



Candidate Questions for 2019

1. What are the most important reasons that you decided to be a candidate for Town of Delavan Chair?

Having been on the town board and having served as the town chairman, I am very much aware of the challenges that will face the Town of Delavan over the next few years. While we have put many systems in place and have taken actions to protect Delavan Lake, there will be new residential developments and pressures on the town that need to be efficiently managed. I live and work in the Town of Delavan and want to continue to make the right choices to make Delavan the best possible place to live.

2. What are the goals you wish to achieve if elected? How do you propose to see your goals implemented?

My pledge to the town of Delavan is to continue to Listen, Plan, and Protect. The pledge to "Listen" will continue through extended public hearings that are held for complicated or expensive town decisions and public comment sections that encourage the contribution of citizens. An example of the pledge to listen can be seen in my request for an advisory referendum for the construction of a new town fire station. With important and costly decisions such as this, I will continue to ask for citizen input prior to spending town tax dollars.

The pledge to "Plan" can be seen through my implementation of long range planning at the town. I have instituted a long term capital plan with careful consideration of expenditures and planning from all town committees. I have expanded the long term road improvement schedule and have involved the entire town board in the planning process. I will continue to plan for the future with the involvement of citizens and board members.

The pledge to "Protect" includes protecting our great lake, the fire department, the rescue department and the police department. During my office as Town Chair, we have invested more in the town Fire and Rescue departments than during any other period since the 1980's. We have completed the largest lake management project since the 1980's, and we have maintained a strong, dedicated police force through open contract negotiations and support of their capital needs. These actions will continue if I am re-elected in April.

3. What do you believe to be the most significant short-term and long-term problems facing our Town? What actions or solutions would you propose to deal with these problems?

There are many challenges that will face the Town of Delavan over the next few years. Two major areas are the upkeep and reconstruction of roads and the protection of Delavan Lake.

For road improvement and maintenance, we need to do a better job of planning and cooperating with other government entities. Our planning will include the utilization of new materials to preserve road integrity and the judicious scheduling of repairs, resurfacing and replacement. We need to continue to work with the City of Delavan, County of Walworth and State of Wisconsin to ensure roadways receive the proper funding and attention.

Delavan Lake is a complex ecosystem that does not have simple answers to ensure its water quality and preservation. We need to cooperate with our lake partners; the DLIA and the Delavan Lake Sanitary District, to make sure we are making informed decisions on lake management.

Under my direction, the town had a watershed plan created in 2016 that shows the areas that result in the greatest benefit for the lowest cost. We need to pursue those areas that give us the best return on investment. An example of this is the watershed project that we are completing at the Town Community Park. We were able to receive matching grant funds for phase one of this project and have applied for an additional grant for phase two. This entire project was detailed in the watershed plan.

The completion of this project will reduce the phosphorus and sediment that enters into Delavan Lake and stabilize the land upstream from the project. Town Public Works employees were also used on this project which resulted in an additional \$30,000 savings from the project bid.

4. The Town's watershed consultant, Dr. Peter Berrini, has recommended dredging the Mound Road ponds to bring back their effectiveness in trapping sediment and pollutants, to keep them from entering the Inlet and therefore Delavan Lake. Do you support the dredging project, or what other solution to restoring the ponds do you support?

The dredging of the Mound Road ponds is one of many recommendations that were made by Dr. Peter Berrini in the Watershed Plan. Because of the total cost for dredging the ponds, they are not the highest ranking project that the town can pursue. Other projects in the watershed need to be pursued first before we commit town funds to lower ranking projects.

Unfortunately, the ponds were not designed to be as optimal as they could have been. They are too small to trap enough sediment and they were not designed with a maintenance plan. As a result, the ponds continue to fill up at a rapid rate, but do not capture sediment during major rain events. If money were not an issue, the town should dredge all of the areas in Delavan Lake that have collected sediment along with the ponds and the Inlet. Then we would have a clean starting base for collecting sediment from the water shed. Unfortunately, money is an issue and as an elected official, we need to make prudent decisions with taxpayer funds. Spending \$500,000 every three years to dredge ponds that were not designed properly is not the best use of those funds.

5. Do you support the Town creating a reserve fund for lake projects?

The town already has a reserve fund for lake projects. That is what we use to fund the lake projects each year. At this time, there is about \$250,000 in the fund. I had the fund created with we dredged the Delavan Inlet. Projects that have used the funds recently include the water quality monitoring by the USGS, Sediment Pellet testing and the Town Park watershed project.

6. Currently, a small portion of the Town budget is allocated to maintenance and capital improvements to the Lake. Do you intend to maintain, increase, or decrease this current spending pattern?

What the town has conducted, and should continue to advocate, are lake management projects, such as dredging projects, waterway projects and cover crop projects. The smaller of these projects can be, and are paid for with the Lake project funds. Larger management projects need to be paid for with additional debt. When there is the need and opportunity to pursue a major lake management project, I recommend having public meetings and hearings on the project and, if they are approved by the public, they are financed through either bank loans or part of a debt offering as they have been in the past.

7. Recognizing the importance of Delavan Lake to the economy of the Town of Delavan, how would you ensure that the priorities listed above are implemented?

We need to continue to partner with the Delavan Lake Improvement Association (DLIA), the Delavan Lake Sanitary District (DLSD), the City of Elkhorn and the City of Delavan. This is why all of these entities take part in the monthly Lake Committee meetings.

The DLIA should continue to provide education to citizens and land owners and work with land owners on better land management in the water shed.

The DLSD should continue to manage the removal of plant material from Delavan Lake and provide testing and research assistance for lake projects.

The Town should continue to fund the major lake projects with the continued support of the cities of Delavan and Elkhorn.

By working together and utilizing the watershed plan that has been created, we can continue to have a cost effective management plan that benefits Delavan Lake.

8. Why should a voter cast their ballot for you?

Voters should support me because I am the best qualified candidate for the position. I have ten years of service as Chairman of the Lake Committee and understand the complexities that are part of maintaining a healthy lake. Under my stewardship, the town has completed the largest lake management project since the draw down, invested record amounts in infrastructure and first responders, and still managed to keep taxes either level or lower for town residents.

If elected, I will continue to do what is best for the Town of Delavan. I will listen to the tax payers of the Town of Delavan, plan for the future and protect our resources and citizens.

Ryan Simons