



## Ottawa County Commissioner Candidate Questionnaire

District # 1 (Please insert your district number)

Name: Danielle Smith  
Employer: Shape Corp.  
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1. Why are you running for office?

*I've had an interest in public policy since an early age and that interest drove me to pursue a Bachelor's Degree in Political Economy from James Madison College at Michigan State University. I've always intended to get involved at the local level once we were settled in one location and I had more time to dedicate to this passion. I'm at a point now where I feel my life and professional work experiences can be applied effectively to supporting and evolving our community. I'd like to set an example for my teenage girls, working moms, and others who've considered becoming more politically involved to confidently and respectfully use their voice to influence positive change.*

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

*I have not previously run for political office.*

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

*I have over two decades of experience in management and leadership. In my current role as the Vice President of Global Human Resources for Shape Corp., I have had the opportunity to partner with multiple local agencies and serve on a number of boards in the areas of talent attraction and retention, workforce readiness, diversity, equity and inclusion, and pandemic response. My career has fostered a collaborative mindset that I bring to problem-solving, which I feel is needed in our elected officials.*

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

*The three top priorities I'd focus on if elected include:*

- Support for Business – Every sector of Ottawa County's economy is struggling to fill jobs. To remain prosperous, I will support policies that increase access to affordable housing and services, foster a culture of inclusion, and provide opportunities for training/re-training of our workforce.*
- Access to Leading Health Services – Ottawa County has an aging population, an increasingly diverse constituent base, and an uptick in mental health challenges (especially among the young). I am committed to prioritizing access to high quality and meaningful physical and mental health services for all residents.*
- Preserving our Lakeshore - I am committed to preserving the health and beauty of our lakeshore for future generations by accelerating our efforts promoting sustainability at the government, business and individual level.*

5. Ottawa is blessed with diverse economic sectors: agriculture, tourism, industrial and commercial. For each of these, what do you think are the issues they will encounter in the next 2 years? If elected, how will you support each of these sectors?

*Availability of labor, inflation, and material/resource shortages are the primary issues facing all these sectors. If elected, I am committed to supporting efforts that attract talent and investment to our county, including access to affordable housing, access to high quality healthcare, strong educational and workforce training programs, local*

health and sustainability of our groundwater and agricultural resources, and the preservation of our lakeshore and parks.

6. Safety for all citizens is a protection we expect. If elected, how will you ensure that the Ottawa County Sherriff's Department, Ottawa County Health Department and Ottawa County Court system equally and fairly provides safety to all residents?

*I will help promote safety for our residents through empowerment, support, visibility, and accountability. In my current role at Shape Corp., I'm responsible for all human resources programs globally, and I ensure that our values are upheld in our business practices by empowering our team members to be their best, supporting them with the resources they need to achieve success, monitoring their progress through regular check-ins, and holding myself and others accountable when the need arises. I would apply these same principles to our oversight of the Ottawa County Sherriff, Health and Court departments.*

7. Ottawa County is financially more secure than many other Michigan counties. This is due to previous boards and administrations wisely spending and saving revenues. If elected, what will be your spending priorities for county dollars?

*My spending priorities would be for programs aligned with my top priorities – Support for Business, Access to Leading Health Services, and Preserving our Lakeshore.*

8. Ottawa County is one of the fastest growing counties in Michigan, attracting people from many cultures, ethnicities, and lifestyles to support the growth of businesses throughout the county, if elected, how will you support diversity, inclusion and equity at the county level.

*Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) is fundamental to the growth and health of our community. If elected, I'm committed to supporting the following:*

- *Driving recognition that DEI isn't a nice to have – it's an expectation and fundamental part of our government, economic, and community strategy and operations.*
- *Helping build partnerships across government, community, and business groups to solve challenges such as affordable housing, transportation and childcare.*
- *Promoting practical consulting and training support aimed at building cultural intelligence and inclusion within the broader community and workplace.*

If you have any endorsements, current or past community or business affiliations that you would like to share, please note below.

Endorsements: Ottawa County Democratic Party  
Ottawa Integrity