'head of household' jobs?

The city has utilized economic developed tools to attract companies that employ a qualified and skilled labor force that pay good wages. Just look at the increase our EVA over the last five years. The city has taken a regional approach in attracting this growth. These companies consider many variables when considering a location to include secure infrastructures, availability of power, water, streets, and a strong labor force. . Examples are Hortica (Sentry Insurance), Prairie Farms, Scott Credit Union, World Wide Technology, Amazon, and Madison Mutual, come to mind. We need to embrace SIU-E and our community colleges to attract students and educators.

5. Identify and prioritize the three most important 'large capital' projects in the city of Edwardsville. Please justify your prioritization. How do you propose to pay for these projects?

Downtown parking is important to continue in the enhancement of this district. A vibrant downtown is essential. Public and private financing will be used to accomplish this goal. Private and the expansion of TIF 2 will be the main source of funds. The sales tax we receive from new businesses locating in the area should pay for the bonds issued for the construction.

Construction of a new fire station is on my list. This is necessary to better serve the east side of Edwardsville. This will ensure adequate service for the entire town and replaces an antiquated facility that is costly to maintain. Funding for this is through the existing .25% sales tax.

Expand water treatment facility. This is necessary to provide safe and reliable water service to our businesses and residents. This is funded by our water rates.

6. What are your thoughts on city finances?

a. Are there opportunities to cut expenses?

Specifically, where are those opportunities?

Yes, negotiate with our service contract providers. Share staff and equipment across departments. Utilize available federal and state grants for road projects, water, sewer, and public safety.

Is there a need for new or additional revenue?

Specifically, where would it come from?

Yes. Capture growth in EAV while still maintaining a flat property tax rate. The city has not raised property tax rate for the last 5 years.

c. Are there areas where spending needs to be increased?

Specifically, where does spending need to increase?

Specifically, where would the money come from?

Yes, road, water sewer, infrastructure. Some of the city's water and sewer lines are over 100 years. Funds will come from the planned increase in the water and sewer rates. Borrowing from IEPA for low interest loans, leveraging available grants, MFT disbursements from the state.

7. What do you believe is the role of a city council member in the city administrator form of government?

The council's role is to pass legislation and set policies that enhance public safety and direct public work projects. It should be the liaison between the city administration and our constituents. It also should be the caretaker and be fiscally responsible for our taxpayer's dollars.

8. Governor J.B. Pritzker recently signed into law HB 3653. How do you recommend the city prepare for the unfunded financial burden when this law goes into effect?

It is too soon to determine the financial burden on the city. The state has granted a 4-year implementation period. We know there will be a cost, i.e., storage and body cameras. Issues and solutions are to come.

9. If you're the incumbent, what have been your significant accomplishments during your term? If you're the challenger, what do you believe have been the significant disappointments of the incumbents, and how would your term in office be different?

I was involved in the resurfacing roads in several subdivisions in my ward. We doubled our parks space with the addition of Plummer Park. We moved into the new Public

Safety building and continued to maintain a flat tax rate. I have always been available for my constituents. I quickly return calls and emails and address their concerns.

10. Will you commit to not raising the city's property tax levy?

I have always been opposed to raising property tax rates.

11. Glen Carbon has placed a moratorium on collection of school district impact fees. Are you willing to again consider an impact fee moratorium?

District 7 is one of the highest rated school districts in Illinois. The quality of our educational system effects and attracts many people. I would not want to harm this image. But, I would be willing to consider a moratorium if it made sense and was not too detrimental.

12. If elected, what would be your top three priorities?

Priorities would be to not increase the property tax rate, continue to provide a safe and secure environment and continue to support economic smart and controlled growth. I would support the continued efforts of the Equity and Inclusion committee's recommendation and add policies to ensure we foster a more inclusive community in Edwardsville.

13. At the end of your term in office, how will you know if you have been successful?

"I would hope I left it a little better than I found it". Although it was in good shape when I came on board.

14. Are there any changes you would like to see regarding:

a. how city council functions?

The city council functions well with a diverse group of autonomous individuals who have respect for one another.

b. how committees function?

The committees also functions well. There are many different personalities and views, but still with respect and empathy for each other.

c. how departments function?

Departments seem to work well together. I am not privy to any issues within.

