

Candidate Replies to Questions – Tom Anderson

1. Why do you wish to serve in the government of Poetry?

If re-elected, I would like to see the town council finish what we started in 2021. When I was elected in 2021 I committed to three goals: (1) establish the needed legal systems and ordinances, (2) create a sound financial base to make the town sustainable, and (3) develop an organization, and the town hall, for conducting the town's business. Over the past two years we have made considerable progress in developing most of the necessary ordinances, revenue sources, budgets and management systems. Roads are a particular need. Beginning in 2023 we should have revenue from our new sales and use tax to address our roads. In my view, we now have three primary areas of focus: undertake extensive road repairs using our newly approved sales and use tax, complete the town hall building, and modify the council meeting agenda to be more productive.

2. There will be much to do in the second term for the Mayor and Town Council. What three things do you most hope to accomplish, if elected?

As stated in my reply to question number 1 above, in my view we now have three primary areas of focus: undertake extensive road repairs using our newly approved sales and use tax, complete the town hall building, and modify the council meeting agenda to be more productive.

3. When you were first considering the possibility of Poetry incorporating, what did you see as the biggest positive from incorporation, and what was your biggest concern?

The biggest positive, as I understood in 2021, was to block incorporation of Poetry from Terrell and Royse City. My biggest concern was managing the geometric boundaries. The Poetry map has boundaries that are more like fingers or branches, with large open spaces between the fingers, with many designated as ETJ. I envisioned questions and concerns regarding voting eligibility, and that concern proved to be true.

4. What makes you stand out from other candidates?

I don't know some of the other candidates and I don't have enough information to discuss all our differences.

5. If elected, you will serve a two year term. What changes to Poetry do you envision over the next two years?

In my view, the extensive growth of high speed fiber optic internet connections throughout Poetry, primarily by Spectrum and Monster, will forever change Poetry and other rural towns. Many people want to move to a rural setting like Poetry but need to work from home, or just desire a better source of internet communications and entertainment. The worldwide Covid lock down in 2020 forced many people to work from home, and businesses learned that employees could successfully work from home if they had high speed internet. That insight changed the dynamics in rural communities throughout the world. More people will be attracted to Poetry and that trend will continue for many years.

6. **If you are NOT elected, what would you do to try to help work on ideas or issues that are important to you?**

If asked, I will continue to volunteer my time to complete our town hall. We need to finish our Town Hall building, which was previously an Annex at Campground Cemetery. We moved the building in 2022 to the current site, which was donated to the town. We will use it for town business and council meetings. Additional work remains, including a septic system, ADA ramp, parking, and building modifications. Considerable labor and materials have been donated, which lowered our costs for the building repairs. In my opinion, completing the town hall renovations is extremely important for the future of our town.

7. **How would you plan to involve residents in the decision-making process in the Town?**

In my opinion, we need to encourage more broad participation in our council meetings by making our agenda more productive and efficient. We need to end the meetings at more reasonable times. Over the past two years many of our council meetings have lasted four to five hours. This is an unhealthy and unnecessary burden on the council and the attendees. It also discourages many from attending and offering their views and opinions. We have learned that other town councils in Texas have agendas that are more efficient, effective and timely, while still encouraging broad public input to assist the council in making decisions. We should model our agenda based on towns with more effective agendas.

8. **What would you describe as your primary leadership quality?**

I work to make meetings, discussions and decisions that are well organized, efficient, clear and focused on the most significant goals and needs. I try to get things done promptly and efficiently. I try to avoid wasting people's time and resources.

9. **What changes to Poetry do you envision?**

Please see my reply to question number 5 above.

10. **If you are not elected what would you do to try to help work on ideas or issues that are important to you?**

Please see my reply to question number 6 above.

11. **How would you plan to involve residents in the decision-making process in the City?**

Please see my reply to question number 7 above.

12. **What three things do you hope to accomplish most?**

Please see my reply to question number 2 above.

13. Poetry is currently a very rural area with a “country” lifestyle. How much do you think that lifestyle should be allowed to change, and how would you ensure the town stay within the bounds you would set?

Change inevitably will occur. We can plan for it and try to manage it, which is one function of the town council, Also, please see the answer to question number 5 above.