

**Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce
Candidate Questionnaire**

2023 Spring Election – Oshkosh City Council

1. Please provide some personal background information.
 - a. Name **Bill Miller**
 - b. Occupation **small business owner/32yrs in Oshkosh**
 - c. List any community activities you are involved with **city council, Parks board, YMCA board, Boys, and Girls club board, Advocap board,OCVB board**

2. What are your background and qualifications for this City council position and what value will you bring to the City Council personally? **32 years as a small business owner in Oshkosh, and 3yrs on council. I bring a no-nonsense approach to issues and a very pro-development agenda.**

3. Please outline what you consider to be the City of Oshkosh's 3 most critical issues. **Clear well project/balanced increases in water/storm water rates, new development and growing tax base to spread the tax burden and finally increased police and fire protection to deal with the 16% increase in calls.**

4. What are the biggest challenges the city faces currently and in the next 5 years? What should the city do to respond and overcome these challenges? **Infrastructure/utility rates. I believe local government owes the Oshkosh community consistency in its policies so small businesses and taxpayers do not get surprised. Increased Storm water retention and water rates shocked our community this can not happen again. We all know rates are going up but it certainly can be assessed and increased annually instead of a 5year rate case.**

5. 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 am opposed to such a program simply because it has been challenged legally in so many other communities, and I feel it is a waste of our tax dollars and resources to do the same. I do believe there needs to be some type of relief mechanism for those exceptionally burdensome cases.**

6. Municipalities across the State are moving to Fee for Service approaches to pay for the delivery of 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? **we already have a lot fee for services in Oshkosh and I think we should evaluate each one on its own merits. It is my job to keep fees and taxes as low as possible while providing quality services to this community. I believe that can be accomplished primarily with an aggressive economic development plan and making things streamlined for our development partners and contractors also utilizing aggressive TIFs.**

7. 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 (annual) storm water utility fee in 2003 was \$19.10 per ERU and has grown to \$237.72 per ERU in 2023. Do you find this rate of increase acceptable? Do you believe that continued rates of increases at that level over the next 20 years is acceptable? Please outline any ideas you might have to curtail the growth in storm water utility fees. **This is a very complicated and important part of controlling the large amounts of flooding we have had in the past. If your are a business owner paying this fee including myself you are not happy !!!!! but if you are a home or business owner with a flooded basement with every heavy rain its not enough !!! this will be an ongoing discussion and debate for the next 10 yrs. My job is to make the pain as minimal as possible while supporting public works with the ultimate goal of eliminating flooding in our community.**
8. With a low unemployment rate and strong local economy, many employers are reporting difficulty in attracting and retaining talent. What is the role of the city in attracting people to Oshkosh an ensuring that Oshkosh is an attractive place to live and work. **Housing costs and availability is a key issue along with low crime and quality parks, these are typically the top 3 in polls. And I fully believe in investing aggressively in all 3 .**
9. 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. **This is a state wide issue effecting all municipalities. The system of funding local government at the state level is broken and needs to be fixed. The league of municipalities is constantly lobbying on our behalf in Madison. We would not have these issues if the state would fairly distribute taxes it collects to local governments like Oshkosh. Please please please put pressure on your state representatives to fix this we are truly handcuffed at the local level.**