



WINONA AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2022 CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

County Board

Marcia Ward - District 5 Candidate

- 1. What should the Winona County EDA (Economic Development Authority) be doing to support and increase private sector business development/job creation?**

EDA funding was established with State funds from the flood of 2007, there are some restrictions that should be reviewed along with the bylaws and possibly changed to allow flexibility of the use of funds available.

- 2. How do you define the role of the County Board of Commissioners verses the role of paid County staff?**

Commissioners set policy and guidelines and staff implement the policies. It is a team effort to create good policy.

- 3. What should the County Board be doing to support and promote agribusiness in Winona County?**

The county needs to start a discussion to review the current policy using science, best management practices and modern farming management. The number is an arbitrary number negotiated over 20 years ago. All policies need periodic review and analysis.

- 4. How should the County Board of Commissioners balance the rights of private property owners and current/future county regulations?**

We need to use health, safety, facts, and science along with citizen input to allow property owners to do reasonable things with their properties. Have an open attitude to allow new uses vs I don't like it I won't allow it.

- 5. What should be the role of Winona County Government in working with townships and municipalities for growing private sector jobs?**

Winona County supports the Workforce Development Center. Thru a multi county agency affordable housing is a high priority. Land use outside municipalities is within the county rules, guidelines to establish development areas for both housing and business development.

6. What do you see as the County's role in job creation and economic development?

County government shouldn't be an obstacle for private sector to grow and create economic development opportunities. Potential a funding sources. Creation of development zones in specified corridors within the county.

7. Where do you stand on possible future pandemic mitigations? How would you balance having a vibrant local economy while maintaining a safe community?

The role of the county public health should be to provide science based information and individual options, individuals need to be allowed to make their decisions based on their personal situation. If resources are required the county needs to provide and make available as needed. Higher levels of the health/ medical system should give direction and guidelines.

8. The recent jail project is a significant expenditure for the County, what steps do you believe need to be done to ensure this ongoing debt will not be a detriment for business and economic development in Winona County?

The County Board is working on a 1/4 cent sales tax to cover the bond payment. Legislative authority is required, and a voter approved referendum. I believe this is a fairer way to cover the bond payment with a broader base paying the expense vs all on the property tax payer.

9. Many communities across the state have seen many public safety officers leave or retire early from their positions. These same communities are having difficulty re-filling these positions due to negative public perceptions and lack of funding. What steps do you believe need to be taken to ensure that our community's law enforcement is adequately funded and supported so that our community remains safe and healthy?

This is a major concern with all positions in county governments. Law enforcement as most positions in Winona County government are represented by unions. We will continue to work to fund appropriate staff at all functions. Flexibility with pay and benefits needs to [be] researched. I am a proponent of a pay for performance system.