



City of Grand Haven Mayoral Candidate Questionnaire

Name: Nichol Stack

Employer: Liberty Pest Control

**Please feel free to attach a separate sheet if the space provided is not sufficient.*

General

1. What qualifications/experience do you feel you possess that will enable you to fulfill the responsibilities of the elected office you are seeking?

My father's military career brought me here 25 years ago. I graduated from GHHS, continuing to Aquinas College. I achieved my BS in Mathematics through GVSU. I am currently COO of Liberty Pest Control holding state certification since 2002 as a Commercial Pesticide Applicator. I am a partner at Stack Housing providing affordable living for low income families. I have been a Trustee for the Coast Guard Festival for over a decade and am currently elected as Trustee for Grand Haven Area Public Schools. I am a state certified board member through MASB with an Award of Merit.

2. Have you ever run for political office before? If yes, please explain.

Yes. I am currently elected to the Board of Trustees for Grand Haven Area Public Schools. I originally ran as a write-in candidate for a partial term in 2014, strongly winning against my four opponents. I ran again, unopposed, when my term was up in 2016.

3. If elected, what would be your top priorities and why?

First and foremost, refreshing the mechanics of our Council. By fine-tuning the orders and operations of the Council and the cleaning up the language of our Charter, the will of the people can be executed more seamlessly. Contiguous to this notion, and of equal importance, is prioritizing necessary measures to ensure ample time for residents to reflect and be heard by Council and responded to in a timely matter by our staff. If we can perfect these two things, as is our job, much of the divisiveness we see amongst our neighbors regarding Council's work will be avoided because more voices will be heard and there will a widespread understanding of Council's work throughout the community.

4. What is your vision for the next 10 years for the City and how will your leadership help accomplish that vision?

I hope to look back 10 years from now and see our entire infrastructure updated, Grand Landing thriving and full, infill areas being developed, and our greenspaces vibrant and

healthy. I understand that all of this is a tall order, but streamlined governance provides our only shot at this goal. My skill set as a data based decision maker and strong ability to manage many projects at once will allow our staff to do their jobs without obstruction.

Economic Development, Tax and General Policy

1. As Mayor what do you consider your role in retaining and attracting new business and industry to the City?

I have only one role: to be the voice of the people within the constraints of the Constitution. This includes listening to residents' ideas and concerns, fact-finding, and administering data-based directives to the city manager. If I stay in that lane of effective, reasoned governance, all else runs smoothly. Business & industry partners prefer to work with municipalities that show consistency and common sense – apt governance provides on both of these fronts.

2. What is the number one challenge facing business growth and development in the City?

People's natural fear of change. Our town has a great history, yet nostalgia often inhibits growth and development. We must remind ourselves that little in our city remains the same as 100 years ago & 100 years from now it will be entirely different. It is our long time families, our love of the Coast Guard and military, and our drive to be the best of the best that remain the common thread in forming our community. If we stay true to ourselves as a community, all the rest falls into place.

3. What is the number one area that the City should invest in financially?

Infill. We have too many open pockets of potential growth that sit unused. If we thoughtfully develop those areas, we will see an increase in revenues in a relatively short amount of time and with minimal taxpayer investment.

4. Do you support the use of tax abatements and /or special tax incentives to create jobs and spur economic growth? Why or why not?

Yes, we need to remain competitive but giving away tax revenue must only be done on a very limited basis. Our local government suffers already from a tough financial situation (as most municipalities do) and tax revenues remain crucial to keep us afloat. We must keep in mind that we are a desired destination for work and play and everyone must chip in to keep that going.

5. As we move to a more regional community and in the face of continued fiscal constraints, what are your thoughts on consolidation of services (police, fire, schools, and transportation to name a few)?

I do not support consolidation. While all aspects of improving government efficiency must be examined, consolidation of services risks the quality of service City residents enjoy. I would be more inclined to share underemployed staff. For instance, if GH needed a part-time mechanic, and GH Township had a part-time mechanic— perhaps all could benefit by having that be the same person, working for both municipalities. That

mechanic would then have a full time job and municipalities would have some cohesion and cooperation helping all parties.

Talent Attraction

- 1. Local business and industry has identified that barriers to growth are lack of affordable housing, regional public transportation and qualified employees. As Mayor, what role would you provide in helping to address these issues?**

I would support revision of the restrictive ordinances that engage arbitrary criteria that often, unintentionally, keep housing prices high. I would call on our neighboring municipalities to share in the expansion of public transport. I would continue my work with our local schools that train and retain a qualified workforce. For instance, I am very proud of GHAPS' recent partnership with Shape Corporation, PRIME, that offers a direct track from school to employment. With civic support, we will certainly see more programs like this get footing in the near future.

Environmental Policy

- 1. How would you suggest green space be preserved while at the same time sustaining economic development and growth?**

I do not see these ideas as oppositional. In my opinion, vibrant greenspace incentivizes economic development and growth. We have plenty of areas to infill throughout town already zoned commercial, but remain underused. Our natural beauty serves as one of the draws for investors to develop already existing spaces. Dissolving greenspace to bring industry is like throwing the baby out with the bath water. Let's expand greenspace to bring industry, instead.

Transportation Infrastructure

- 1. In your opinion, what role do you think local/state government may play in further expanding the regional transportation services throughout West Michigan?**

We must make it worth the initial expenditures. Shared transport benefits the environment as well as the billfold. If you look internationally, public transport serves as the heart of each and every thriving economy. It creates revenues for the municipality, provides savings for the residents, expands opportunities for the employed, and reduces emissions. We must work collectively with other municipalities in our region to develop viable solutions. No one city/village/township can do it alone, but if we all chip in, we break down the distances that divide us and all gain exponentially.

Please attach additional information regarding your community and business affiliations.