



*The Board of Directors of the Arlington Heights Chamber of Commerce invites you to complete the questionnaire below to provide your vision and input on why you want to serve as a village president. Your responses will be published in their entirety on the chamber website and will be emailed out to the entire chamber membership. The Arlington Heights Chamber Board does not endorse candidates but works in partnership with all elected officials to foster positive economic growth through small business development and expansion for the betterment of the Arlington Heights community.*

Please provide your complete questionnaire by **Tuesday, March 25<sup>th</sup>**. Please email to: Chris Nichols – AHCC Board Chair @ - [chris@arlingtoncigar.com](mailto:chris@arlingtoncigar.com)

### **Village President:**

1. What do you believe are the top three priorities for the Village of Arlington Heights over the next four years, and how do you plan to address them?

The Village is financially secure with excellent bond ratings. During my tenure as Trustee, for 5 consecutive years, we had not increased our tax levy. Yet, Village infrastructure is an issue, and we are challenged by unfunded mandates to replace lead service lines, aging water mains and controlling flooding. My priority is continued financial security that will guarantee outstanding services such as police, fire, and public works to our residents and businesses while keeping tax increases to a minimum as we address the needs of our Village infrastructure.

The most important infrastructure projects continue to be our lead services line and aging water main replacement programs. With the lead service line project, we are helping to share the cost burden of replacing them from the buffalo box to the house with residents. As with all infrastructure projects, we look for county, state and federal grant opportunities to limit the burden on our residents. These might become more difficult to obtain with today's political environment, but I will do what is in my power as mayor to work with the county and state to keep them moving. With this in mind, we must make concessions and put on hold some storm water projects and the senior center renovation, but with careful planning I hope to avoid any serious disruptions.

The Village is experiencing unprecedented turnover in its leadership with the mayor and four Trustee positions on the ballot. As a trusted and experienced leader, my candidacy guarantees continuity in leadership while guiding us into a new era. I have a clear vision to lead the Village into the future. I am dedicated to making that vision a reality and I have time to fully commit to the duty. Finally, I am unincumbered by any conflicts of interest that may prevent me from engaging fully in the duties of mayor.

2. What are your plans for supporting local businesses and attracting new businesses to the village?

My vision for the Village includes expanding our economic base through growth and development of commerce. Growing new business and supporting existing businesses from north to south is a key part of my vision. Development of Arlington Park as well as other vacant properties is a priority. These projects will expand our tax base, increase revenue and lessen the burden on residents. We must carefully monitor and address these projects during a thorough planning process. As your Mayor, I will be fully engaged in the development of Arlington Park and other projects to secure the best outcome for our Village residents and businesses.

We have several local events like Sounds of Summer, Harmony Fest, Santa Run, etc. There have been discussions about closing Vail Avenue from the parking garage to Campbell Street to improve the experience during these events. Working with our Special Events and Arts Commissions, Chamber, and Downtown Business Group, we can collaborate with our park district, library and schools to expand other events across the Village. Ideas include art and antique fairs, car shows, a winter ice sculpture event, and chalk-the-block with local artists. Building on the examples from neighboring communities, I believe we can do this and more across Arlington Heights.

Arlington Heights is a welcoming community. I would look for opportunities to expand our image, which is known for belonging and inclusion.

3. How would you manage Arlington Heights' budget to ensure that critical services are funded while avoiding tax increases on residents and local businesses?

Presently, the Village is in a sound financial position. I will work diligently to maintain if not improve our bond rating while stewarding our annual budget planning. We employ a Village Manager who leads the daily operations of our Village and is critical to our future success. I think our current government structure serves our needs very well.

The Village has many opportunities to grow our community, expand our tax base and increase our revenue to the benefit of our tax paying residents. Although I don't believe it is our only opportunity, the most visible opportunity for the village is to develop Arlington Park. There are other projects that have been proposed that have yet to be started and these must be an immediate priority. Additionally, we also need to advance projects that are already underway so we don't lose momentum and can deliver on the promises we made to our residents when they were initiated.

4. How would you involve the Arlington Heights Chamber of Commerce in shaping long-term plans for the village, such as redevelopment of the Arlington Park property?

Developing Arlington Park is a once in a lifetime opportunity for Arlington Heights. It will position the Village as a regional destination point for visitors from surrounding counties and states. The decision will affect Arlington Heights for decades to come and must be thoroughly vetted to ensure it aligns with the vision of our community. The stadium is only part of the larger proposal for the 326-acre property. It is important to consider the whole and not just the part.

The Bear's proposal must complement our Village from north to south and not detract from it. Ultimately, these decisions will be made with the full collaboration of our Village Board and staff in a transparent process that will include input from our residents and businesses including the AHCC. As

your Mayor, I will be fully engaged in a process to plan and implement this process so that when complete, all of Arlington Heights may celebrate in the outcome.

5. How do you plan to foster collaboration between the mayor's office and other local leaders, such as those in the Arlington Heights Chamber of Commerce?

As a leader, I am respectful of the opinions of others and work collaboratively to achieve consensus. I value open communication and hold that in the highest regard. As Mayor I will solicit ideas from the Board and lead discussions on any and all topics that will better our community. I will extend this sense of mutual respect and collaboration to other government agencies in the Village including parks, libraries and schools. Business alliances including the AHCC will be recruited to participate in these discussions.

Presently, our Village Board meets annually with our library and park district boards. I propose that we include annual meetings with D23, D25 and D214 school boards. Working collaboratively with these other governing boards generates ideas that benefit our community and help come up with creative solutions to problems while leading to greater efficiencies to save taxpayer dollars.

In my experience, mutual respect and open communication fosters trust that leads to creative solutions. During my time in Village leadership, I have seen countless examples of how collaboration has contributed to finding answers that otherwise wouldn't have been possible if we weren't willing to work together.

As we move forward during this pivotal time in the history of our Village, I believe that my background and leadership style makes me uniquely suited to fostering consensus and taking action. I have earned the endorsement of Village Board colleagues, other Village government leaders, and our residents in a manner that positions me to lead our Village as its next Mayor.

***Thank you for volunteering to lead our community***

