



## **Local Candidate Questionnaire**

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this candidate questionnaire. Your response is an important element of the political education process for members of the Heartland REALTOR® Organization. Please note: simply completing a questionnaire in no way implies support from the Heartland REALTOR® Organization or RPAC.

Please forward the completed questionnaire via e-mail to Conor Brown at [cbrown@illinoisrealtors.org](mailto:cbrown@illinoisrealtors.org). Keep answers short & concise, but feel free to attach additional pages if you are unable to answer in the space provided. If you have any questions, please contact Conor by e-mail or by phone at 815-319-0943.

### **Background**

Candidate's Name: Larry W. Smith

Party (if applicable): Republican

Office You Are Seeking: McHenry County Board District 6

Name of Campaign Committee (REQUIRED): Citizens to Elect Larry W. Smith

Street/P.O. Box: 19111 Righeimer Road

City and Zip Code: Harvard, IL 60033

Cell Phone: 815-353-8043

E-mail: [LSmith911@yahoo.com](mailto:LSmith911@yahoo.com)

Website or Facebook Page:

[Vote-Smith.com](http://Vote-Smith.com) [www.facebook.com/Larry-W-Smith-280715659085450/](http://www.facebook.com/Larry-W-Smith-280715659085450/)

Profession & Name of Business/Org: Real Estate Broker, Brokercity, Inc.

40+ Years as a Realtor in McHenry County

Educational Background:

McHenry County College, University of Wisconsin, Northern Illinois University.

Primary Opponent(s): Ersel Shuster, Orville Brettman, Michelle Aavang

General Election Opponent(s): Unknown at this time.

### **General Issues**

1. If you are not currently in office, have you previously held public/appointed office? If so, please specify.

Current County Board Member for District 6

2. Have you discussed your campaign with any REALTORS® or staff from Heartland Realtor Organization? If so, with whom have you spoken?

Many Realtors, but only on a general basis.

3. What would be your priority if elected/re-elected?

Our 2018 budget has a tax abatement of 11.2%. I would like to turn this 11.2% abatement into a levy reduction of 11.2% for the following year. As a current member of the finance committee I will prioritize holding the line on the reduced levy with the goal of further reductions in spending and a lower tax levy.

#### **Economic Issues:**

4. How would you address housing affordability?

A combination of making zoning regulations less burdensome, and eliminating unnecessary building and zoning regulations will result in lower housing costs to homeowners. I am also a proponent of encouraging economic growth to bring more and better paying jobs to McHenry County. We will not resolve the affordable housing concerns until wages keep up with the increase in housing costs. I would support incentives for buying and/or remodeling existing inventory that would be available to our residents in need of affordable housing.

5. How should McHenry County's high property taxes be addressed? If elected/re-elected, what is your plan? Should the County increase the levy the rate of inflation? Would you vote for increasing the levy accommodating new growth (new EAV)?

I will not vote for a budget that raises the aggregate amount collected for taxes above the 2018 amount that is an 11.2% decrease from the previous year. I will not vote for increasing the levy for the rate of inflation or for new growth. As my goal for the coming year is to make the 11.2% tax abatement an 11.2% reduction in the tax levy, and working towards further reductions in spending and a lower tax levy, voting for an increase is not an option that I would consider. As a County, we need to encourage our state legislators to change the school funding system to allow for a reduction in real estate taxes.

6. Do you support government consolidation? If so where does it need to happen? Also speak to what services you think could be combined.

Government consolidation that can be conclusively shown to save the taxpayers money and not reduce services must be considered. Reducing administrative costs should always be taken into account when analyzing the benefits of combining services.

#### **Development & Land Use**

7. Do you welcome or oppose new residential subdivisions as part of economic development?

In balance with commercial and industrial growth for jobs, I would welcome residential development that provided for the needs of McHenry County.

8. What type of commercial and industrial development would you like to see in the county and where?

Commercial and industrial development to provide jobs would be ideal. This type of development should be located so as to have access to adequate infrastructure.

9. What is your view of the Unified Development Ordinance? Should there be any changes?

The UDO is, and will continue to be an ever changing document. The concept of having a UDO is that it should be reviewed each year and revisions made as needed. As chairman of the Planning, Environmental and Development committee, I called several special meetings of our committee in 2017 for that purpose. Recommendations from staff for clarity, ease of enforcement and ease of use by the public were considered. We also had much input from the public that led to recommendations from the PED committee for changes. Currently (January 2018) the PED committee recommendations are going to the Zoning Board of Appeals for their consideration and recommendations before being presented to the whole County Board.

10. What is your view of land-cash “donations” or impact fees (passed on to homeowners) for new housing for the purposes school districts?

I think this is a flawed system to fund schools, parks, etc. This serves to artificially inflate the cost of housing and should be eliminated. The concept of funding schools in this manner is something I am fundamentally opposed to.

11. Should landlords or rental property be regulated locally (licensing, mandatory inspections, chronic nuisances and “crime free” housing ordinances)? If so, how?

No. Regulations of this kind are overly burdensome, costly (adding to the problem of affordable housing) and have the potential to be discriminatory.

### **Fire Sprinklers**

12. Do you support or oppose mandating fire sprinklers in new single-family homes? 2-family? Townhomes?

Oppose. This would be another mandate that would unnecessarily inflate the cost of housing.

13. Should fire sprinklers systems be mandated in all commercial structures regardless of square footage?

No. Common sense needs to prevail. Use needs to be considered. Even with public traffic, a small commercial structure that is up to code with adequate exits and smoke detectors should not be required to install a sprinkler system.