

# READER

Arts, entertainment, bluster and some news

Oct. 24, 2019 | FREE | Vol. 16 Issue 43

## 2019 VOTERS' GUIDE

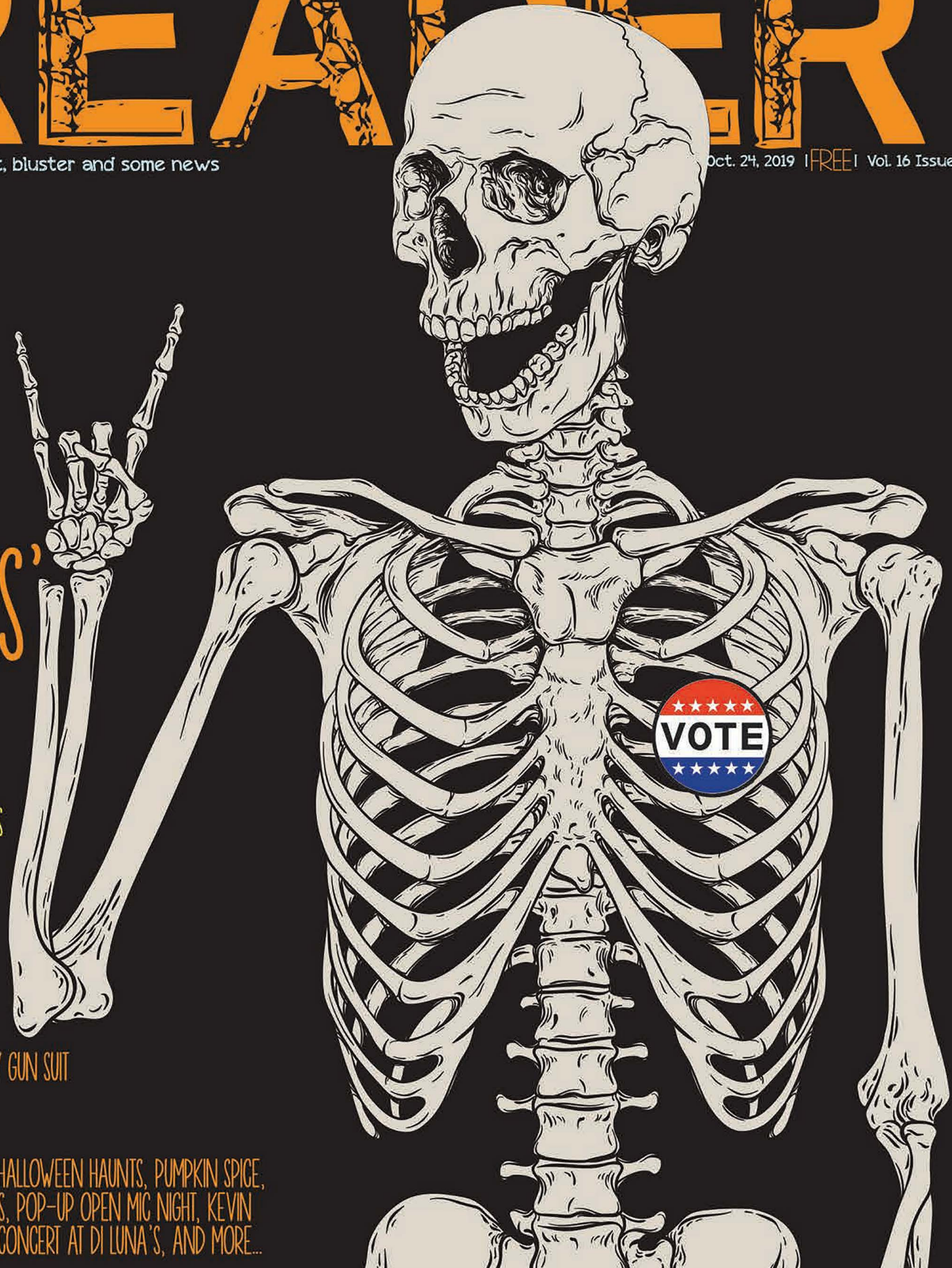
Q&A WITH THE CANDIDATES

SAGLE BURGLARY SUSPECT  
SENTENCED TO 5 YEARS

CITY RESPONSE TO COUNTY GUN SUIT

WHY VOTING MATTERS

A COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF HALLOWEEN HAUNTS, PUMPKIN SPICE,  
219 CELEBRATES 85 YEARS, POP-UP OPEN MIC NIGHT, KEVIN  
BROWN'S ALBUM RELEASE CONCERT AT DI LUNA'S, AND MORE...







# CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

## ELECTION DAY NOV. 5, 2019

Sandpoint City Council • Sandpoint Mayor

As we do every year, the *Reader* is offering a candidate questionnaire to help better inform you about the candidates. This week, we focus on Sandpoint City Council and Sandpoint mayor. Next week, Ponderay and Lake Pend Oreille School District.

### Questions for Sandpoint City Council and Mayor candidates:

1. What inspired you to run for office?
2. In the midst of all the changes in downtown Sandpoint in regards to the master plan, how do you intend to help Sandpoint retain its character?
3. What are some concrete ways that master planning is going to benefit the average Sandpoint citizen?
4. What are the top three issues facing Sandpoint right now and how will you address them?
5. Is there a shortage of affordable housing in Sandpoint? If so, how will you increase the availability of affordable housing?

### \*QUESTIONS SPECIFICALLY FOR MAYORAL CANDIDATES:

- \*6. Diversity and inclusivity have been topics of concern and interest in Sandpoint for many years. How will you address these issues if elected as mayor?
- \*7. How would you characterize relations between Bonner County and the city of Sandpoint? How will you, as mayor, work with the county commissioners?
- \*8. For the incumbent, what have your biggest successes been in office? For the challengers, what would you do differently?

### SANDPOINT CITY COUNCIL

#### Andy Groat

**Age:** 44  
**Years of residence in county:** Lived, worked and raised three daughters in Sandpoint since 2001.

**Education:** A.A. from SCC, B.A. in recreation management from EWU.

**Recent or pertinent employment or professional qualifications:** Four years Coca Cola account manager serving Sandpoint, Bonner, Boundary and Pend Oreille counties for 15 years. Currently with UPS 15 years, as well as the Union Shop Steward Teamsters Local 690.

**How can voters contact you?:** groat83864@gmail.com

--ANSWERS--

1. Curiosity — I'm interested in how all these moving parts work together to create community. Civic opportunity — It's my turn to pay forward what has been paid into me and my family. Challenge — I want to become more engaged, informed and involved with my community and motivate my peers to do likewise.
2. I intend to help Sandpoint retain its character by showing up, being involved and giving continued support to local business and our community. It's time for all of us to do more.
  - Engaging with our citizens.
  - Inform myself with policy and procedure.
  - Involve myself in leadership and decision making. We can all help support the character of



Sandpoint by continuing to shop, dine and recreate downtown and in it's surrounding areas.

3. So as long as the Master Plan retains its original intent of Sustainability, Affordability, and Taking Care of what we have, the average citizen can share my view of Sandpoint. I get the privilege to live, work and recreate in a park-like city with my friends.

4. Affordable workforce housing — I'd like people to be able to live, work, purchase/rent a home and recreate all in the same small town, if they choose to.

Adhering to the Master Comprehensive Plan — Make sure that we as a community are involved in our town's growth. That our government is responsive to continued planning efforts.

Being a good neighbor — Exchange ideas respectfully.

5. I do believe there is a shortage of affordable workforce housing. Originally, I had the opinion that it was a "jobs" issue and why aren't we doing more to attract more employers. Fortunately, I had a good neighbor explain to me, "We have great employers currently here in Sandpoint, LPOSD, BGH, Kochava, Light-house, Quest, Ting, great retail and amazing restaurants. Many of those hard-working, dedicated employees have to commute because they cannot afford to live in Sandpoint." What can I do about it? I don't know yet, I am learning. One lesson that I am learning is to move from a place of opinion to a more solid space based on facts. Facts are going to help resolve our issues. I need more facts.

I am getting more Engaged, becoming Informed and being Involved with my Community. I also ask you to the same.

#### Jacque Guinan

**Age:** 54  
**Years of residence in county:** 6 years  
**Marital Status:** Married  
**Education:**

Postgraduate in nursing.

**Recent or pertinent employment or professional qualifications:**

Inventor of Card Cooler Graphics Cooling Fan for computers.

Founded Cool Solutions, Inc.

Personal assistant to president of Nutraceutical Corp. High-level finance position within Nucor Corp. Full business and financial background.

**How can voters contact you?:** jacque4sandpoint.com, jacque4sandpoint (FB), jacque4sandpoint@gmail.com

--ANSWERS--

1. I made the decision to run because I feel people want to know their best interests are being represented by elected officials. I have found the recent budget explosion and rising taxes alarming and above everything else I would like to see a fiscally responsible government in place that will appreciate the value of tourists while prioritizing the local citizen and business community ahead of the lure of tourists.

2. Sandpoint's character, as in all communities, is mainly in its people. I have seen so many instances of a loving, caring community. It is one of the major draws people have to this town. Sandpoint's charm is in its buildings, architecture, homes and streets. I believe we retain Sandpoint's character by serving, protecting and building up its citizens. We retain Sand-



point's charm with restoration of its buildings and landmarks without majorly changing their features.

3. First, I would like to say that the plans do look beautiful and many of the changes would bring things that our local community would certainly enjoy. I love the idea of more indoor recreation, ice skating and the carousel. That being said, I do have some concerns regarding the parks plan. With a business and financial background, my first question is always going to be: "How will this be paid for?" To my knowledge, there have been no cost estimates given to the public for these projects and no plan to pay for those costs. We need to be sure we have our priorities in order. First take care of vital infrastructure (such as sewage and parking issues) and proper city maintenance needs and then move onto these other projects as funds allow.

4. 1) The sewage system. I am deeply concerned with the fact that Sandpoint has 20 discharge violations this year, according to the most recent ICL report. This has been an ongoing problem for many years and progress to correct it has been minimal. I would like to see a more aggressive approach to resolve this issue so we can move on to other city projects knowing our water is safe.

2) Downtown parking. I have spoken with many people who express that they do not shop downtown because parking is difficult for them. I would like to look into various solutions for this. One option may be a multi-level parking structure. Kaniksu has already expressed an interest in renting 60 parking spaces which could help offset the costs over time. I would want to see designs to the structure that blended in with the surroundings as much as possible so that it



< cont' from previous page >

would not be an eyesore, but rather, an enhancement to the area. We could also look into the possibility of bringing back the trolley, which would not only add convenience but charm to the downtown area.

3) I feel Sandpoint citizens and businesses have been getting lost in the pursuit of the big money of attracting the wealthy and luring in tourists. While tourism is a vital part of our economy, we have to be careful to be balanced. I would like to see Sandpoint get back to its roots of a small-town, business and residential family-friendly area to live and work. We need to structure our spending with the residents and local businesses being top priority.

5. Unfortunately, there is no blanket solution. Yes, a council can vote to relax some of the regulations and restructure the impact fees. Council can also vote to limit the number of vacation rentals permitted within city limits. Beyond that, I would want to look into and work with the rest of the council to find any other way to help the situation because I do personally feel it is a serious problem in our city.

## Kate McAlister

**Age:** 60  
**Years of residence in county:** 27 years  
**Marital Status:**



*Married, four children, eight grandchildren*  
**Education:** Corporate Social Responsibility education from Boston College, Buccaneer Scholar (life-long learner).

**Recent or pertinent employment or professional qualifications:** President/CEO Greater Sandpoint Chamber of Commerce 10 years  
**How can voters contact you?:** Facebook: Kate for Sandpoint or kateforsandpoint@gmail.com

--ANSWERS--

1. I love where I live and am inspired by those who serve our community on a daily basis, especially the unsung heroes: teachers, servers, nurses, those who work retail, foresters, landscapers, office workers, all the worker bees who don't get much recognition

but continue every day so our community keeps going. Earlier this year, several local business owners approached me and asked me to consider running; they felt they needed someone to represent them and their employees in an official capacity. It is a natural extension of what I do every day at my job at the Chamber of Commerce. I am a solutions-driven person who likes being part of the process of change and helping everyone move forward. It is my time to step up and stand up for our community.

2. The character resides in our people and our culture, who we are at the core. Acceptance and problem solving together, keeping our eye on our common values of educating our children, caring for our beautiful environment, being an independent resilient community — solving our own problems, moving at our own pace. I will do what I can to keep us moving forward and not digressing. However, I am just one person, this will take all of us. As a community, we should never give up our own power and rely on one, or six, people to do all our thinking and work.

3. I am a proponent of planning in general. It is vitally important we have a plan for going forward and addressing possible future issues and growth. With no plan, or roadmap, how do we know where we are headed, or how much to budget for future projects? From what I have experienced, I feel the city has done a good job with communicating to our community what is happening in regards to planning. We've all been given a number of opportunities to voice our opinions and concerns. All of us will benefit as we look towards the future. Growth and change are a constant in our lives, be part of the process, add your voice.

4. I'm sure everyone has an opinion on the "top three" here's mine:  
*Affordable housing:*  
I hope to collaborate with all participating groups regarding housing. There are, and have been, concerned citizens already working to begin solving this issue. I've heard from many different sources there are no long-term rentals, and if there are, they are very expensive and often restrictive. In addition, the price point for purchasing a starter home is well beyond local wages. We all need to work together to figure

this out. In the long run, it effects all of us.

*All voices matter:*

One of the things I hear on a frequent basis is "only the voices of the rich matter." To me, this is very disheartening and a signal we have a disconnect somewhere. All of us are a part of the community. I understand what it is to feel disenfranchised and feeling like your voice doesn't matter. It does matter. It matters because we all make up the fabric of our community, every unique one of us. I have always been a warrior for those who feel left out and unheard, and will continue to do so. I talk to a lot of people on a daily basis, I want to know what they are thinking and how best we can all work together and be heard, socio-economic status should not matter. In my opinion, inclusion means all of us who are already here as well as welcoming any new person who wants to join our culture and embrace our long held values of believing in education for our future, caring for our environment, problem-solving together, and mostly caring for and listening to one another. Let's talk.

*Educational choices with better funding:*

This is the foundation for our future and generations to come. Supporting education is the key to growing our economy and qualifying the workforce for better-paying jobs. In seeking other opinions, I've received some really great input and hope to start working on some educational issues benefiting our community. We should be looking at how to create educational programs via NIC or Lewis-Clark, to fill the jobs we need here in our community and our region.

5. Yes. According to a 2019 ESRI study of Sandpoint, 46.5% of our community are renters (compared to 32.5% nationally. 37% are homeowners). Why is it so cost prohibitive to get into a starter home? Is it overinflated home prices, or low wages? Or both? What are the barriers for developers in creating affordable housing? There are a lot of questions and as a community and region, we all need to have a seat at the table and figure out what will work for our community.

I hope to collaborate with all participating groups regarding housing. There are, and have been, concerned citizens already working to begin solving this issue. I've

heard from many different sources there are no long-term rentals and if there are, they are very expensive and often restrictive. In addition, the price point for purchasing a starter home is well beyond the local wages. We all need to work together to figure this out. In the long-run, it effects all of us.

This is also an important issue when thinking about attracting young people and families to the area to keep our economy growing. They are looking for economic opportunity, affordable housing and a great community to raise their family. It will take more than just myself to address this issue, but I am looking forward to being a part of it, and the ability to affect change.

## Shannon Mitchell

**Age:** 49  
**Years of residence in county:** 17 years  
**Marital Status:** Single,  
*two daughters (14 and 10).*



**Education:** B.A. English, Penn State University. AAS animal science, Bel Rea Institute.

**How can voters contact you?:** shannon4sandpoint.com

--ANSWERS--

1. I've been working for government for 10 years and it's time I stepped off the sidelines and became involved in the decision-making processes of the community we live in. I'm a single mom raising two daughters and would like them to see me as a positive role model and also understand that their input is valued and can affect local change.

2. While important infrastructure updates are happening, care needs to be given to the history and (what should be) citizen-approved functionality of the city. The business need to be able to offer input as the infrastructure is changing around them, so as to avoid work slowdown or stoppages.

3. The analysis and proposals of a master plan, once evaluated and a path agreed upon, can help guide growth and development of our city and have a positive influence on jobs, infrastructure, community facilities and services.

4. 1) Parking and traffic flow, as well as snow removal and flooding. Growth is inevitable, so we need to plan for increased parking requirements, and I believe a parking garage could benefit downtown Sandpoint. I would want to talk to the city employees who are involved with plowing to receive their input and collaborate on a solution to make our current snow removal system more efficient.

2) Waste water treatment. I would like to pursue some grant solutions to help fund both the analysis of our current system, and the project of moving and maintaining the new system. We have to realize Sandpoint is growing and it's more expensive to deal with a failed system than to plan ahead appropriately.

3) Government transparency and communication to the community. While I understand and appreciate the city currently posts information on its website, I feel that there needs to be improved communication with the citizens of Sandpoint, improved dissemination of information to the public and measured response times so the community has reasonable time to digest changes and respond and/or participate.

5. We need to create an environment for more affordable housing by looking into possible grants. Also, since real estate prices are market driven, getting the sewer system upgraded would facilitate development which will serve to reduce housing costs via supply and demand.

## Deb Reuhle

**Age:** 51  
**Years of residence in county:** 15 years  
**Marital Status:** Two teenage boys, Slate and Klein Fragoso.



**Education:** Master of physical therapy, Emory University.

**Recent or pertinent employment or professional qualifications:** 6 years on Sandpoint City Council.  
**How can voters contact you?:** At my city email or [debruehleforcitycouncil@gmail.com](mailto:debruehleforcitycouncil@gmail.com) or message on FB Deb Ruehle for Sandpoint City Council

< cont' next page >



# UNITE THE VOTE

☒ **Vote! Nov. 5<sup>th</sup>**  

## SHELBY

★ *for Mayor* ★



Mayor Shelby is a 4th generation Idahoan who is committed to making Sandpoint the best place to live, work and raise a family.

**EXPERIENCE**

Mayor  
City Council President  
City Council Member  
Planning & Zoning Commissioner

**CORE ISSUES**

Resilient Economy  
Affordability & Quality of Life  
Responsive Government

**www.ElectShelby.com**  
Paid for by Shelby for Mayor

< con't from previous page >

--ANSWERS--

(For Deb Ruehle - Spt. City Council)

1. I wanted to be of service to my community. My concern for the walking and biking connectivity and safety in town was the basis for my initial involvement in local government on the planning commission six years ago. We've made steady progress during those years. With persistence, and the help of others, we finally got the sidewalk at Ontario and Ella installed this summer. There is now a complete walking/ biking connection for residents of Lincoln neighborhoods, the elderly at Luther Park, the North Shore residents and others, including Festival goers, to access the city's new stadium. Children can now get to Washington Elementary School without having to walk/bike on the road.

I also spoke out at the Oct. 2 council meeting during our Master Parks Plan presentation. The data demonstrates the city doing well with distances for our residents to access parks. However, if there is no connectivity to safely reach the parks we need to do better. As we promote ourselves as a walking town we need to keep pedestrians as the top priority in our Multimodal Transportation Master Plan.

2. The Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan is currently under way. It is my hope that we will see a significant number of Sandpoint residents continue to be involved in this effort. The master planning effort allows the citizens to decide what the city's parks and trails will look like in 20 years. I would encourage everyone to get involved and take the time to listen to the presentations. You can also check out everything online at [sandpointidaho.gov/Home/Components/News/News/2441/1417](http://sandpointidaho.gov/Home/Components/News/News/2441/1417) or in the lobby at city hall. Please respond with your comments.

In regards to retention of character, I would highlight the efforts that were made to help the new stadium fit into the character of our town. I spent time with neighborhood residents that felt the entry was out of character and too massive for the neighborhood. Because of these discussions the look of the entry was revised. The entry gates as you see them today represent the fruit of those discussions.

Overall, I intend to continue to listen to the residents and allow them to guide me in the retention of the city's character. Lastly, I believe it is important for Sandpoint and City Beach to retain a waterfront dining experience.

3. Master planning allows a venue for citizens to get involved directly. It allows them a voice in where they would like their tax dollars to be spent within the Parks/Rec and Open Space Department. It is their vision for the amenities and improvements they would like to see over the next 20 years as our city grows and changes. What are the

possible benefits? Here are a few: improved and more usable playing surfaces for our athletes, improved parking at sports fields, restrooms next to boat launch at War Memorial Field, improved boat launch at City Beach, a space designed for the carousel. I would again encourage everyone to look at the design board [sandpointidaho.gov/Home/Components/News/News/2441/1417](http://sandpointidaho.gov/Home/Components/News/News/2441/1417)

If there is something missing that you would like to see, please let us know. Your input is crucial! You are what makes Sandpoint what it is and what it can be.

4. *Housing:* See Question No. 5

*Food Insecurity:*

Food insecurity, the inability to access sufficient, affordable, nutritious food, is a large problem in our community. We have many amazing citizens and organizations in this town that are trying to bridge the gap. We need to continue to encourage the companies that are here to stay and improve wages, while encouraging new companies to invest and make a home in our area.

*Communication with the County Commissioners:*

It is important to keep in mind that we all have more in common than separates us. We as a city and county have to live under the same "roof." Just like a family, we are not always going to agree, but we are tied together. We need to sit down to do the hard work of getting to know one another.

We need to experience the people and not the perceptions, bridge the gap by working on issues that are not flashpoints, building more consensus. I have been a liaison for the city on the Trail Mix Committee for over four years. I have worked side by side with our former County Commissioner Cary Kelley who chaired this committee and subsequently with Chair Steve Klatt who is now working in the County Roads Department.

I will keep the city involved with the Bonner Regional Team, which is a collaborative effort to increase cooperation and communication with other cities and the county. The county is not officially engaged, though County Commissioner Jeff Connolly has been attending. I will be sure that the city has a presence at BCATT (Bonner County Area Transportation Team), The Trail Mix Committee and other venues where the commissioners are present so city officials have every an opportunity to share information and engage in problem solving with them.

It is important to keep engaging our county residence in our master planning efforts and these advisory teams. Sandpoint is the county seat and we need to embrace this. Many county residents own businesses within the city and our counties most populated High School is within the city limits all of which means a significant number of residents converge here. We need to keep the rural residents of our region involved on a personal basis to make sure everyone feels

welcome in Sandpoint.

5. There is a shortage of housing period, but especially in affordable housing. If you compare the data from across the country for towns similar to ours, it becomes evident that it is our median income that is the crux issue. We need to find creative ways to get our community more integrated into our school system through training and technical programs; with the goal of creating a more skilled workforce capable of filling higher paying jobs. For every dollar we spend on economic development we need to spend two on affordable housing. We must continue to look for creative solutions within the planning department with the goal to build more housing within Sandpoint. For example, we have changed the Accessory Dwelling Unit standards. This opens up options for more housing density while preserving the essential character of Sandpoint. We can also partner with other close by communities to help solve this problem.

## SANDPOINT MAYOR

### Ken Lawrence

**Age:** 78

**Years of residence in county:** 22 years

**Marital Status:** Married, four children, 12 grandchildren, 12 great-grandchildren.

**Education:** Bachelor of Arts.

**Recent or pertinent employment or professional qualifications:** Retired business owner and retired pastor.

**How can voters contact you?:**

[ken4sandpointmayor@gmail.com](mailto:ken4sandpointmayor@gmail.com)

--ANSWERS--

1. Running for mayor of Sandpoint has been a consideration of mine for several years because of my love for this town and its people. My family and I have lived here for 22 years, and I want to keep Sandpoint the vibrant community that it is by being a leader who unites our diverse opinions with well-reasoned policies based on input from residents and the council.

2. We are without a doubt a growing city, especially since Sandpoint was ranked the best place to retire in Idaho in early 2015. Sandpoint's charm draws people here because of our beautiful lake, its parks, historic buildings, "walkability" and interesting downtown area, to name just a few of the character aspects I value. Equally important are infrastructure issues, and there are many of them listed in the master plan that I look forward to addressing. It all requires a careful balancing

< con't next page >



< con't from previous page >

act and common-sense, fiscal astuteness, augmented by citizen input and drawing on the expertise of our department heads.

3. Talking with residents, the shortage of affordable housing in the city is an often mentioned concern, and master planning will help in that regard. More and better residential sidewalks, bike lanes that don't impair traffic and general walkability of Sandpoint are also desirable features that can be addressed through master planning. Builders and developers will benefit from the city's plan to examine land use, fees and permit codes. There are many more aspects that will be favorably impacted by a well thought out master plan that keeps in mind the quality of life in our town.

4. I consider affordable housing to be one of the top issues. Without it, how will we attract businesses and employees? As indicated above, the council, with citizen input, has the ability to make this happen.

Secondly, traffic. As anyone who lives here has noticed, our traffic and parking problem has increased tremendously, and it is unimaginable what it would be like without the Byway that helps to take a lot of traffic off our streets. The complaint I hear a lot is that we're nearing the traffic situation in Coeur d'Alene. Because trains often block major city roads, I believe working with BNSF for quick construction of the second railroad bridge is important, and long-range plans should include having over- or underpasses for certain train crossing locations.

Third, economic opportunity. We need to focus on attracting all kinds of businesses and make it possible for them to thrive. Tourism-related businesses are of course a given, considering the beauty of our area. However, it should not be the primary focus. We also need to stay away from "picking winners and losers" by giving some businesses generous financial and other perks, putting others at a disadvantage. Fees and regulations need to be reduced to make it as convenient as possible for businesses to get off the ground and make a decent living. Disastrous experiments like the BID (Business Improvement District) that took money from downtown businesses for non-essential "improvements" are an example of what is not business-friendly and was in fact a divisive issue.

5. As indicated above, I consider affordable housing to be one of the top issues in Sandpoint, and builders and developers need to be able to conduct their business with minimum obstacles while remaining within existing ordinances and master plan directives. This includes both apartments and individual homes.

\*6. I have never seen our citizens more agitated and alienated than during the recent past when proclamations, resolutions and proposals were on the City Council's agenda that essentially painted Sandpoint's citizens as racist, Nazis, KKK and xeno-

phobes if they didn't follow the diversity and inclusivity ideas outlined. One unhinged individual distributing flyers and making annoying phone calls, who has long since disappeared, does not constitute a racist community by any stretch of the imagination. I believe that the continued effort by the mayor to convince us that Sandpoint has a problem in this regard is a solution in search of a cause.

\*7. I look forward to working with the county commissioners or any other government agency, or individuals, for that matter. I am a listener and evaluate issues carefully before deciding. I know there is currently some tension because of the Memorial Field issue relating to guns at the Festival, however, courts will decide the outcome of that issue. The county's recent effort to serve as a fail-safe in the event the Festival organizers are unable to continue may serve as an example of how county and city can work together to solve an issue to the benefit of both.

\*8. My experience in running a local business for 20 years and leading an area church has given me a pragmatic approach to deal with every-day issues that require common-sense solutions and prepared me to work with people of widely diverse backgrounds. I welcome being connected to citizens. As a mayor, I intend to always have a finger on the pulse of the community. After all, the mayor is the leader they elected to have their best interests in mind. That includes practicing fiscal responsibility at all times and putting essential expenditures ahead of nice-to-have projects. It means an ongoing effort to keep taxes and fees as low as possible and look for ways to reduce the budget, not increase it every year. It means keeping regulations to a minimum to avoid stifling the economy and our way of life. Ultimately, it is all about our way of life, and making Sandpoint the best possible place to live.

## Shelby Rognstad

Age: 45

Years of residence

in county: 20 years

Marital Status:

Married, two kids, 7 and 10

Education: B.A.

general studies, University of Idaho

Recent or pertinent employment or professional qualifications:

Rognstad Enterprises, owner, property management; Common Knowledge Bookstore and Cafe, owner, 2005-2015; The Hive, co-owner, 2013-2014.

How can voters contact you?:

electshelby.com

mayor@sandpointidaho.gov



--ANSWERS--

1. This city is in the midst of its most robust master planning effort in history. It's important that we maintain experienced leadership and get it right. Sandpoint is challenged with difficult issues arising from explosive growth. It is also challenged by a polarized political environment. Sandpoint needs leadership that can rally the community around shared values, stand strong in support of those values, and lead the city into a future of greater affordability and opportunity.

A vote for me keeps my opponent in office as council president, and keeps me in office as mayor, providing the continuity of city governance that is most needed right now.

2. Right now we need to get the downtown revitalization completed as soon as possible, get the streets opened back up and support our local businesses. Our local businesses downtown are part of the heartbeat of Sandpoint, as are the historic buildings and landmarks which give our community its character.

Looking forward, the Arts and Culture Master Plan process will inform the Comprehensive Plan with regards to the built environment and will identify elements of historical and cultural value. This will be a community driven process that will provide code recommendations to promote develop-

ment that preserves the historical character that defines Sandpoint.

3. Master planning will ensure that citizen tax dollars are spent in the most efficient way possible for delivery of all public services. Citizens benefit from increased playability on our athletic fields and courts, increased opportunities for events in public spaces, better access to the water, better connectivity and multimodal access, increased and improved arts and culture opportunities, and more affordable development and housing. All of this results in a stronger, more diversified economy, from which we all benefit. Planning for our future now is the key to ensuring affordability, and sustainability for our children and our grandchildren. These plans also increase the city's ability to attract grant, state and federal funding for projects that directly benefit our residents.

4. The county is suing the city over the Festival lease. The city has filed for dismissal and will fight this frivolous lawsuit. The Festival is one of the most significant contributors to cultural and economic vitality of Sandpoint. I'm looking at alternative funding sources to support the Festival.

Downtown street construction must be completed as soon as possible. This is a huge burden to downtown business. I have directed staff to hold the contractor's feet to

> con't next page >

# CANDIDATES' FORUM 2019 ELECTION

**Tuesday, Oct. 29, 2019  
5:30 p.m.**

**Sandpoint Community Hall**

*204 S. First Ave. Sandpoint*

**CANDIDATES HAVE BEEN INVITED  
FROM THE FOLLOWING RACES:**

- Sandpoint Mayor
- Sandpoint City Council
- Ponderay City Council
- LPOSD Trustee #4

**READER**  
**SandpointOnline.com**

Panhandle  
Community  
Radio  
**KREY**  
88.5 FM

Selkirk REALTORS®  
& Multiple Listing Service  
MLSR



< con't from previous page >

the fire so that the project is completed in a timely fashion.

Last Wednesday [Oct. 17] was a difficult decision when I, with three council members, approved the Memorial Field design to include artificial turf. As a lifelong supporter of grass over turf, I was converted when I realized that all of the Festival needs could be met with cork, the environmental impact was a wash and the overall use time nearly tripled. This was the most fiscally responsible choice that best served all user needs.

5. The comprehensive Plan Revision currently under way addresses the affordable housing issue. Accessory dwelling units, greater density and smaller lot sizes through the 2009 Comp Plan were successful changes creating affordable housing in Sandpoint. There are other innovative approaches, like a community land trust and employer subsidized housing that can offer housing options below market and have been successful in other communities.

I have initiated discussions with potential partners to consider these novel approaches. I have also initiated discussions with county commissioners and other mayors in the region to address urban growth, bring more housing inventory onto the market and reduce housing cost.

\*6. I have partnered with the Bonner County Human Rights Task Force to convene regional and state leaders to address this issue. I have often been the lone voice among City Council, calling attention to the need to stand for our values of human dignity, kindness and acceptance. I have stood up and defended these values in City Hall and in the community. I have brought forward an inclusion initiative to support equality in the workplace and offer a resource for local employers if they so choose to participate in the effort.

Sandpoint needs a mayor who has the courage to stand up for the least privileged among us, whether that is socio-economic, race, gender or ability, and I will continue to fight hard for diversity, inclusion and equity. My opponent had a chance to support the initiative and she chose not to.

\*7. My approach has been to be proactive, identify common goals and collaborate to achieve shared success. I've worked with the county on Bonner County Trails Plan, the BC Area Transportation Team, and the

Bonner Regional Team to address growth issues. I am the candidate with the most experience working across political and ideological boundaries to build relationships in the county and state. This is important now more than ever as the city is being sued by the county and the future of the Festival is at stake. I am passionate about the success of the Festival and I have the experience and track record to engage our constituents and advocate on behalf of the Festival.

\*8. The Strategic Plan 2018-2020 was the first in Sandpoint's history and it was a game changer because it identified common priorities and goals for the council, mayor and leadership team. This results in more effective government and greater efficiency of cost and service.

Sandpoint government is more responsive than ever before. With new tools like Engage Sandpoint, OpenGov, OpenTownHall and more robust public engagement, it is easier than ever to be informed and participate in government. The new community resource officer division also represents government ready to respond to public needs.

## Shannon Williamson

**Years of residence in county:**  
*8 years as a resident. I've visited the area regularly since 2003.*

**Marital**

**Status:** *Single mom of two (ages 12 and 9 years old)*

**Education:** *Ph.D. in marine science; B.S. in Marine Biology*

**Recent or pertinent employment or professional qualifications:** *Nonprofit executive director.*

**How can voters contact you?:**  
*www.shannonforsandpoint.com*



--ANSWERS--

1. I was inspired to run for office in 2013 by my two kids. I've chosen to raise them in Sandpoint and I remain committed to making Sandpoint a great place for families and everyone that wants to live here. I'm now running for mayor because we've made promises to our citizens that we need

to deliver on over the next 4 years. I'm a methodical and pragmatic leader that will get the job done.

2. The city worked hard to collect feedback from all stakeholders with respect to the two major phases of the downtown streets revitalization so our residents, visitors and business owners had a say in the design aspects of the project. I believe that listening to what the public values and implementing their vision helps to preserve Sandpoint's character.

3. Example 1: The inflow and infiltration (I&I) mitigation plan will help the city identify where groundwater is entering our sewer system and how we can address this chronic problem. Reducing I&I will allow us to build a smaller capacity wastewater treatment facility, which will directly benefit our rate-payers. Example 2: The multimodal masterplan will engage our citizens in the important conversation of sidewalk connectivity and help the city identify the best path forward to improve walkability in a way that is equitable to taxpayers.

4. In my opinion, the top three issues include affordability, growth and the potential loss of our resort city status due to an arbitrary population threshold. I address affordability in a subsequent question. The city continues to experience significant growth and development pressures. Our master planning efforts will help ensure we have a unified community vision that will define how we grow and respond as a community to these pressures. I will advocate to retain our resort city status, which allows us to offset the cost of service demands caused by tourism, by continuing to work with our two state representatives and senator to achieve the changes necessary to protect our status at the state level.

5. Affordable housing is an issue that our elected officials have no choice but to tackle. It's our responsibility to our citizens. We've had many conversations about how to address this issue over the years. From making changes to how we limit short-term vs. long-term rentals to performing a new housing assessment, it's a priority. A workshop with local developers helped us identify areas where the city could make changes that may help alleviate our affordable housing stock shortage. We need to continue the conversation locally, learn lessons from

success stories regionally, and act.

\*6. I would imagine that most would agree that diversity and inclusivity are important hallmarks of a healthy community. However, I don't think it's the city's role to legislate kindness with taxpayer dollars. If elected mayor, I would support efforts to improve diversity and inclusivity by organizations and individuals in the community. I would also acknowledge and communicate that Sandpoint is made up of people that go above and beyond to help their fellow citizens in need daily and that's part of what makes Sandpoint such a great place to live.

\*7. I would say that the day-to-day working relationship between staff at the city and county is OK, but the larger relationship between the entities has not been positive. If elected mayor, I would like to establish a committee made up of a subset of elected officials from the city and county that meets face to face monthly to address concerns and have frank conversations about the issues that impact our constituents. I would also like to establish a committee that is made up of all the elected officials that meets quarterly at a time when the public can attend so that we can gather feedback directly from our constituents and address them in a collaborative manner.

\*8. If elected mayor, I will work in close coordination with the city council members to achieve the goals we have outlined over the next four years. I will meet with each council member monthly to hear feedback, address concerns and brainstorm ideas. I will foster a collaborative environment across the city and give credit to the teams and individuals that help us serve our citizens every day. I will show up during critical times for the city including budget hearings and adopting the budget.

*Editor's Note: This week, we featured answers from Sandpoint City Council and Sandpoint Mayoral races. Next week, we'll publish answers from Ponderay City Council and Ponderay mayoral candidates, as well as Lake Pend Oreille School District Trustee #4 race. We'll also publish a ballot explainer in next week's issue outlining what will be on the ballot, including a question for Lake Pend Oreille School District to establish a permanent school levy.*



# Design20FIRST.com

**Energy Optimization / Footprint Reduction • Residential / Commercial / Industrial  
Utility Rebates • Tax Credits • Free Cash Flow Analysis on Every Project**



Let's

# VOTE YES

## to ensure quality schools for our kids!



**On Tuesday, November 5**, residents of the Lake Pend Oreille School District will vote on a ballot measure to continue the district's current maintenance and operations levy into future years. Here is information we hope all voters will weigh as they decide their vote.

**This is NOT a proposal for a new levy.** Rather, it will stabilize funding for our schools by continuing the levy that voters approved last March, without requiring additional votes in the future.

- **Voting YES won't increase taxes.** This ballot measure will continue the current \$12.7 million levy already on the tax rolls.

- A school district levy has been approved every two years for 20 years. **This measure will eliminate the need for a levy election every other year.**
- The levy constitutes 35% of the district's budget. **Should it ever fail, the district would require drastic cuts.**
- **Our school district remains accountable** to us for every penny they spend, through the annual public budget hearing and the trustees we elect.
- **The levy can never be increased without another vote.**

Your YES vote will help provide  
**STABLE FUNDING** for our schools

## WHY are we voting AGAIN?

**Every other year for 20 years**, voters have approved the Lake Pend Oreille School District supplemental levy for instruction and operations. Unfortunately, levies are a necessary funding mechanism for school districts in Idaho. **The money the state provides falls far short of school needs.** This year, 93 of Idaho's 115 school districts have levies to help fund operations.

**In LPOSD, the levy is now 35% of annual revenue.** It funds approximately 300 staff positions, all athletics and extracurricular activities, professional development for staff, a resource officer for student safety, and the district's technology department.

**Should the levy ever fail to pass, the district would be forced to make deep cuts.** Meantime, the effort and expense required to hold an election every two years is costly, inefficient and

distracts from the prime mission of our schools ... to educate our children!

**Even with our current levy in place, our tax is very conservative within Idaho. The LPOSD tax rate is 53 percent below the state average.** Despite that, our student achievement trajectory in the past 10 years is one of improvement and we're now one of the leading districts in Idaho. We're getting a great deal for our money!

We believe our children are the best investment we can make as a community. They are the future citizens, workers and taxpayers. **Even if you don't have kids, ensuring well-educated, productive citizens will benefit you.** Giving our kids a good start in life helps us all.



## Please VOTE YES for stable school funding!

Early voting is under way right now, up till November 1!  
Vote from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Bonner County Elections Office,  
in the County Building at 1500 Highway 2. (208) 255-3631.  
On Election Day, November 5, vote at your regular polling place.  
Polls are open 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.



More info on levy and how to vote:  
[www.voteourschools.org](http://www.voteourschools.org)