

Gregory Klepeis

Answers for candidate for city council vacancy

1) I would be a unique candidate for city council having a scientific background. I mapped the extent of the last Ice Age in PA while working for the PA Geological Survey/DCNR. I could hold a strong voice in the municipal climate action committee.

My background is diverse, and I have attained many skills from partaking in different endeavors. My architecture degree included many courses comprising city planning and green building. Over the last year I founded an event at Artsquest that had sold-out attendance. This event helped me gain experience in marketing, strategic planning, and creating contracts with sponsors and vendors.

Last year I also used my position as head organizer of a Lehigh Valley meetup group to acquire donations from local businesses we would frequent to support my fundraising goal for Leukemia and Lymphoma Society of the LV.

2) The top three priorities for my campaign platform would be to work to help complete the goals that the city laid out for itself. Consider and implement the best way to improve the lives of our cities residents in a resourceful manner. Thirdly creating more opportunities for young adults. It is increasingly difficult for that age range to find good employment opportunities.

3) I believe Bethlehem can and has honored our architectural history, while promoting economic growth and business. Bethlehem's architectural history, economic growth, and business go hand in hand. Our history attracts tourists who support the economy, and economic growth increases job opportunities.

4) I have been a lifelong resident of Bethlehem. Only 22 is a problem.

5) No

6) One issue I believe Bethlehem currently is not addressing is Sand Island Park. There is trash all over and in the stream along the trail. I could host a clean the trail event on my meetup page to garner volunteers. Also I believe there is a better way to use the park. The river is not viewable which could be an attraction. The park could also create an awesome view for fireworks and Steelstacks, but the tree line is blocking it. Attracting more people to the park, the city could allow a food truck vendor or an ice cream truck to pay for a permit to park there on a 1 year basis.

7) A pedestrian bridge over the Lehigh River would be a great idea. A bridge would promote foot traffic, be helpful for the cities festivals, and is safer than our current option. To help fund the bridge I would propose the city host another festival. All the Lehigh Valley festivals had amazing attendance last year. Go with what works. Bethlehem took the Steelstacks/Artsquest idea from Germany. When I visited Denver last summer they had an Art Crawl Festival that was extremely successful. The downtown festival included many artists making amazing artwork on the road with sidewalk chalk.

I proposed Steelstacks Gamecon (board and card gaming event) to Artsquest last August. We had the event in November with sold out attendance. I would be able to help in organizing such an event to raise money for the bridge.

8) I applaud the council's usage of social media streams to try to encourage more participation. I would follow a similar path. Another option would be to attend and speak at Bethlehem (LV Young Professional Chamber) events to hear from citizens.

9) Our golf course has been in the red for many years. The golf course could partner with NCC or other local colleges to create opportunities for students to gain real like experience at no cost. This could help defray some of the labor costs. Many majors could participate to learn about marketing, business/event planning, and accounting.

10) Pools should be priority over the golf course. Pools are good for the families of Bethlehem, while the golf course is good for a few citizens. Memorial Pool should be upgraded.

11) The City and Parking Authority would need to plan where else they could temporarily offer public parking to try and ease the burden of losing the parking garage. There is a lot of parking under the bridge behind hotel Bethlehem that is often under-utilized. Some traffic can be directed down that direction. The city could consider also rent a parking lot and run a bus to and from throughout the week, similar to Musikfest.

12) I think it is important that the city tries it's best to keep a balanced budget. Also helpful to keep an open mind for discovering alternative methods or resources for success.

13) I can contribute my voice which is level headed and has common sense. I know it is equally as important to respect others, and listen and learn. Compromise is necessary to move forward. I am all for being open minded and hearing from both sides, before making an educated decision with the other councilmen.

14) My background closely relates to the municipal climate action being that I worked for DCNR mapping the last Ice Age. I could help be a strategic planner to help spread word of how people can help make a difference. My education in city planning and green building could be helpful in learning and discovering new and better ways to have more efficient government buildings.