

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

Most importantly, because I believe God has called me to do so. I originally thought I'd just serve my neighbors for the first term of office, but I feel led to continue to volunteer my efforts if it's wanted. From my time in Boy Scouts to now, helping others has always been an integral part of who I am. I firmly believe that we all have a responsibility to give back and make a positive impact in our communities. Serving in the government of Poetry allows me to do just that, and I am honored to be able to contribute my time and energy to this important work.

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

If elected, my top three priorities would be to:

- **prevent property taxes.** I've fought since day one to make sure we don't implement town property taxes. I am committed to advocating for the financial well-being of our neighbors, especially those on fixed incomes who would be disproportionately affected by property taxes. We must find creative solutions to fund necessary projects without burdening our community.
- **Protecting our freedom from restrictive zoning regulations:** Our community values individual freedom and the right to live and work as we choose. I will continue to stand up against any regulations that threaten this fundamental principle. I personally experienced that loss of freedom when Terrell kicked my small business out of town on false zoning allegations. It was a rough journey, and I don't want anyone in our town exposed to that threat.
- **Improving our roads:** While we have made progress in repairing our roads, there is still much work to be done. We need to work with our neighboring counties to secure cost-effective road agreements, increase funding for road maintenance, and establish a proactive system for identifying and addressing road issues before they become major problems.³

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?

When Poetry was considering incorporation, my biggest concern was the potential for increased government intervention, regulations, and taxes. I firmly believe that small government is best, and I was committed to preventing any unnecessary burdens on our community. However, I saw the biggest positive as the potential for greater control over our town's future and decision-making processes. By incorporating, we were able to ensure that our community's needs and interests were represented and protected while they would have been under direct threat if Terrell had continued to expand our way. I am proud to have played a role in preventing the county from expanding throughfare roads in our town, and I remain committed to safeguarding the unique character and values of Poetry.

4. What makes you stand out from other candidates?

As an Eagle Scout, small business owner, and 15-year resident of Poetry, I bring a unique blend of experiences and skills to the table. I am deeply committed to preserving our town's rural character and protecting the interests of our community. What sets me apart from other candidates is that I am not just someone who talks about getting things done, but I am someone who has a track record of following through on their commitments. You can watch all the council meetings at poetrytexas.com and read the minutes there as well. I believe I'm also the most outspoken candidate about property tax, which, in my opinion, should be avoided at all costs.

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

Over the next two years, my primary focus as a Town Council member would be on maintaining the small-town charm of Poetry, preserving property rights, and limiting development. I would prioritize improving our road maintenance and ensuring that government spending remains low while continuing to protect our town's character. I also believe in fostering a sense of community and encouraging residents to become more involved in local decision-making processes. My vision is small and simple, because at the end of the day, I love how our community is now, and simply wish to preserve what we have.

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

Regardless of the election outcome, I am committed to remaining involved in the community and advocating for issues that are important to me. I believe that everyone has a responsibility to contribute to the success of their community, whether or not they hold elected office. If I am not elected, I will continue to support the Town Council and advocate for policies that align with my values. I will also look for other opportunities to volunteer and serve my community, whether it be through local organizations or community service projects. My dedication to our town and its residents does not depend on holding a specific title, but rather on my love for this community and my desire to make it a better place for all of us.

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

I believe in transparency and accountability in government, and I would work to ensure that residents are informed and involved in decision-making processes. I would continue to utilize the online forum I started during my previous term to enable transparent discussion between the council and the public. I try my best to get back to everyone who emails me with a complete and well researched reply.

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

I consider my ability to lead through collaboration and peacemaking as my primary leadership quality. I believe in bringing together diverse perspectives to find common ground and work towards a shared vision. I am a good listener and value the input of others in decision-making processes. I am committed to building consensus and fostering an environment of mutual respect and understanding. I believe that effective leadership requires active engagement with the community and an unwavering commitment to serving the best interests of all residents.

If you have anything else to ask me, just shoot me an email at simeonawhite@yahoo.com.

God bless,

-Simeon