

Candidate Questions – Terry Fowler

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

Response: My “wish” to serve comes from my love of country and community. Although I’m a fervent voter in the state and federal elections, as a citizen my ability to effect change there is limited. I feel the newness and uniqueness of Poetry provides me an opportunity to make a difference. A chance to protect this beloved community. I see myself as a more of a representative of the people than a legislative authority. I want to represent you!!

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?

Response: The first term is nearing an end, but it’s only a chapter in a never-ending novel. A new chapter is soon to be written. I hope to be a key character in chapter two of this town. I would love to see chapter two be a reflection of increased fiscal competence, increased road improvements and increased protection from housing developers who want to cash in on our sacred lands.

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?

Response: Like the overwhelming majority that voted for Incorporation, the “biggest positive” was the protection from perceived threats of encroaching cities. I won’t debate whether the state legislature protected us with house bills to stop annexation, but I will say as easy as it was written in a house bill, the law could be amended by future state legislative votes.

My biggest concerns have been partially realized already; deteriorating roads and political unrest. I believe we can continue to build on the relationships with the counties to improve our roads in a more affordable and timely manner while seeking wisdom from contractors and vendors within and around our town to develop a plan to move forward and stand on our own two feet. I believe we can assist in the political unrest by encouraging more collaborative communication and all of us being more willing to listen to other thoughts and ideas. An unnamed mentor of mine told me one time, “God gave you TWO ears and ONE mouth, you should listen TWICE as much as you talk”. That is what I strive to do every single day, listen to others.

What makes you stand out from other candidates?

Response: I don’t know that I stand out from anyone else. I currently serve with some remarkable people who all bring their own strengths to the table, sometimes filling in areas where I’m not as strong. But some of my qualities that I think are worth mentioning are: I am hard working, dedicated, driven, passionate, personable and I strive every day to be more humble than I was the day before.

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

Response: I may have already stated this before, but when someone sits a softball on a tee you swing for the fence. My goal is to increase fiscal competence, increase road improvements and increase protection from housing developers who want to cash in on our sacred lands. Furthermore, I want to continue collaborative efforts in our small town and work to restore unity and community back to our town.

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

Response: If I wasn't re-elected I would stay involved. I have enjoyed my time learning to walk as a Councilman, but the title of Councilman does not define me. I would continue to attend meetings and volunteer for committees. I would continue volunteering to repair roads as I have done multiple times. I would continue to meet the citizens needs of this town even if it's only an hour worth of free skid steer work in front of someone's house like I did for Kevin Senkevech when a delivery truck ran into his ditch. I am a people person and I would continue to try to meet the needs presented to me.

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

Response: Involvement is what I fight for. I don't have to agree with everyone and I know I don't have all the answers. Which is why I have been fighting for the citizens right to speak on every agenda items. There have been recent conversations on how to reduce the time spent at council meetings. I am for working with council to develop ways to better use our time and one of those is moving public comments to the beginning of the meeting. I am for that; it would allow citizens an opportunity to speak their minds early in the meeting and return to their homes in preparation for their next day. But I am not currently for removing the citizens ability to speak on all agenda items. We are a new town and admittedly we don't have everything figured out. I want to hear the comments at the same time we are discussing them. The citizens cannot be expected to be fully abreast of the agenda items if council is not.

What would you describe as your primary leadership quality?

Response: Leadership books, forums and seminars are around every corner. It would be easy to google leadership traits and paste them as my ideas, but that's not me. I am sincere and transparent. As I promoted through the fire service from fire fighter to driver/engineer to fire Lieutenant to Fire Captain and now Fire Battalion Chief I have learned each promotion

brought with it more and more responsibility. I've learned from those that were my supervisors and more importantly from those that I have supervised. Some lessons I learned were what you should do, but more importantly I learned what not to do. Somewhere in the 22 years in the fire service I have learned the best leadership is relationships. I pride myself on the ability to build REAL relationships. Real relationships/leadership is when each party strives to help the other complete a task for the common good. You see, when everyone cares more for others than themselves it doesn't seem like such a heavy task because those that you now lead are those that voluntarily help you carry the load. And when the time comes, true leaders carry the load of others.

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

Response: I feel like a broken record, but I believe in collaboration. Issues that are important to me may not be as important to others, but when you listen to others I believe they begin to listen to you. When you put down your selfish needs and concentrate on others, I believe the gift of an ear will be given to you for your desires to be heard.

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

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What three things do you hope to accomplish most?

Response: My goal is to increase fiscal competence, increase road improvements and increase protection from housing developers who want to cash in on our sacred lands. But further more I want to continue collaborative efforts in our small town.

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?

Response: Change, don't they say change is inevitable? I've seen change in my lifetime and I believe I will continue to see change. The “country” lifestyle is my lifestyle. I come from and married in to a “country” family. Ranching is our life and what has changed for ranching will continue to change ranching. Less land available. As people find this oasis we call Poetry, properties get smaller and smaller. Honestly, if I could have it my way, I would hit pause and no more change would happen inside this cloud we call ETJ. But change is going to happen and the best I can offer is that I will continue to foster the ideology of those in my family have done before. I will be a good steward of the land and what God has given me and I will continue to be a good neighbor to those around me. If everyone tried to be the neighbor they would want to live beside to the neighbor that does live beside them, then I believe we would have a lot less problems.