



# WINONA AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2022 CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

## City Council

George Borzyskowski - Ward 4 Candidate

- 1. Please provide a brief biography detailing your background and including your occupation, job title, employer, and education.**

I am a life-long Winona resident. I am a graduate of Cotter High School and holder of many training certificates from SE Technical college. I retired from Peerless chain Company in 2019 after 45 years. I am also an adjunct instructor in forklift safety instruction since 1993. I have been 4<sup>th</sup> Ward council representative since 1999 and serve on the Winona Port Authority and serve as Chairman on the Winona Housing Authority.

- 2. Among the Chamber's top priorities are economic development, workforce development, and community promotion. Explain how you see those priorities as important to our community and explain how you would work alongside the Chamber and business community on such initiatives?**

Economic development means jobs. Companies need employees. Jobs for people mean bills and taxes can get paid while schools and churches get supported. I served on the Workforce board and know we need to partner with our Universities and Technical College to provide the training the students need to be successful and find jobs for our local companies. The City of Winona has an excellent background in helping to promote Businesses in and around our area. I intend to keep working with the Chamber, City Government and Port Authority to continue assisting growth as we do now.

- 3. Winona has a long history of being a transportation, business and manufacturing hub in the region. Winona has experienced a new surge in tourism and arts industry in the last decade. What strategies do you embrace for the future of Winona? (You may pick more than one)**
  - a. Expand Port, rail, trucking and other transportation facilities and related infrastructure.**
  - b. Enhance tourism development with focus on downtown, limiting truck traffic and encouraging new small business in downtown.**
  - c. Pursue additional commercial/industrial land for future expansion of Winona's existing and emerging manufacturing businesses.**

I will work on Infrastructure upgrades. Winona has a great transportation system in place including rail, trucking, water and air transport, major Interstate all close by and to everywhere in the city in ten minutes. Winona Tourism is on the rise along with our growing and thriving Art Scene. The Winona Port Authority is a solid supporter of this growth and continue to search new land and ways to expand to keep our economy growing while working carefully with our neighbors.

**4. What do you believe are barriers for business growth and what would you do to influence how the City addresses these barriers?**

Right now, our biggest barrier to business growth is maintaining current workers and gaining new ones. As a city we work through community Development to help advertise to attract new people to work in Winona. Housing is also a barrier and we are working to attract developers to build locally but need to lessen the restrictions on building.

**5. What is the role of City government to improve the start-up business environment in Winona?**

The City works through the Port Authority's revolving loan fund to assist new and existing businesses to start up.

**6. Winona's success has led to questions and discussion on how to manage increased growth. How would you ensure the city appropriately balances the need for additional government (public safety, serves, etc.) without unfairly burdening citizens and businesses (zoning regulations, increasing taxes, etc.) as we address the symptoms of growth?**

Without new growth we will have a tougher time paying the City Operation costs, and maintenance and repairs. Growth means a larger tax base over which the costs can be spread out.

**7. What is your vision for the future of Winona?**

My Vision for Winona is to see a strong and varied business climate, growth in entertainment venues, and more recreational activities.

**8. Each of Winona's three higher education institutions has distinct and unique issues as we move into the future. How do you see the City working with the colleges and universities issues?**

I feel the City has a good working relationship with our college and universities. We meet with the leadership; they explain what their plans are and what we can do to work together and help each other out.

**9. As a City leader, what approach would you take to balance community growth and the rights of private property owners?**

As we do every year, we meet to discuss issues and explain what we need from each other to help bring desired plans to fruition and plans and ideas that are good for our community.

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

We will continue to be cautious and careful. To take precautions, and make sure vaccines are easily available to the public. We will continue to monitor flu and covid cases and be aware of any problems.

**11. Where do you stand on the Police & Fire Safety Center (eg. East End Rec) issue from a standpoint of business growth and development.**

I stand for Public Safety at its best. Our businesses rely on Public Safety for protection, information, training, and seminars.

**12. 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.**

First, let's stop committing crimes, but we know that isn't going to happen. We need to offer fair compensation and respect to our police and fire. It is important to be sure we are offering pay equal to what other cities our size pay.