

**Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce  
Candidate Questionnaire**

**2021 Spring Election – Oshkosh City Council**

1. Please provide some personal background information.
  - a. Name – **Lateria Garrett**
  - b. Occupation- **Store Manager**
  - c. List any community activities you are involved with- **Oshkosh Chamber, Boys & Girls Club, Diversity Affairs Commission, Oshkosh Community Ally Academy** \*Some of these have been at a stand still due to covid-19,however I'm excited to get back at it one we safely can.\*
  
2. Please outline what you consider to be the City of Oshkosh 3 – 5 most critical issues.
  - **Increased transparency, collaboration & openness with residents**
  - **Residents feeling heard and valued**
  - **Increased economic growth & development**
  - **Increased equity & inclusion for all Oshkosh residents**
  - **Increased entertainment/events as we recover from covid-19 to rebound our tourism**
  
3. There are a number of geographic locations within the city that can benefit from attention to facilitate economic growth and development. Please identify and discuss what you consider to be the top two or three economic development priorities that you will champion as a member of the city council? **I'm a supporter of both economic growth and development, however I know we already have a few great developments in process and so I'm not sure if right now is the best time to add any new developments due the economic issues we've faced over the last year due to covid-19 and so my first course of action would be to get all the facts and engage our residents.**

4. Previous City Councils have considered proposals to change the policy on how to fund the current street improvement and sidewalk replacement program. Past proposals included establishing a Transportation Utility Fee Program or a Transportation Assessment Replacement Fee as a means to eliminate special assessments for street reconstruction/improvement projects and the sidewalk replacement program. Do you support this type of a program? If so, what should be the basis to establish a transportation fee? Please discuss your position. **I would be in support of a that type of program as long as it delivered on a more equitable solution for both residents and local business owners, as I feel the burden of street and side walk repairs shouldn't solely fall on the shoulders of our residents. I'm also anxiously awaiting the feedback from the study on alternatives that Janesville conducted regarding their special assessment program as there may be some learnings we can benefit from based on the work they've already done.**

4. Municipalities across the State are moving to Fee for Service approaches to pay for the delivery municipal services that were otherwise funded by the annual property tax levy. Do you support a funding approach like this? If so, what current city services would be appropriately funded as a Fee for Service? If a new Fee for Service is imposed, should property tax payers receive an equal, proportionate tax levy credit?

**I don't know enough about the fee for services approach to effectively answer this question, however what I do know is I'm open to listening and considering new ideas, while ensuring its in the best interest of our residents.**

5. The City established a Storm Water Utility in 2003 for the purposes of managing storm water run-off issues in the community. Residential property owners are assessed for one equivalent runoff unit (ERU). Non-residential property owners are assessed annual fees based on the amount of impervious space (parking lots and roof tops) to determine the amount of ERUs that exists on a parcel. The initial storm water utility fee in 2003 was \$19.10 per ERU and has grown to \$196.92 per ERU, a 14.7% annual rate increase. Do you believe this increase is reasonable? Please outline your ideas to curtail the growth in storm water utility fees.

**Whether to be reasonable or unreasonable isn't the question for me, but a transparent explanation/illustration of why is important for residents as know the why's and ways to prevent increases like this are vital to maintain trust and collaboration between municipalities and residents.**

6. Local governments have asked the Legislature to prohibit the use of physically comparable vacant properties as comparable sales to occupied properties for property tax assessment purposes, known as the "dark store" loophole. The result of this policy

would allow tax collectors to more subjectively assess property value and taxes and make it harder for businesses to challenge their tax bill. Do you support the eliminating the so-called “dark store” loophole to allow municipal assessors to disproportionately assess commercial property owners? Please discuss. **I would suggest we amend or remove the dark store loophole to allow for a more ethical approach where big box stores wouldn’t benefit from this process and be accountable to paying fairly in relation to property taxes, doing this would allow small to medium businesses to continue to benefit from the dark store loophole. I also feel changes need to be made to ensure business costs aren’t the responsible of our homeowners.**

7. The State of Wisconsin currently imposes levy limits on local municipalities but allows for levy increases based on new development. Do you support the continuation of this? Should there be modifications? Should this be repealed? Please discuss. **I would look at these situations on a case by case basis, always engaging residents to get their perspectives.**
8. Over the past year, the State of Wisconsin has imposed a number of restrictions on businesses and individuals aimed at reducing the spread of Covid-19. As a City Council member, would in support imposing further restrictions on the citizenry of Oshkosh? If so, please outline what those restrictions might be. Please discuss your answer. **We are now third in the nation with vaccine roll out, so I think we will continue to see more of a normalcy for both residents and local business owners.**
9. In the proposed 2021-22 Biennial State Budget, Gov. Evers proposed the creation of a ½-cent municipal sales tax that communities over 30,000 could enact if approved by local referendum. If this proposal were to be retained, would you support the creation of a ½-cent city-wide sales tax? Please discuss. **I would like to know more specifics regarding what ½ cent tax would be used for and I also feel now may not be a great time to impose and additional tax on our residents as were recovering from a pandemic.**